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The Official Publication of the Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists

Protecting the Public's Health, Safety, and Welfare

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Members of the Board: John W. Green, President (Environmental); Ed Hollingsworth, Vice President (Mining - Mineral Extraction); Maureen K. Corcoran, (At Large); Everett J. Ferris (Government); and Darrel W. Schmitz, (Academia).

For Your Information

From the Director,

Rick Ericksen

It has been an interesting three (3) months or so. The Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists (MSBRPG) chose to introduce two companion bills (Senate Bill 2913, sponsored by Senator Robert M. Dearing and House Bill 1369, sponsored by Representative John O. Read) to reauthorize our enabling legislation a year earlier than many anticipated during the 2006 legislative session rather than in the 2007 session, as required in our existing legislation. The legislation was introduced pre-emptively to repeal the sunset date, revise registration fees and make technical corrections. Note: This reauthorization (sometimes referred to as a sunset or repealer provision) is designed to allow the legislature to evaluate the board's activities and perhaps change the way the board operates. Not all boards have this provision in their enabling legislation.

Initially, the MSBRPG requested a ten-year sunset provision as contained in our initial, 1997, enabling legislation. However, in a public hearing held by the Senate's Oil, Gas, and Other Minerals Committee, the committee chose to remove it completely from Senate Bill 2913 (SB 2913). Its removal was at the suggestion of the committee's Chairman, Senator Robert M. Dearing (also our Senate sponsor of the bill). The House Bill (HB 1369) that contained several significant drafting errors was assigned to the House of Representatives Oil, Gas, and Other Minerals Committee chaired by Representative John R. Reeves. Because of the bill's drafting errors, HB 1369 was allowed to die in committee and SB 2913 was subsequently heard in that same House committee.

In a public hearing held by the House's Oil, Gas and Other Minerals Committee, SB 2913 was reviewed. The committee heard comments from both the MSBRPG and one of two lobbyists for the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC). Despite hearing the comments provided by the MSBRPG and at the insistence of the ACEC lobbyist, the committee chose to add a three (3) year repealer provision so that the MSBRPG legislation would be reconsidered on the same date as the engineering and surveying law (the purpose for the ACEC's insistence for this remains unclear). The committee also approved the removal of language concerning the environment and the public's health, safety, and welfare as related to the

exemption of petroleum geologists from registration. The MSBRPG's intent of that clarifying language was to ensure that any geologist providing environmental services and practicing in the petroleum sector of professional practice must be registered. Upon consultation with legal counsel, the US Oil and Gas Association, and others, the Board chose to remove that language as it could be misinterpreted to mean something completely different from its original intent. Further, that language was already in the existing legislation and further clarification, although appropriate, was considered not to be necessary.

The additional changes made by the House committee resulted in the legislature now having two different bills and, as such, it was referred back to the Senate's Oil, Gas, and Other Minerals Committee to either be accepted as amended or go into conference. The MSBRPG leadership met with Chairman Dearing and the bill went into conference. The result of the conference committee was to remove the repealer and accept the removal of the language concerning the environment that was previously recommended to be struck by MSBRPG. The resulting bill then went to both the House and Senate floors for a vote on March 28, 2006, and it was successfully passed in both Houses.

It is important to note that the conference report, in addition to removing the three (3) year repealer added by the House committee, also included an amendment to remove the repealer from the existing engineering and surveying law. This was done as a result of it being first proposed by Chairman Robert Dearing and agreed to by the MSBRPG. Through this agreement our Board (the MSBRPG) has again demonstrated its commitment to work with the engineering community in general, the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors (BLPES), and the ACEC.

The legislation was approved by Governor Haley Barbour on April 24, 2006 and will take effect on July 1, 2006. The text of the adopted legislation appears on the MSBRPG web site at: www.msbrpg.state.ms.us

In conclusion, the MSBRPG would like to thank both Representative John Read and Senator Robert Dearing for their sponsorship of this legislation and all of the guidance they provided during the legislative session. Additionally, the MSBRPG wishes to also thank Governor Haley Barbour and his staff for the assistance that they provided to the MSBRPG concerning its legislation. Lastly, the MSBRPG would also like to extend its thanks to the ACEC for its help near the very end of the legislative

session for their lobbying efforts in support of the adoption of our, the Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists legislation, SB 2913.

Until next time.....



Rick L. Ericksen, RPG, CPG
Executive Director

Second Annual Legislative Day at the Capitol Held

On January 11, 2006 representatives from the Board, its Advisory Committee, and the Lower Mississippi Valley Section of the Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists (AEG) hosted a booth on the first floor rotunda area of the state's Capitol for the second straight year. As with last year, the mission was to meet with state legislators and interested members of the public and relate to them what geologists do and how their professional practice influences and impacts the public's health, safety, and welfare.

As one would expect one of the more pressing issues on legislators minds was the ongoing rebuilding efforts that were underway on the Mississippi Gulf Coast as the result of the devastation caused by Katrina. In that vein several legislators approached the geologists manning the booth and requested further input from geologists concerning the rebuilding efforts. The result of that interest shown by Senators Mike Chaney and Dean Kirby the MSBRPG requested inclusion in legislation dealing with building code standards of the coastal counties and the rest of the state. The legislation (HB 1406) that was passed by the Legislature and ultimately signed by Governor Haley Barbour on April 14, 2006 creates a council composed of various sectors of government and others including the Executive Director of the MSBRPG as a non-voting, ex-officio council member. It is anticipated the MSBRPG will be beneficial to the council by providing geologic input related to geohazards in the state's coastal areas and perhaps other areas of the state, e.g. northwestern Mississippi and the reactivation of the New Madrid Fault.

The MSBRPG wishes to extend it thanks to all those geologists that participated in making this the great success that it was and further desires to thank Environmental Management Services of Hattiesburg and MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc. of Jackson for their continued financial underwriting of the Annual Legislative Day.

Upcoming Seminar, May 11, 2006

Please make plans to attend a day long seminar being jointly hosted by the Eastern Gulf Region of the Petroleum Technology Transfer Council, the MSBRPG, the Division of Professional Affairs and Division of Environmental Geoscience, both divisions of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists.

The workshop titled, "Environmental Workshop for the Oil and Gas Professional" will cover the basics of what to look for when conducting a general site-inspection. The workshop content also considers land owner concerns and pollution prevention ideas to implement in everyday operations. On the management level, the workshop covers how to develop an environmental management plan that prevents problems from occurring and encourages the management of environmental concerns within everyday business operations. This workshop is ideal for the petroleum industry professional that is unfamiliar with environmental regulations and their application to the oil and gas industry. Environmental professionals who are unfamiliar with oil field operations will also benefit from the workshop as it contains numerous photos of actual field sites and illustrates common issues to investigate. The workshop also covers pollution prevention and landowner concerns when conducting field operations. Project managers, geologists, and engineers who are responsible for the management of field operations will find this workshop to be beneficial. The workshop should be considered an introductory course which will provide an individual with the knowledge necessary to manage field operations in a manner that complies with regulations, prevents environmental problems from occurring, and maintains good relations with landowners.

The workshop instructor will be Margaret (Maggie) Dalthorp.

Maggie Dalthorp presently has her own natural resource planning company and works as an independent geologist in Corpus Christi, TX. Maggie received a BS in Geology from the University of Texas, an MBA from Texas A&M and is currently working on her PhD in Marine and Coastal Systems Science at Texas A&M in Corpus Christi, TX. She worked for Exxon Company USA as a development and exploration geologist and in operations analysis in a management staff position. As a consultant, she has worked for the states of New Mexico and Texas, the International Boundary and Water Commission and numerous private clients to develop natural resource plans and manage pollution issues. Maggie is the author of the **AAPG/DEG on line course: "Environmental Issues in the Oil and Gas Industry"**.

It is essential that we have an accurate accounting of those who plan to attend the workshop. Therefore, we request an immediate registration by signing up on-line at: <http://egrpttc.geo.ua.edu>, or by calling or e-mailing Mr. Bennett Bearden, Director of the Eastern Gulf Region's PTTC at: (205) 348-1880; bbearden@geo.ua.edu

This seminar has been assigned 6.0 PDHs by the MSBRPG. Both the PTTC and the MSBRPG will have certificates of attendance available at the end of the seminar for those who need to document their PDHs. Hope to see you all there!

New Board Members Appointed by Governor

At the end of June, 2005 Governor Barbour appointed Mr. Everett J. Ferris and Dr. Darrel W. Schmitz to the MSBRPG, joining two other recent additions, Ms. Maureen K. Corcoran and Mr. John W. Green. This is the first time that both Ms. Corcoran and Mr. Ferris have served on the Board but both have served in various capacities in Board related or pre-Board activities. Ms. Corcoran served on the Geologic

Task Force (the group that formulated the initial legislation creating the MSBRPG) and Mr. Ferris served on the MSBRPG's Ad Hoc Advisory Committee chairing the committee for two (2) consecutive terms. Mr. Green (the Board's current President) and Dr. Schmitz are no strangers to the MSBRPG — both having served on the initial board when it was formed, including the posts of President and Vice President. Currently, Dr. Schmitz, in addition to serving on the MSBRPG is also head of the Department of Geosciences at Mississippi State University and is currently serving as national President of the Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO PASSED THE PAST TWO ASBOG EXAMINATION OFFERINGS!

The following took and successfully passed the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology examination in October, 2005 and March, 2006:

Matthew S. Aufman	Ryan E. North
Eric D. Dearman	Ashley N. Phillips
B. Clark Griffith	Natalie J. Rose
Matthew B. Hayes	Thomas R. Steinwinder
Robert C. Herr, IV	Gary M. Teague
Andrew W. Hill	William G. Walker, Jr.
Roger E. Marlin	

The following took and successfully passed the ASBOG Practice of Geology examination in October, 2005 and March, 2006:

Laura B. Barnhart	Gary M. Teague
V. Benson Chow	Lance D. Yarbrough

Next Offering of the ASBOG® Examinations

Fall ASBOG® exam date is set for October 6, 2006 with August 14, 2006 deadline for payment of examination fees. Please be aware that you may only take one examination, i.e. the Fundamentals of Geology (FG) or the Practice of Geology (PG) examination during a scheduled exam offering. *In order to take the FG exam, you must have a complete application on file with the Board as an enrollee (GIT) and have been cited to sit for the exam. To sit for the PG exam you must have: 1) four years of geological work experience; 2) previously passed the FG exam; and 3) have a complete RPG application on file with the Board.* Failure to have the necessary information on file will disallow you from sitting for either exam. If you have any questions contact the Board! If you are taking the FG exam as an "exit" exam with the University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, or Millsaps College, the requirement for the Board's receipt of an application as an enrollee (GIT) is waived.

REMEMBER THE DEADLINE FOR EXAM ORDERS IS MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2006. Please visit the Board's web site for an exam application or call the Board for additional information.

ASBOG® Annual 2005 Meeting

The Annual 2005 meeting of the Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG®) was held in Portland, ME from November 1 - 6, 2005. In attendance was the Board's director, Rick Ericksen.

During the annual meeting Director Ericksen proposed that the Fundamentals of Geology examination be revised to its former cost of \$125.00/examination when it is used as a university/college "Exit Examination." After much discussion by the other Member Boards and despite the minimal monetary effect of this proposal to the ASBOG® organization it failed to pass.

In addition to the Council of Examiners Workshop that was held in conjunction with the annual meeting it is important to mention that the ASBOG® Executive Committee adopted the "Model Geologists Licensure Law." The adoption of this model law parallels similar model licensure laws that have been developed and adopted by other professions, e.g. the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES). The Geologists Model Law incorporates portions of the old "Suggested Geologists Practice Act," also known as the COPGO bill. ASBOG® chose to develop this new model law as the previous one had been developed over a decade ago and needed significant revisions and updates, including an extended definition of what constitutes the public practice of geology. It is important to note that there are few if any exemptions for any sector of professional geologic practice as one should realize that very few areas, other than those involved in strictly an academic or research capacity, affect the public. The Model Law can be found on the ASBOG® web site at www.asbog.org

In other related news concerning ASBOG®, the Council of Examiners and its Executive Committee met in Houston during the AAPG's Annual Meeting held there during April, 2006. On Sunday, April 9, the ASBOG® and DPA/AAPG executive committees met to discuss the potential of developing a minimum of a petroleum geology speciality examination. The results of that meeting were very encouraging and ongoing news concerning this matter will be reported later if the development of this specialty examination is pursued further.

Voluntary Continuing Education and Professional Development Program

Please be aware that the Board has implemented its "Voluntary Continuing Education and Professional Development Program." Along with its implementation some time ago, the Board continues with its offerings of low cost seminars and presentations (see Upcoming Seminar, May 11, 2006). Information about this continuing education election can be found on the Board's web site at www.msbrpg.state.ms.us. Once enrolled in the program the registrant's participation will be noted in the Official Roster of the Board as an acknowledgment of those who are participants in the Program.

Report of Activities of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee

This This has been an exciting year for registered geologists in Mississippi. A large part of the Advisory Committee's efforts for this past year has been in supporting the excellent job Rick Ericksen has done in guiding legislation to strengthen our position as registered professional geologists. We are all aware of the efforts that have been underway to weaken our status. Like last year, a major thrust of the Advisory Committee was to make the presence of Registered Professional Geologists known to both the House and the Senate during the active legislative session. Our organization was recognized and applauded from the floor by both the House and the Senate. By calling on Senator Mike Chaney, Representative Dr. Masterson and others we were able to aid Rick and the MSBRPG in garnishing the support needed to protect our interests. We again interfaced with the public in a positive way at the annual Gem and Mineral Show. The advisory committee also continued efforts to build a strong relationship with the Association of Engineering Geologists who have played a major role in our legislative lobbying efforts. The committee is continuing efforts on other ongoing projects such as maintaining an archive of Geological News Events, Roadside Geology, Building Stones of Jackson, and Continuing Education. I would personally like to thank the Committee members for a job well done this year. The current members of the Committee are:

Mike Wright
 Carol Lutkin
 Howard Johnson
 Ken Ruckstuhl
 Ron Tarbutton
 Trae Welch
 Del Gande
 George Vockroth

I would like to single out Ken Ruckstuhl and Mike Wright for outstanding support to the Advisory Committee and the Board. This will be my last year to head the Advisory Committee and I am honored to have served with such an outstanding group. I am also honored that the Board allowed me to serve in this capacity.

James H. May, Chair
Ad Hoc Advisory Committee



**ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL
& ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS**

Lower Mississippi Valley Section

The Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists is an international organization devoted to the professional success of geologists and to the public welfare through leadership, advocacy and applied research. Founded in 1957, the AEG has 25 sections across the US and internationally. Here in our area, we are fortunate to have access to the Lower Mississippi Valley Section (LMVS). AEG leads the profession in its advocacy for professional licensure and legislation that supports that goal. For that reason, the LMV Section established a Lobbyist Fund for the

2006 Mississippi Legislative Session. Thanks to the members that have responded to this petition.

The LMV Section will also be sponsoring the 51st AEG Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA in September, 2008 with the Marriott Hotel as the host hotel. We are very proud to be hosting this event. The successful operation of an annual meeting of this magnitude requires a great deal of planning, organization, and coordination. Work is currently underway to obtain assistance for the meeting functions. The Meeting Planning Committee's activities include the following areas: Field Trips, Outstanding Env. Eng. Geology Project, Poster Sessions, Publicity, Short Courses, Sponsors, Spouse Activities/Hospitality Room, Student Coordination, Symposia, Teacher Workshops and Technical Sessions. Your assistance is welcome if you would like to participate in this big event. Drs. Darrell Schmitz and James May are co-chairs of this 51st AEG Annual Meeting.

If you have any questions or wish to volunteer to help with the 2008 Annual Meeting please contact the LMV Section Chair at the number below. To learn more about membership benefits and join AEG go to <http://www.aegweb.org>

Evelyn Villanueva
 LMV Section Chair
 601-415-0005

Please notify the Board if you have recently moved or changed employment - include your e-mail address with your new information!

**REPORT RPG LAW VIOLATIONS, IT'S
YOUR ETHICAL OBLIGATION!**



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In This Issue.... From the Director, RPG Legislation Passed, Geologists with MSBRPG and AEG Host Second Annual State Capitol Legislative Day, Annual ASBOG® meeting and other ASBOG® news; New Board Members; etc.