



Great Rivers chapter



INTERNATIONAL EROSION CONTROL ASSOCIATION

A Newsletter For Members and Friends of the Great Rivers Chapter of the International Erosion Control Association

Winter 2009

NEWSLETTER

Fall Conference Wrap-Up



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Well, another fall conference in the books...October 27th, 28th and 29th the Great River Chapter had our 13th Annual Conference and Expo. in Lenexa Kansas. Thanks to the amazing work of our committee members and volunteers, both on and off the Board of Directors, we were able to pull off an amazing show! For some attendees the conference started Tuesday with the Certified Inspector of Sediment and Erosion Control (C.I.S.E.C.) training course taught by J.B. Dixon and Shirley Morrow. For me the conference started with a social hour at Oklahoma Joes Barbeque with 20 to 30 conference attendees. I was excited and ready to go for our the big show on Wednesday and Thursday.

One of the reasons I was so excited for this year's show is it was pretty unique. First of all as far as the class

schedule we typically have a primary topic and all our speakers and presenters tend to orbit around that "theme". This year, in an effort to try to respond to some of the great response we have received from our chapter membership we had an amazing variety of topics and speakers at this show. In fact, looking back at the flyer...it's

pretty hard to tie any of them together at all! It may sound a little disheveled, but the feedback we received told us that there are a lot of topics out there that people want/need to hear about. This was an effort to try and respond to as many chapter members as possible.

Another unique identifier for this show was the venue. Typically our conferences are hosted in conference/hotel centers. This year in an effort to keep costs to an absolute minimum we separated the conference venue from the sponsor hotel. Thanks to the hard work of several committee members we were able to get the amazing Lenexa Conference Center, The Thomson Barn donated and a lot of our food prep work completed by volunteers. It was the tremendous work of the committee members and other volunteers that we

were able to pull off such an amazing show at an incredibly low price, thank you again to everyone involved.

So with fall 2009 in the books we look forward to 2010. We already have committee's working hard on planning our spring conference, fall chapter meeting, and fall conference. We are excited to be working with several partners for our spring conference scheduled for March 24th at the Bradford Research & Extension Center in Columbia Missouri, so be looking for conference registration information coming soon. We are also very excited to be working with the Nebraska Department of Roads and City of Omaha for our 14th Annual Fall Conference & Expo in Omaha, Nebraska. It has been several years since the IECA Great Rivers Chapter has held our Fall Annual Event in the Omaha Area, it is really shaping up to be an amazing show.

There will be more information as available in future newsletters and website updates, feel free to contact us with questions as well.





“The Ice Man Cometh”

It seems like only yesterday when I was working on my president’s message talking about winter stabilization frustrations and wrapping up my sites for the year while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was announcing their proposed options for Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELG’s). Ahh how time flies when you’re throwing dirt. Now here we are a year later... a little bit older, a little bit rounder, and a little bit more regulated. If I could figure out how to stop any of the three I would be a hero to millions! Oh well I guess I will just have to settle for my family and my adoring chapter membership. So what really has changed for our industry in the last 12 months?

A year ago it was a pretty scary financial time for the private and public sectors; there was a lot of uncertainty heading into a long looking winter slow down. So are things looking better this year? Just like last year it depends on who you ask. As an inspector I talk to a lot of people on both sides of the silt fence and there is still little consensus about what awaits us with the spring thaw. There is some definite optimism out there but until that starts to translate into dollars, projects, and jobs the optimism may be fleeting.

A year ago I was expressing frustration with trying to find better ways to get through to operators and owners about the benefits of winter stabilization (besides that whole compliance thing). Sometimes shutting down a few weeks BEFORE the ground freezes and getting some good mulch and blanket in place will more than pay for itself by preventing damage and head ache in the spring (freeze, thaw, runoff, repeat you know the drill) cycle. There seems to be an unrelenting demand by the operators and developers alike to spend ten dollars to save ten cents. Sometimes its new folks in charge, new developers to the communities, or developers that still no better but it seems like I beat my head against the wall with this message every year. Frankly with the finances the way they are I will probably be facing this challenge for awhile.

A year ago the industry was spinning with the proposed EPA ELG regulations. Profit margins were getting crushed and even the once secure city/state regulator jobs were subject to budget slashing due to ever growing scrutiny of a public that was growing weary of additional costs in any form for any reason. It was during this time that we as industry professionals in all sectors were asked to submit comments on the 4 options proposed by the EPA that were guaranteed to increase the cost of construction. I can’t even fathom the comments that were received.

I was fortunate enough to be able to attend IECA’s EC09 in Reno last year and attend the panel discussion with representatives from the home building industry, state regulating entity, and the EPA. It was an amazing discussion and it was pretty obvious at that point that there was a lot of passion around the topic. In the last twelve months I haven’t talked to one person that was blasé about it. Everyone has had pretty strong feelings one way or the other.

Now 12 months later all the comments have been thoroughly reviewed and weighed and the results are in. Were you a good little erosion control professional that studied the final rule top to bottom the day it came out?? Or do you sit with me in the truly unique class of dirt nerds that scoured the “supporting documents” a week before the release to try and find out what was coming? Regardless, it’s here now and what’s the verdict? Frankly I don’t know how to feel about it at this point.

For better or worse there were some compelling arguments made and some definite concessions made. I am trying to figure out the true impact and implications for my little corner of the world. I would really like to hold out official judgment until I have a chance to speak with other folks in the industry to see how they feel it will affect them.

So I will ask again, how far have we come in the last 12 months?

It’s up to each of us to answer that question for ourselves. As for me, if I wasn’t such a diehard optimist I would have given up this game long ago! Whether fighting for jobs I would have given away 18 months ago, trying to figure out how to keep costs down while chasing the carrot on an ever growing stick called compliance, or championing the same causes year in year out to try and convince operators and developers how to really save money –

Continued on next page

I can't give up. I have learned to truly savor the small victory's and just try to muddle through frustrating defeats.

Until next time, stay warm, stay safe, and keep your mud on your OWN sites.
Thank you for the opportunity to serve,

Tom Wells, CPESC, CISEC
IECA Great Rivers Chapter President

Meet Your Board Member—Rebecca Kauten



In 2004, Rebecca Kauten started down the career path of stormwater management. For five years before that she worked in corporate marketing, communications and nonprofit development. "It all started by accident," she claims. "I was working as communications director for the Iowa Environmental Council and was asked to attend an Earth Day Fair in Dickinson County." Being an avid outdoorswoman, she decided to camp at Gull Point State Park, where the event was hosted. "Keep in mind, Earth Day is in mid-April," she states. "I woke up to 40-degree weather and rain, so I broke camp, set up my display at the fair and did my best to stay close to the huge fireplace in the nature center." While struggling to warm up by the fire, Kauten was struck with inspiration. "The featured speaker

at the fair was this man named Wayne Petersen." At the time, Petersen was the State Urban Conservationist for Iowa Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and key promoter of low-impact development, stormwater management and other conservation practices for the built environment. "I didn't know this guy from Adam, but what he had to say that day changed my life forever."

Kauten since graduated from the University of Northern Iowa Masters of Public Policy program. Her major focus was land use policy, with research on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Phase II of the Federal Clean Water Act. Her grant writing experience landed her a position with the Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as a watershed project coordinator, where she worked both as a student and then

as a paid employee for a total of four years. Her watershed project received state and national attention, particularly due to the elements of water quality and best management practice (BMP) performance monitoring that were integrated with the project. Her work also attracted the attention of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Watershed Monitoring and Assessment Section. Since 2008, she has served as their urban monitoring coordinator.

Today Rebecca serves as a technical resource for urban watershed projects in Iowa. This includes work by other SWCDs, MS4 communities and students engaged in water quality monitoring efforts on urbanized landscapes. She received her CPESC-IT in April 2009, and holds certificates in SWPP design and site inspection from the University of Minnesota Erosion and Stormwater Management Program in the Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering. She also serves as the communications chair for the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition and is president of a local river cleanup group known as the Cedar River Festival Group. For the Great Rivers Chapter, she serves as your board secretary.

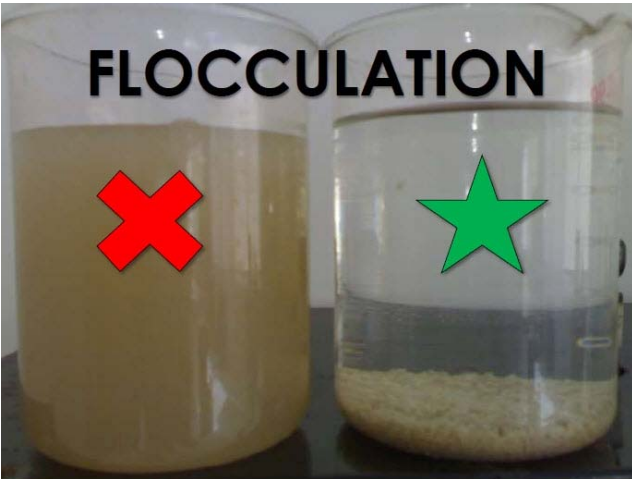
The Sediments Stops Here

Part I: "What the Flock?" By J.B. Dixon

With new proposed EPA regulations stipulating requirements for turbidity limitations for larger permitted construction sites, many people's attention has turned to technology that, while not new, it is still somewhat unfamiliar to a wide audience. We're talking about the use of polymers and flocculants for sediment control, essentially introducing chemistry to an NPDES Toolbox that has been filled with both good and bad techniques and products to physically remove sediment. For many in the Midwest, to achieve 280 NTU's, without changes in the way that land development and construction staging is done today, the use of polymers and biopolymers may be the only way to achieve these numeric standards.

Like anything else, the marketplace for polymers has been a contentious one, filled with all of the typical marketing strategies one would expect from healthy competition. But there are some clear distinctions to make as far as what is actually out there on the market. Essentially there are two main types of polymers on the market: Ones that are man-made or synthetic, and ones that are from natural materials. Essentially, these polymers function in the same manner. Negatively charged colloidal clay particles bind to a positively charged polymer introduced into the water column but natural or man-made agitation. The neutral-charged coagulant now has enough weight to drop out of suspension, settling either to the bottom of a basin or other structure designed for capture.

Regardless of the kind of polymer that is chosen, the most critical step in performance and safety is that the product be used at the proper dosage and rate. When In



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Researcher's Corner

Updates to the International Stormwater BMP Database

By Rebecca Kauten, MPP, CPESC-IT

The International Stormwater BMP Database features over 300 studies, performance analysis results and tools related to BMP performance, monitoring guidance and other LID research. According to the website, the purpose of the long-running project is to provide scientifically sound information to help improve the design, selection and performance of stormwater management practices. With an international scope, the site serves as a central repository for performance data and other resources stormwater professionals in a comprehensive, user-friendly format.

The project began in 1996, under a cooperative agreement between the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Today, the database project has support and funding from a broad coalition of partners including the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF), ASCE Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI), USEPA, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the American Public Works Association (APWA). Wright Water Engineers, Inc. and Geosyntec Consultants are responsible for maintaining and operating the database clearinghouse and web page.

The project team reviewed more than 800 documents related to stormwater BMP performance. There was consensus on a need for better guidance related to proper monitoring of stormwater BMPs. As an amendment to the project, the team developed the guidance document: *Urban Stormwater BMP Performance Monitoring - A Guidance Manual for Meeting the National Stormwater BMP Database Requirements*. The manual is intended to help achieve stormwater BMP monitoring project goals through the collection of more useful and representative rainfall, flow, and water quality information.

Many of the recommended protocols, particularly those for reporting monitoring, watershed, and design information, are directly related to requirements of the Stormwater BMP Database. The manual itself, however, is intended to improve the state of the practice by standardizing protocols for collecting, storing, analyzing, and reporting BMP monitoring data.

This new manual has been significantly revised and updated, with emphasis on guidance for monitoring Low Impact Development sites and techniques. It is currently available for download at the site listed below:

[http://www.bmpdatabase.org/Docs/2009%](http://www.bmpdatabase.org/Docs/2009%20Stormwater%20BMP%20Monitoring%20Manual.pdf)

[20Stormwater%20BMP%20Monitoring%20Manual.pdf](http://www.bmpdatabase.org/Docs/2009%20Stormwater%20BMP%20Monitoring%20Manual.pdf)

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So you want to submit to the database?

Project team members encourage submission from projects around the world. In order to maintain consistency, the team does include criteria for submission. In order for a BMP monitoring study to be considered for inclusion in the BMP Database, the following criteria must be met:

1. The study must be for a post-construction, permanent BMP conducted in the field. **Laboratory studies are not accepted.**
2. Required fields in data entry spreadsheets must be provided, or explained if not applicable to the specific study. As a general rule for water quality data, **event mean concentrations (EMCs) are required for most studies**, unless special considerations are identified (e.g., bacterial data may be taken as grab samples).
3. Studies conducted by vendors or manufacturers of proprietary devices must meet certain requirements to ensure **study results are independent and unbiased.**

Search fields are currently available to retrieve summaries and other data. However, being as the database is still under development, there are some sections listed as "coming soon." The important thing to note is that the project itself is underway and, it has made significant progress since its inception. For more information and to access the database visit: www.bmpdatabase.org.

Great Rivers—IECA

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Part I: "What the Flock?" - continued

a study performed independently by ProTech General Contracting Services, Inc. in 2004, one of their most important conclusions from testing two natural and synthetic polymers said it best: "All polymers are potentially toxic when overdosed." For most polymers, natural or synthetic, the application rates are very small. For example, the application rate range for the most common natural polymer on the market, chitosan acetate, is in the range of 1 to 3 parts per million, and only toxic to certain aquatic organisms at a rate of 500ppm or more. When used at correct rates, all studies used for this article agreed that they were safe and non-toxic to aquatic organisms.

When considering the use of polymers or biopolymers for inclusion and specification in your SWPPP,

make sure that everyone involved in the application and monitoring of the BMP is educated on the proper application rates of these products. Like anything else, it only takes one misuse or improper application for a product to get a bad reputation.

In the next Newsletter:.... Part II: Flocculants: Cationic Vs. Anionic.

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