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Office of Air Quality Update: Stuart Spencer, Associate Director – Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (Office of Air Quality) Arkansas Environmental Federation Convention Presentation

Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog

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Stuart Spencer undertook a presentation at the October 6th Arkansas Environmental Federation Convention titled Office of Air Quality Update.

Mr. Spencer serves as the Associate Director of the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (“ADEQ”) Office of Air Quality.

Mr. Spencer’s presentation focused on a variety of developments and/or changes in the Office of Air Quality. The Office of Air Quality is a successor portion and/or element of ADEQ that houses the former Air Division.

Mr. Spencer’s presentation addressed:

- Changes/additions to the Office of Air Quality’s leadership team
- The purpose of the previously referenced changes/additions (enhanced the Office of Air Quality’s ability to carry out the primary mission of protecting and improving air quality [simultaneously fostering responsible economic expansion opportunities])
- Increased communication cooperation between the branches and sections within the Office of Air Quality
- Improve upon existing and developing new measures and strategies to improve:
 - Efficiency
 - Productivity

The presentation noted that the Office of Air Quality continues to be comprised of three major programs:

- Compliance
- Permits
- Planning

Also referenced are the merged Office of Air Quality programs of Enforcement and Asbestos.

The recent appointment of Tom Rheume as Senior Operations Manager for the Office of Air Quality is noted. His role is stated to focus primarily on implementing measures that promote consistency, innovation and certainty in the Compliance and Permits branches.

Mr. Spencer stated that Mr. Rheume's year-and-a-half tenure to date has resulted in the Office of Air Quality's Permits Branch having improved communications with the regulated community, tightened permit issuance timeframes and production of good permits. The role is further described as the leader of the Office of Air Quality's technical staff as well as a liaison to the regulated community in regards to "high-importance issues of plan and facility design (both initial and modifications) and state and federal permitting requirements."

The presentation also addressed Title V permitting in Arkansas. The elimination of a backlog in Title V permit renewals was highlighted.

General air permits issued by ADEQ were also discussed. Mr. Spencer reviewed the status of four general permits which included:

- Animal Human Remains (went final on 7/11/2016)
- Asphalt Facilities (went final on April 27, 2016)
- Air Curtain Incinerator (draft general permit has been issued)
- Rock Crusher (was sent out one year prior to expiring)

[A copy of Mr. Spencer's slides can be downloaded here.](#)