

Former Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Director Randall Mathis Passes Away



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12/29/2015

I heard sad news yesterday from several people that former Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (formerly known as Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology) Director Randall Mathis passed away yesterday morning.

This news was subsequently confirmed in a news release issued by the agency yesterday quoting both Governor Hutchinson and Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Director Becky Keogh.

Randall had served as Director of the agency from 1989-2000. Equally impressive, his tenor spanned three Governors. He served under Governors Clinton, Tucker and Huckabee.

He had retired from the agency in 2000 at age 70.

Prior to his service as Director, Randall had served as both the Deputy Director and Chief of the Solid Waste Division. Further, subsequent to his retirement from Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, he was appointed to a term on the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission. The agency clearly benefited from his intelligence, skill and personality during his years of service.

Randall's public service did not begin with the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology. He had previously served as Clark County Judge. In addition, he was active on a family farm.

Few issues can potentially generate as much emotion or conflict as those involving regulatory choices regarding the environment. I personally believe that there are few individuals who have been as successful addressing contentious issues with individuals or groups whatever their views. I believe that Randall worked equally well with local governments, environmentalists, industry, the legislature and other groups. In my experience, he never had a set agenda that automatically excluded other views.

The Arkansas Environmental Federation endowed the Randall Mathis scholarship for environmental studies a number of years ago in recognition of his service.

I believe that despite his being retired for many years, his work is evident in the fact that the agency operates every delegated federal program.

[Click here to download a copy of the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality news release regarding Randall's passing.](#)