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# Arkansas Environmental Personnel Moves: Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Acting Senior Manager (Petroleum Tanks Program and Enforcement – Office of Land Resources) Retiring

## Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog

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Ms. Lynda Perry of the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (“ADEQ”) announced she will retire on February 28th.

Lynda is the Acting Senior Manager, Petroleum Tanks Program and Enforcement Office of Land Resources.

Lynda is probably the ADEQ employee most closely identified with the former Regulated Storage Tank Division (“RSTD”). She spent her entire ADEQ career in the RSTD until it became part of the Office of Land Resources in an ADEQ reorganization in January, 2016. She is retiring with 28 years and four months of service for the State of Arkansas.

Lynda’s tenure with ADEQ (then known as Arkansas Pollution Control & Ecology) began in October of 1988. She administered the underground storage tank (“UST”) program for then Hazardous Waste Division Chief Mike Bates. Congress had mandated the development of a comprehensive regulatory program for USTs. This regulatory program would affect millions of businesses (large and small) along with schools, municipalities, etc.

The State of Arkansas recognized the importance of state (as opposed to federal implementation). Therefore, the resources were provided to obtain UST delegation and the Arkansas program became, or was given, its own separate division – RSTD. Lynda was the initial employee of RSTD and served over the next 28 years as:

- Planning Specialist
- Program Section Manager
- Programs Manager
- Branch Manager

She was appointed Acting Senior Manager for the Petroleum Tanks Program and Enforcement after Joe Hoover began a medical leave. She continued to serve in that capacity after Joe retired on September 30, 2016.

The importance of the RSTD and its successor program designation cannot be minimized. Besides enforcement of UST rules and regulations, this program has operated the Arkansas Petroleum Storage Tank Trust Fund (“Trust Fund”) since it was enacted in the late 1980s by the Arkansas General Assembly. The Trust Fund serves as the financial assurance mechanism for thousands of Arkansas UST owners and operators. These UST owners and operators (many of whom are small businesses or local government) would have to attempt to obtain insurance that is either unaffordable or unavailable in the absence of the Trust Fund. It is especially important in a rural state such as Arkansas to ensure to the extent possible that businesses supplying motor fuel in such areas have some ability to continue to operate. Through the guidance of Lynda and her agency colleagues over the years, Arkansas’s Trust Fund has arguably been one of the most financially stable and well run in the nation.

Organizations such as the Arkansas Oil Marketers Association (“AOMA”) and its individual members have recognized the importance of Lynda’s work. Steve Ferren, Executive Vice President of AOMA noted:

Lynda Perry has been a great resource for our Association since the beginning of the UST program in late 1980s. We will greatly miss Lynda’s expertise and wish her the very best in retirement.

Danny Murdaugh, a hydrogeologist with Pollution Management, Inc. and a member of the Arkansas Petroleum Storage Tank Trust Fund Advisory Committee, stated:

I’ve known Lynda for a long time and I think it’s safe to say she initiated, refined and/or implemented most, if not all, the programs that led to the success of each of the ones operated by RSTD including the Trust Fund for the past 25 or more years. She was always willing to share her time and knowledge and made herself available to anyone who called with a question, needing guidance, or could just use some sage advice. (Editor’s note – Danny misspelled a number of words and seemed to have trouble with sentence structure. Therefore, this is an edited version of his quote.)

This writer can personally attest to never having hesitated to seek Lynda’s insight and practical knowledge in regards to any number of issues associated with this program.

Note that Lynda’s husband, Terry, retired a few years ago after a long tenure with ADEQ RSTD as an Enforcement Manager. I would guess that at least some part of her interest in retirement might be both weariness in coming home every evening and seeing Terry’s feet propped up on the couch and the need to improve his productivity around the house.

In all seriousness, I know that Lynda will be greatly missed by both her colleagues at the agency and the regulated community.