



HoleTalk

Spring 2026
Published Quarterly

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ESWWDA SPRING MEETING

April 23-25, 2026

Frey Well Drilling and the Frey family will be hosting the Spring meeting in April. We are all hoping by the end of April the snow piles will be gone and spring will be here. The meeting will focus on well screen sizing, screen installation, and formation development. Past and present drilling equipment will be on site. There will be a special gift for everyone that is able to attend. This meeting will be run like a job so make sure to bring hard hats, safety glasses, and gloves for the drilling activities.

The Board of Directors activities will begin on Thursday night with meeting and a dinner. Everything will kick off in full on **Friday, April 24, 2026**, at **Frey Well Drilling**. FWD welcomes everyone to start the day at the shop at 7:30 a.m. Breakfast sandwiches will be served starting at 7:30 a.m. At 9 a.m. **Timothy Knight, P.A.** from **Occustar** will be discussing DOT compliance and the importance of drug testing. Local vendors will be on-site to display their goods,



and we will have a Chicken BBQ lunch. The plan is to have drilling activities between 1-5 p.m. (site and location to be determined the day of). The general meeting will be held at **Ripa's Italian Restaurant** located at 4218 Walden Ave., Lancaster, NY 14086. Please arrive at 6:30 p.m. for appetizers, and dinner to follow. We will have a guest speaker at dinner, focusing on "*Drilling Down into Retirement.*" Please confirm your attendance with **Eileen** at 716-937-7977 or drillerfrey@aol.com.

On Saturday, if anyone is interested

in extending their weekend, please visit **Bill, Bonnie, and Brian's** farm at 8:30 a.m. There will be a farm tour including grain handling, equipment, a lot of tractors, and livestock. Coffee and donuts will be provided. Please confirm your attendance with **Bill** or **Brian**.

Frey Well Drilling will provide all food. FWD is sharing the winnings from the ESWWDA raffle from the annual January meeting. Speakers and times may vary without notice. Activities and dinner are not near the hotels, we suggest bringing a change of clothes.

ESWWDA has a block of rooms reserved at the **Best Western Crown Inn & Suites** located at **8210 Park Road, Batavia, NY**. Please note that there will be driving between hotel, Frey Well Drilling and other locations. **Please confirm your attendance with Eileen** at 716-937-7977 or drillerfrey@aol.com. We will need counts for meals and activities.

Mission

The ESWWDA is committed to taking a leadership role in protecting our natural resources through the promotion of the ground water industry. It strives to support a spirit of cooperation, communication, and education within the industry and with the consumers and regulatory agencies.

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Spring Meeting Agenda

April 23-25, 2026

Thursday, April 23, 2026

5 p.m. **Board Meeting & Dinner** at the **Alabama Hotel**
1353 Lewiston Rd., Basom, NY 14013.
Please arrive at the restaurant at 5 PM for the meeting,
dinner to follow. *Spouses are welcome to dinner.*

Friday, April 24, 2026

7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m. **Breakfast at Frey Well Drilling Shop** (address below)
9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **Timothy Knight, P.A.** from **Occustar** speaking
on *DOT Compliance and Importance of Drug Testing*
10:30 – Noon **Local Vendors**
Noon – 1 p.m. **Chicken BBQ Lunch**
1 p.m. – 5 p.m. **Local well drilling activities.**
Location will be determined and directions given out
at **Frey Well Drilling**.
6:30 p.m. **General Membership Meeting**
at **Ripa's Italian Restaurant** located at 4218 Walden Ave.,
Lancaster, NY 14086. Please arrive at 6:30 PM
for appetizers, and dinner to follow.
We will have a guest speaker at dinner, focusing
on 'Drilling Down into Retirement'.

*Please confirm your attendance with Eileen
at 716-937-7977 or drillerfrey@aol.com for dinners and activities.*

Saturday, April 25, 2026

8:30 a.m. Visit the **Frey Farm** - There will be a farm tour including
grain handling, equipment, a lot of tractors, and livestock.
Coffee and donuts will be provided.
Please confirm your attendance with Bill or Brian.
Frey Well Drilling Shop: Please put the address in your
GPS for directions from the hotel.
11565 Broadway, Alden, NY 14004
716-937-7977 drillerfrey@aol.com

2026 Officers and Directors

President

Chris Root, CWD/PI, Root Contracting
5540 Wolfspring Road, Scio, NY 14800
(585) 593-4304 • Rootwaterwell@gmail.com

Vice President

Jeremy Baldwin, MGWC, Hawk Drilling Co., Inc.
354 Stone Church Road, Saratoga, NY 12020
(518) 885-7952 • hawkdrilling@aol.com

Past President

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1175 Farley Road, Hudson Falls, NY 12839
(518) 746-0173 • Rosickdrilling@yahoo.com

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(845) 225-3196 • Jewels2564@aol.com

ESWWDA Assistant Correspondence Manager

Susan Bates
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(315) 225-3060 • Gramsue67@gmail.com

3 – Year Directors

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(716) 937-7977 • DrillerFrey@aol.com

James Utter, Utter Well Drilling
(607) 582-7436 • jimdrilling@yahoo.com

2 – Year Directors

William Frey, MGWC, Frey Well Drilling Inc.
(716) 937-7977 • DrillerFrey@aol.com

Richard Tompkins, Reliable Pump & Well
(845) 629-8301 • reliablepumpandwell@gmail.com

1 – Year Directors

Daniel Boyd, DNA Well Maintenance
(772) 626-4515 • Daniel.Boyd70@gmail.com

Zack Barlett, Bartlett Well Drilling
(315) 331-6900 • zach@bartlettwelldrilling.com

Supplier Directors

Bernie Kistner, Group One Northeast, Inc.
(845) 473-1969 • bckistner@aol.com

Dave Keough, Blake Equipment
(845) 258-7867 • Dave.keough@blakeequip.com

David Dretel, D&S Pump
(845) 279-3785 • ddretel@dspumps.com

Christopher Beatson, Xylem
(585) 469-0069 • christopher.beatson@xylem.com

Values

The Board of Directors and membership of E.S.W.W.D.A. believe
in the promotion of the ground water industry through:

**Professional Standards • Communication
Education • Integrity • Affordability**

Hotel Information:

ESWWDA has a block of rooms from Thursday, April 23 to Sunday, April 26
at the **Best Western Crown Inn & Suites**. The room rate is **\$119 plus
tax**. The block code is **ESWWDA**.



Best Western Crown Inn & Suites
8210 Park Rd., Batavia, NY 14020
585-344-8882

Directions: When getting off
Exit 48 (Thruway-90) motels are
straight ahead across Route 98.

There are additional hotels in the area if you prefer.

Camper trailers are welcome at this meeting just call **716-937-7977**
or email **drillerfrey@aol.com** to reserve your space.

Something to be proud of.

Greetings once again. I am writing this letter at the last possible second before my deadline... well, actually, the deadline has already passed! I do apologize to the editors of **Hole Talk** for that, and it was not intentional. As well drillers in this industry, we are often pushed right up to the deadline on getting projects completed, navigating the random challenges that seem to pop up along the way. More often than not, we are balancing a number of problems at the same time.



I do not have to tell you this since you already know we work in a uniquely challenging field. When we push through and come out the other side, it always feels worth it. I think that is a good analogy for this winter. Let me tell you, this winter has been a good old-fashioned winter. As a snowmobiler, I like winter! That said, this year has been brutally cold, which has kept the snow on the ground. Still, you folks are out there pushing forward, keeping our landscapes supplied with water for our communities.

As brutal as the weather has been, the payoff will be worth it. A slow melt from Old Man Winter is the best way to recharge our water tables after the summer droughts we have experienced. So, in the same spirit of pushing through, I guess I can push through and finally get this letter to the editor. Let us get to it!

Our **Big Beautiful Annual Meeting** was just that big and beautiful! It was our best-attended meeting to date at **Turning Stone**, with an estimated 250 people in attendance. I want to thank every one of you who came out to support the event. Without your participation, this association simply would not work.

Speaking of participation, I cannot say enough about our vendors and suppliers. We raised booth prices this year to help offset meeting costs, and without hesitation, every table was filled. Thank you for your support. We also had excellent speakers during our classes again and thank you for your time and participation.

I would also like to thank everyone who donated items for the auction during our **Giving Back Program**. This is our veteran's program, which continues to grow. This past year, we were able to help multiple veterans with new wells or water systems, and we want that effort

to continue. The auction held at the end of our cocktail hour is our sole fundraiser for this program, and we would love to make it even bigger. If you are interested in getting involved, please let us know.

Behind the scenes, none of this happens without two people everyone turns to when there is a problem who are **Julie Boyd** and **Sue Bates**. Without these two, we would be lost, to say the least. Thank you both.

During the general membership meeting, we had the pleasure of hearing from the Vice President of **NGWA**, **Mr. Robert Keyes**. Thank you, sir! It was a pleasure. We also heard from DEC representative **Beth Guidetti** and **Krista Spohr**, who presented updates on wetlands regulations and discussed the possible integration of geothermal drilling (less than 500 feet) into our current well drilling regulations. This is an important topic, and our association is actively involved and at the table for these discussions. We also thank our speaker from Gallagher Insurance, Tracy Wronoski.

We held board elections to fill the seat of **Mr. Mike Palleschi**, who is stepping down after many years of service. **Mike**, a senior geologist at **Alpha Geoscience**, served on the board long before I did and was always a quiet voice of reason I could turn to for guidance. Mike, you will be missed, and we wish you all the best. Stepping into that role is **Mr. Brian Frey**, who brings positive energy, fresh ideas, and a wealth of experience. We are happy to have you on board, Brian.

Lastly, we held the big cash raffle that we have been fretting about for the past year and we did it! We exceeded our goal of selling 500 tickets, with approximately 630 sold. Congratulations to all the cash winners, and congratulations to ESWWDA for turning this into a true fundraiser. Let us keep this momentum rolling!

Looking ahead, we will be holding a spring meeting on the western side of the state, hosted by the **Frey family**. If you know **Bill** or **Brian**, you know it is going to be entertaining!

Thank you for your time,

Chris Root, ESWWDA President 

ESWWDA ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

The 2026 Annual meeting of the **Empire State Water Well Drillers' Association** was called to order at 9:15 am by **President Chris Root** with 82 members in attendance. The following officers and directors were in attendance:

President **Chris Root**

Vice President **Jeremy Baldwin**

Past President **Dave Rosick**

Director **Richard Tompkins**

Director **Daniel Boyd**

Director **William Frey**

Director **James Utter**

Director **Richard Tompkins**

Supplier Director **Bernie Kistner**

Supplier Director **Dave Keough**

Supplier Director **Christopher Beatson**
Adrienne Boyd sold the **50/50 tickets**. **Edward Bates** made a motion to wave the reading of the minutes and accept them as printed in *Hole Talk*. **Dave Root** seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

President Root informed the general membership that the Board reviewed the treasurer's report at the Board meeting the previous day. The reports presented a fiscally stable picture of the association. At the time **Dave Rosick** made a motion to accept the Board's determination of the treasurer's report. **Bernie Kistner** seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

President Root thanked all that attended. **Past President Wild** reported that he counted 250 at the trade expo Tuesday evening. **President Root** stated that we have been working with DEC and NY-Geo on a weekly basis. He is sure that more details will follow with reports and speakers.

At this time there was no communications. The only sickness and health report was that **Rick Menshausen** was in the hospital with pneumonia.

At this time **President Root** introduced **President-Elect Robert Keyes** from **NGWA**. **Mr. Keyes** introduced himself as a talker and a cable tool driller. He talked to the membership about the impact of workforce recruitment. He played a video that **NGWA** released during ground water week regarding the opportunities for individuals in the ground water industry. He said as an industry we still sell ourselves short. Next, he promoted the **NGWA University** and the need to standardize the terminology in the industry not dumbing down the industry by making tests easier. Then **Mr. Keyes** showed a video promoting **Business Pro**. He stated that the **NGWA Fly-in** would be **March 24-25** and the topics would be geothermal federal policy and tax credits, **WOTUS (Waters of the United States)**, the **Water Resources Act** and data centers. He also spoke about the low interest loans that are offered through **NGWA**. There was a period of questions and answers with the membership.

Insurance: **Tracy Wronoski** gave the following insurance report. In looking at the state of the market, we see a slight flattening in the real estate market but currently there are still steady increases building valuations (for properties under-insured), premiums (historical cat losses) 8-15% (including inflation guards on building values) and coinsurance penalties regarding under-insured buildings.

General Liability to increases 3-5% and it is important to report expected payrolls for renewal terms 120-90 days prior to expiration. **Inland Marine** to increases 3-5% and it is important

to review equipment schedules, replacement valuations (sold, replaced or new equipment) within 15-30 days of transactions. Automobile has seen a steady increases in liability rates 8-15% due to the cost of parts/labor and increased litigation costs (primary cause). It is also important to review automobile schedules/equipment. Workers Compensation is staying favorable. Payroll reporting renewal terms 120-90 days prior to expiration and to review your experience mods. Excess Liability/Umbrella will increase 5-12% due to the increase in loss settlements.

There are other lines of coverage for consideration. One additional line is cyber liability covering areas of credit cards, electronic phishing, and wire fraud. Liberty Mutual driller program will include endorsements and \$50K automatic coverage and additional limits available with application. Full \$1M+ policies available with a full application/marketing process. **Employers Practice Liability (EPLI)** is another line of coverage with rising claims within the construction industry. There is a line of coverage that covers discrimination especially with the broadened definition in the state of NY. **Liberty Mutual Water Well Drillers** program will include endorsements with \$50K automatic and increased limits available upon application. Full \$1M+ policies available upon full application/marketing process.

Gallagher offers several FREE resources to insureds: telematics (vehicle/driver monitoring) with new Gallagher clients receiving 25% Samsara discount; **STEP** – Online employee, management and supervisor training modules on **Human Resource Training** such as New York

ESWWDA Values

and NYC sexual harassment & discrimination and ethics training, Drug Free workplace, Workers Compensation essentials; safety training; safety shorts; and ERisk Hub also known as Cyber security.

Membership: Sue Bates reported that we have a total of 290 members with eleven new members in 2025. We have 161 contractors with 105 paid renewals; 55 supplier/manufacturers with 34 paid; and 74 associate members with 45 paid. Second round of invoicing will go out in February.

Scholarship: No report at this time.

Government Affairs: President Root thanked Sandra Baldwin, Kevin Moravec and Beth Guidetti for working so hard on the proposed regulation changes and incorporating

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Education ◦ **Integrity** ◦ **Affordability**

the geothermal into the regulations. Sandra Baldwin reported that they had been talking about different topics including other testing options, apprenticeships, continuing education, and many other topics. She thanked NY-Geo for their work with the group also.

NEWWA: Henry Boyd reported that the NEWWA Board had met the previous weekend and set up the classes. The show is March 13-14 in Marlborough, MA.

Education: Henry Boyd stated that he had

over 30 people in the pump primer class. We also had a full slate of great classes at this meeting.

Budget & Finance: It was discussed at the Board meeting that the association is doing a third party audit this year.

NGWA & WSC: President Root reported that Michael Palleschi who was the director assigned these committees had stepped down from the Board. President Root had attended **NGWA Expo** in New Orleans. At the peer-to-peer meeting he had the opportunity to discuss common topics with other associations and learn about NGWA's Partnership program. He would like us to develop a closer relationship with NGWA. As far as

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Water Systems Council, they are particularly good at keeping us up to date on legislation and regulation changes in New York state.

Hole Talk: The next deadline for *Hole Talk* is **February 1st**.

Public Information: **Sue Bates** asked everyone to check their listings. Also, join us on **Facebook** at **Empire State Water Well Drillers**.

DOT: No report at this time.

Continuing Education: Please remember that we have continuing education forms at our meetings and classes. Points for the voluntary accreditation must be submitted each year with your membership renewal.

Veterans Program: **Jim Utter** reported

that we completed three wells and one pump last year. The committee is reviewing the application, contracts, and guidelines for the program. Once all that is done, we will be promoting the program more. He thanked all who supported the auction last night which raised over \$10,000 for the program. The applicants we seem to get are from drillers walking into local VA offices and telling them about the program. We will continue working and moving forward with this program.

At this time President Root introduced **Krista Spohr NYS DEC Wetland Outreach Coordinator** who gave an incredibly detailed presentation. In summary, the NYS DEC were updated and took effect **January 1, 2025**. These updates clarify the jurisdictional

status of smaller wetlands of unusual importance and expand regulatory protections beyond the previously mapped wetlands. The amendments to the **Freshwater Wetlands Act** originally passed in 1975 include new definitions, revised classifications, and changes to the department's jurisdiction. These reforms aim to enhance the protection of critical wetlands resources in New York State. For a wetland to meet jurisdictional criteria for protection it must:

- Have an area of 12.4 acres (5 hectares) in size or greater. As of January 1, 2028, the threshold will decrease to 7.4 acres (3 hectares).
- Meet any of 11 Unusual Importance criteria.
- To ensure the functions and benefits of jurisdictional wetlands are preserved, the department

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regulates a 100-foot adjacent area to maintain protective buffers.

Most of the ownership of knowing if and/or where on a property there are wetlands is on the homeowner, developer, or builder. In most cases this will be determined by drilling the permitting process for construction. It is pre-existing homes where a new well is needed though this is something the homeowner is supposed to know. We can use the **DEC Environmental Resource Mapper** for information on wetlands. A well can be drilled within the wetlands buffer or adjacent area with a counter signature on the **General Permit GP-0-25-003**. No septic systems are allowed in the adjacent areas. Information on this permit and other details can be found on the **NYS DEC Freshwater Wetlands website**.

President Root introduced **Beth Guidetti** from **NYS DEC Water Well Program**. Ms. Guidetti talked on three major topics.

The **first topic** was well location verifications. Beth stated that in 2024 there were 4,481 completion reports submitted. Of those reports 81% of the locations could be verified; 6% had estimated locations; 7% did not have enough information to verify and 6% needed new RPS data. We must provide the well location via address and/or parcel ID. We should also be careful that we report all GPS locations in the correct format.

The **second topic** was an update on proposed regulation changes. Why do we need a new law? The priorities are to add geothermal drilling, revise the certification process and increase enforcement and consumer protections. Currently, open-loop geothermal boreholes require registration and certification for all depths. Though

closed loop geothermal are not covered and requires legislation to add registration and certification for depths less than 500 feet. DEC's Division of Mineral Resources will have requirements for open and closed loop greater than 500 feet. In the area of certification there is discussion regarding allowing other sources of testing with NGWA, adding an experience requirement, and adding continuing education. Regarding enforcement there has been an increase in fines and penalties to encourage compliance. There needs to be reporting of incidents along with evidence by other contractors and customers. Currently, there is a maximum civil penalty of \$1500 per violation with the base penalties ranging from \$500 to \$1250. Multipliers can be used to influence the penalty including culpability, cooperation, and history of noncompliance. The proposed changes would be to add advertising as a well contracting activity and a violation if the company is not registered. The penalty or fine of \$1500/\$1000 for each violation for each day the violation continues. The DEC can use Articles 71 for enforce where each violation is \$2500 per violation plus \$500 for each day the violation continues. Since 2014 there have been over 100 warnings issued from Environmental Conservation Officers (ECO), 40 notices of violations, 16 consent orders with penalties of \$2000 to \$30,000 per case, and additional tickets by ECOs. If you would like to report a drilling or pump violation you can call **1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)**.

The **third topic** Ms. Guidetti talked about was DEC permit requirements for geothermal drilling. Geothermal

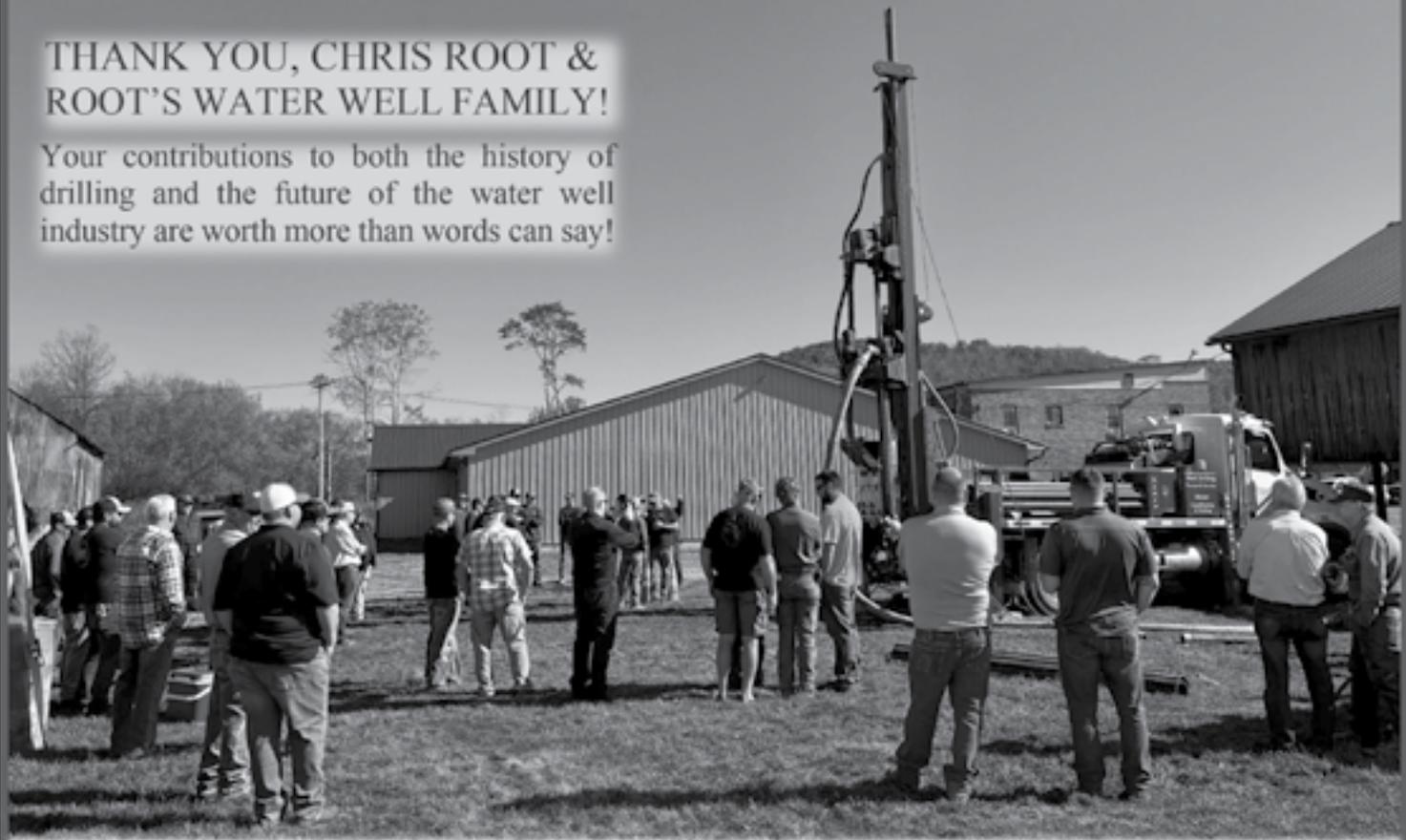
drilling is not automatically excluded from SPDES (state pollutant discharge elimination system) permitting. Currently, its regulations read (11) discharge of yield test, well test and cutting water from water well drilling operations provided such discharges are handled in accordance with best management practices and are for limited duration during well development only. Geothermal potential requirements will be impacted by water well contractor program, water withdrawal permits, construction stormwater, SPDES, Division of Mineral Resources, Division of Materials Management and Natural Resource Permits. Regarding the SPDES permitting, if no chemicals are added during the drilling process, then no SPDES permit is required otherwise a permit is required and the process varies depending on how to handle the contamination. If you do not expect to find any contaminants, you would not need a SPDES permit and would not need to sample. If you expect to find or encounter contaminants the list to test for is site specific and would be determined in consultation with the SPDES permit holder and/or DEC. For example, if you are next to a gas station, then you might test for VOCs, metals, and other items. Though if you are on a farm, then you would test for pesticides, fertilizer, etc. In a city you will likely need to sample, especially if discharging to a WWTP (wastewater treatment plant) or MS4 and the city would tell you what to sample. If you are unsure that you need a permit have a conversation with DEC. You can send an email briefly describing your project to the [regional DEC permitting office](#) and

(Minutes...continued on page 9)



THANK YOU, CHRIS ROOT &
ROOT'S WATER WELL FAMILY!

Your contributions to both the history of
drilling and the future of the water well
industry are worth more than words can say!



THE FUTURE OF DRILLING IS HERE

(Minutes...continued from page 7)

then can direct your inquiry to DEC divisions as appropriate. Each site has specific issues and requirements. The earlier you contact DEC the better. Representatives from each division will meet with you to determine if they will require a permit for your site or if they need more information. Contact information will be added to *Hole Talk*. After general questions and answers, we resumed our meeting.

Geothermal: **Kevin Moravec** gave a summary of tax credits and incentives for geothermal that still remain since the Federal tax credit for residential ends as of 1/1/2026. NYS Tax Credit is 25% up to \$10,000. The Clean Heat Utility Rebate can vary from utility to utility. They all adopted the flat rate. For example, NYSEG offers \$10,000 for a new construction home while offering \$17,000 for an existing home for a qualified Geothermal System. The commercial federal tax credit is still in place and up to 30%. Over 1 megawatt is the grading scale from 6% up to 30% but requires the use of a registered trade along with the prevailing wage aspect.

Past President: **Dave Rosick** stated that he thought Chris Root was doing a great job as well as the current board. He is very much in favor of the experience component of the proposed regulation changes.

Old business: **Frey Well Drilling** will host the spring meeting. The meeting will focus on well screen sizing, screen installation, and formation development. Expo of past and present drilling equipment will be onsite. Please attend and there will be a special gift for everyone and a chicken barbeque. The meeting will be held on **Friday, April 24, 2026**, at **Frey Well**

Hole Talk

Drilling located at 11565 Broadway Street in Alden, NY. All activities will take place onsite. ESWWDA has a block of rooms from Thursday, April 23 to Sunday, April 26 at the **Best Western Crown Inn & Suites** located at **8210 Park Road in Batavia, NY 14020**.

The **summer meeting** will be hosted by **Rick Tompkins** and **Dan Boyd** in the **Montgomery, NY area**. We are still waiting for more information regarding the **fall meeting** possibly in the **Warrensburg area**.

At this time, past president and parliamentarian **Tony Ferraioli** came forward to run the elections. Since **Michael Palleschi** was stepping down the Board had endorsed **Brian Frey** to be added to the Board. At this time **William Frey** would advance to the position of **second-year director** to replace Mr. Palleschi and Brian would then fill in as a third-year director. At this time Mr. Ferraioli placed the name of **Brian Frey** into nomination for **third year director**. Mr. Ferraioli asked if there were any nominations from the floor for this position. Tony again asks if there are any nominations from the floor for the positions. There being no nominations from the floor, Tony hereby instructs the executive secretary to cast one ballot for the position of third year director for Brian Frey. Mr. Ferraioli placed the name of **Charles Crover** into nomination for Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Ferraioli asked if there were any nominations from the floor for this position. Tony again asks if there are any nominations from the floor for the positions. There being no nominations from the floor, Tony hereby instructs the executive secretary to cast one ballot for the position of **Secretary/Treasurer** for Charles Crover. Mr.

Ferraioli placed the name of **Jeremy Baldwin** into nomination for **Vice President**. Mr. Ferraioli asked if there were any nominations from the floor for this position. Tony again asks if there are any nominations from the floor for the positions. There being no nominations from the floor, Tony hereby instructs the executive secretary to cast one ballot for the position of Vice President for Jeremy Baldwin. Mr. Ferraioli placed the name of **Chris Root** into nomination for **President**. Mr. Ferraioli asked if there were any nominations from the floor for this position. Tony again asks if there are any nominations from the floor for the positions. There being no nominations from the floor, Tony hereby instructs the executive secretary to cast one ballot for the position of President for Chris Root. At this time **President Root** thanked past president **Tony Ferraioli** and dismissed the nominating committee.

The winner of the onsite standard raffle which **Adrienne Boyd** was selling tickets for was drawn. The winner was **Dave Moravec**. The winners of the large fundraising raffle were the following: grand prize winner was **Maria Nursery**, the second prize winners were **Frey Well Drilling** and **Pamela Smith** from **AW Kincaid**, and the third prize winners were **Chad Moravec**, **Jamie Root**, **Frey Well Drilling**, **Dave Kauppinen** and **Adam Crawford**. President Root thanked everyone for buying and selling tickets.

With no other new business, **Ed Bates** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Dick Vedder** seconded that motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:
Julie Boyd 🗨️

2026 ESWWDA Committees

Scholarship

Chairperson Jim Utter 607-582-7436
 Kevin Moravec 315-536-3911
 Ricky Tompkins 845-629-8301
 Zack Barlett 315-331-6900

Education

Chairperson Henry Boyd 845-225-3196
 Jeremy Baldwin 518-885-7952
 Sandra Baldwin 518-396-9499
 Zack Bartlett 315-331-6900

Membership

Chairperson Sue Bates 315-339-9060
 William Frey 716-937-7977
 Chris Root 585-593-4309

Insurance/ Safety

Chairperson Analisa Jesco 888-869-3535
 William Frey 716-937-7977
 Chuck Crover 845-783-9355

Government Affairs

Chairperson Janice Hawk-Baldwin 518-885-7952
 Sandra Baldwin 518-885-7952
 Jeff Smith 518-758-6142
 All Board of Directors

NEWWA

Chairperson Henry Boyd 845-225-3196
 Julie Bullock 845-225-3196
 Alt. Dan Boyd 772-626-4515
 James Utter 607-351-1002

Liaisons to NGWA/WSC

Chairperson Mike Palleschi 518-348-6995
 Henry Boyd 845-225-3196
 Dave Keough 845-258-7867
 Zack Bartlett 315-331-6900
 Richard Moravec 315-536-3911

Budget & Finance

Chairperson Tyler Wills 518-758-6142
 Chuck Crover 845-783-9355
 Bernie Kistner 845-473-1969
 Analisa Jesco 888-869-3535

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 Dave Keough 845-258-7867
 Christopher Beatson 585-469-0069

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

February 2026

CATEGORY	TOTAL	PAID	UNPAID
Contractors	162	109	53
Suppliers	56	35	21
Associates	74	48	26
=====			
Total	292	192	100

*Members in arrears for 2+ years
 will be dropped from active membership*

**Payments may be made by mailing checks to:
 ESWWDA, 1054 Route 52, Carmel, NY 10512**

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Your membership gives you access to programs and services specifically formulated for the professional growth and success of water well drillers and pump installers.



The association provides:

- **Educational programs in:** water well drilling, pump installation, general management.
- **Informative newsletter:** *Hole Talk* covers local, state and national issues and news.
- **Annual Tuition Scholarships**
- **A united voice:** ESWWDA speaks for drillers on issues of far-reaching impact.
- **A voice:** A vote on the direction ESWWDA takes.

Join or renew your membership and keep this powerful alliance alive!

ESWWDA

Membership Application **Empire State Water Well Drillers' Association** • Organized 1941

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Pump Installer \$250	MGWC/CWD/CPI # _____
Supplier/Manufacturer \$250	NYS DEC Reg # _____
Associate Company Member\$50	Sponsor: _____
Retired Member\$50 <i>(Who were self-employed with no employees)</i>	

Dues are NOT Tax Deductible

Mail application to: **Susan Bates, 900 N James Street, Rome, NY 13440** (Checks payable to: **ESWWDA**)
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One Big Beautiful Bill: A Game-Changer for Water Well Drillers

2025 was a landmark year for drilling businesses. Thanks to the passage of the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)* in July 2025, companies investing in water well drilling rigs and other qualifying equipment can now unlock powerful new tax incentives—making it easier than ever to invest in the future.

100% Bonus Depreciation Is Back—Permanently

Under the OBBBA, full bonus depreciation has been restored. That means you can **deduct 100% of the cost of qualifying equipment**—including water well drilling rigs—in the **first year** it's placed in service.

Key Highlights:

- Applies to **both new and used** qualifying equipment.
- Equipment must be **acquired and placed in service after January 19, 2025**.
- Water well drilling rigs qualify as **20-year recovery period heavy machinery**.

Bottom line: Buy a rig in 2025, and you can deduct the full cost up front, no need to spread it out over years.



Section 179 Deduction: More Control, More Flexibility

In addition to bonus depreciation, the **Section 179 deduction** gives you even more options to manage your tax strategy.

For 2025:

- Deduction limit: **\$2.5 million**
- Phase-out begins at: **\$4 million** in total equipment purchases

Section 179 is ideal for:

- Smaller equipment purchases
- Businesses aiming to **optimize taxable income**
- Companies that want to **choose which assets to expense**

Why 2025 Is the Time to Invest

Purchasing a drilling rig is a major decision—but this year's tax changes make it a smart one. With the ability to fully expense your rig in year one, you can:

- **Improve cash flow**
- **Reduce taxable income**
- **Reinvest in your business faster**

Talk to your accountant or tax advisor to build the best strategy for your business. 

Want a chance to go to Mud School next year?

See Julie at a meeting, contact her at 845-225-3196, or email her at jewels2564@aol.com for a ticket.

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Win 1 of 2 chances to attend mud school in
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Drawing: October 2026 at the
General Membership Meeting

Tickets: \$30.00 each

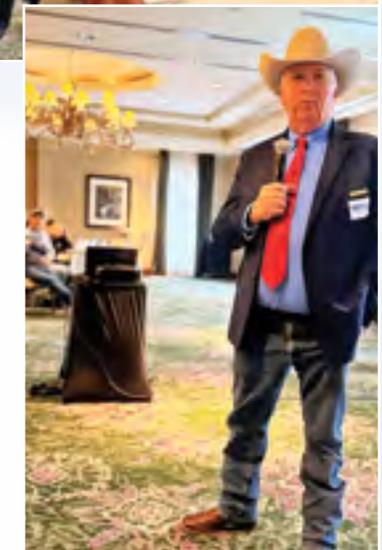
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for your Company's Safety Meeting

Learn From Near-Accidents

From NGWA Safety Facts Sheets

When you're driving down the highway at a pretty good clip and another car pulls out in front of you, it's necessary to hit the brakes or execute a quick maneuver to avoid an accident.

Chances are that you'll be pretty hot under the collar over the other driver's action, and you'll run your hand over your forehead to remove the perspiration.

But, if you're smart, you won't let anger overpower your safe driving habits, and you'll also make a mental note that you should be more alert and watch for cars approaching the highway from side roads. This could save your life next time.

Close calls or near-accidents on the job should be converted into safety precautions. A near-accident is an indication that something is wrong. It's a warning. A machine isn't operating correctly, materials aren't stacked properly or someone has done something that is unsafe.

When you're driving and you notice a red light glowing on the dashboard, you know that your engine is overheating or that there's another problem. Even a simple headache signals trouble in the human body, though it may be minor.

Now, let's consider some typical accidents that could have been avoided if the close call warning had been heeded.

A shop employee stumbled over a two-by-four and fractured an ankle. A janitor tripped over a loose floor tile and fell against a metal guardrail. After slipping on some trash and grabbing a metal file cabinet in an attempt to break the fall, the cabinet landed on the falling secretary. An injury resulted to a machine operator when a hi-lo struck the machine being operated.

It's pretty obvious that the proper handling of near-accidents could have prevented the real thing from happening in the cases just mentioned. The two-by-four in the aisle and loose tile or trash on the floor probably

caused other employees to step aside to avoid tripping or even caused them to stumble. And how many near-misses did the hi-lo operator have with the machine? Chances are there were several.

However, in all of these cases no one paid any attention to the warnings. Nothing was done to correct the situations and accidents resulted.

We can't go through life depending on luck to keep us healthy. We have to make our own luck, as the saying goes. We have to act in a safe manner and take proper precautions.

It's not hard to recall accidents that you've had. You may still have the pains or scars to remind you. If you get burned at an early age, you don't need a slap on the wrist to remind you to be cautious from that point on. But, as we've noted, a near-accident is often forgotten without any benefits resulting from the experience.

How can we turn a close call into a contribution to safety? There are several ways and maybe some of you are already using them. First, we have to think safety and become concerned over near-accidents.

The next step is to correct the situation or remove the hazard that caused the near-accident. If you can't handle it routinely, then report it to your supervisor. In fact, near-accidents should be reported regardless of the action to be taken. This gives your supervisor an opportunity to get a line on potential problems and to make plans for the overall security of his employees.

There's at least one good lesson to be learned from every near-accident, and in many cases, there may be two or three. So, don't discount the value of reporting close calls and correcting hazardous situations.

Safety awareness is always important. It's a case of preparing yourself mentally to act in a safe manner and to recognize a close call as a warning. So, when a stack of boxes tips over – or the handle on a tool snaps – or a ladder slips – you should get the message and do something about it. 



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Do you work underground?

Many inland marine (equipment) policies exclude property underground, which also excludes coverage for hammers, bits, tools and equipment lost down the hole.

The Water Well Drillers Insurance Program team understands the risks you face and can provide enhanced inland marine coverage including, but not limited to:

- Down the Hole Coverage
- Replacement Cost Coverage
- Rental Reimbursement
- Materials Coverage
- Full Glass Coverage
- Business Income Coverage for Key Equipment



Analisa M. Bastiani-Jesco

Area Director, Water Well Drillers Insurance Program
518.533.6841 Analisa_Jesco@ajg.com



Tracy E. Wronoski

Area Vice President
518.242.7550 Tracy_Wronoski@ajg.com

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THE ESWWDA HAS SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

1. Preference is given to children of association members.
2. Preference is given to those attending a minimum of a 2- year program.
3. Scholarships are only available to those whose course of study is in the water well field.
4. Applications are only made available after acceptance into an accredited school and program.
5. Funds may be distributed to more than one person in any calendar year.
6. Application deadline is April 1st of each year.

Information is available on the website www.nywelldriller.org, click on resources then go to Scholarship. We have 2 scholarship programs available, The **Albert H Mack Scholarship** and the **Daniel M. Shultes Scholarship**, which is a one time award.

To receive an application by mail, please email **Sue Bates** at gramsue67@gmail.com or call (315) 225-3060 and the applications will be mailed to you. 



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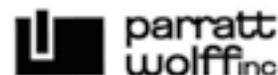
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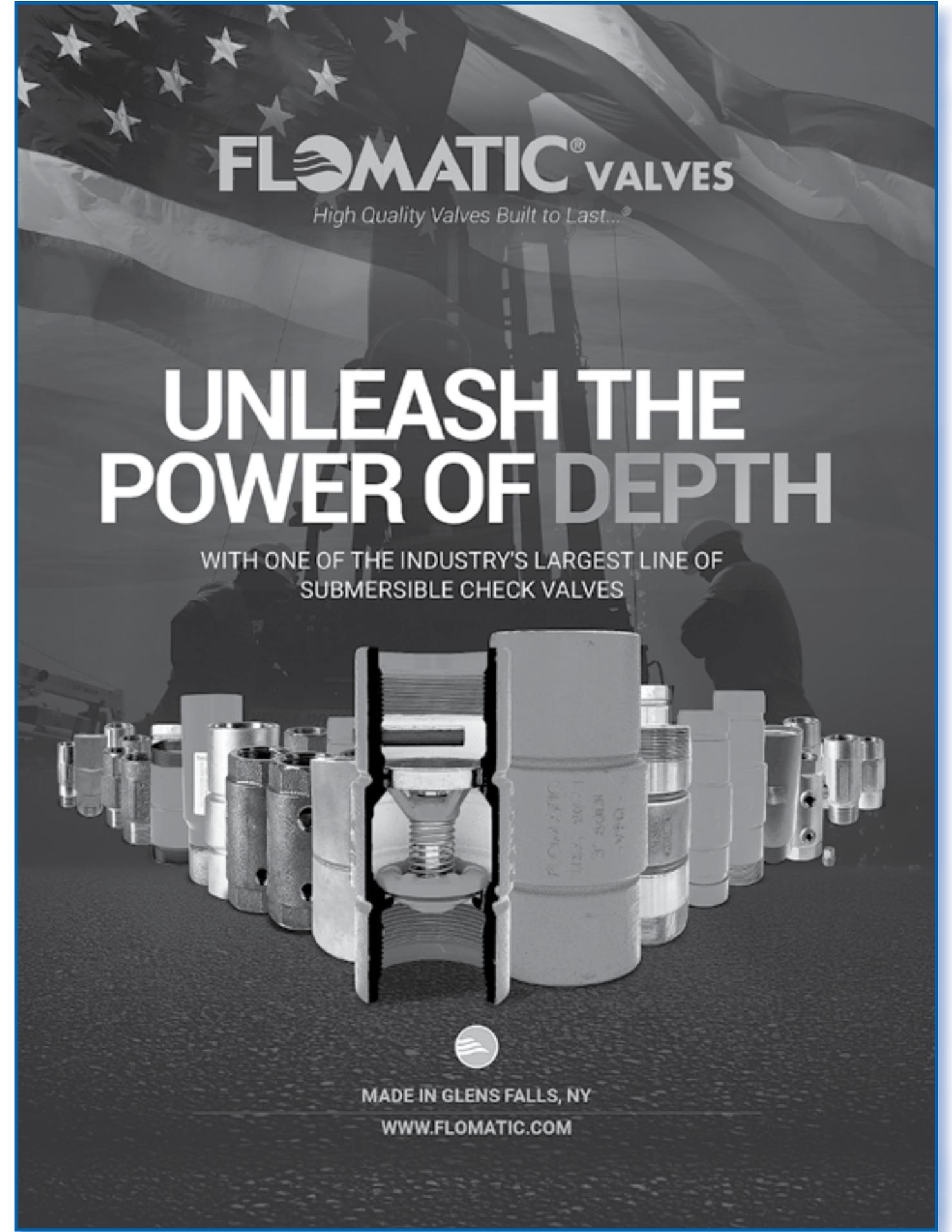
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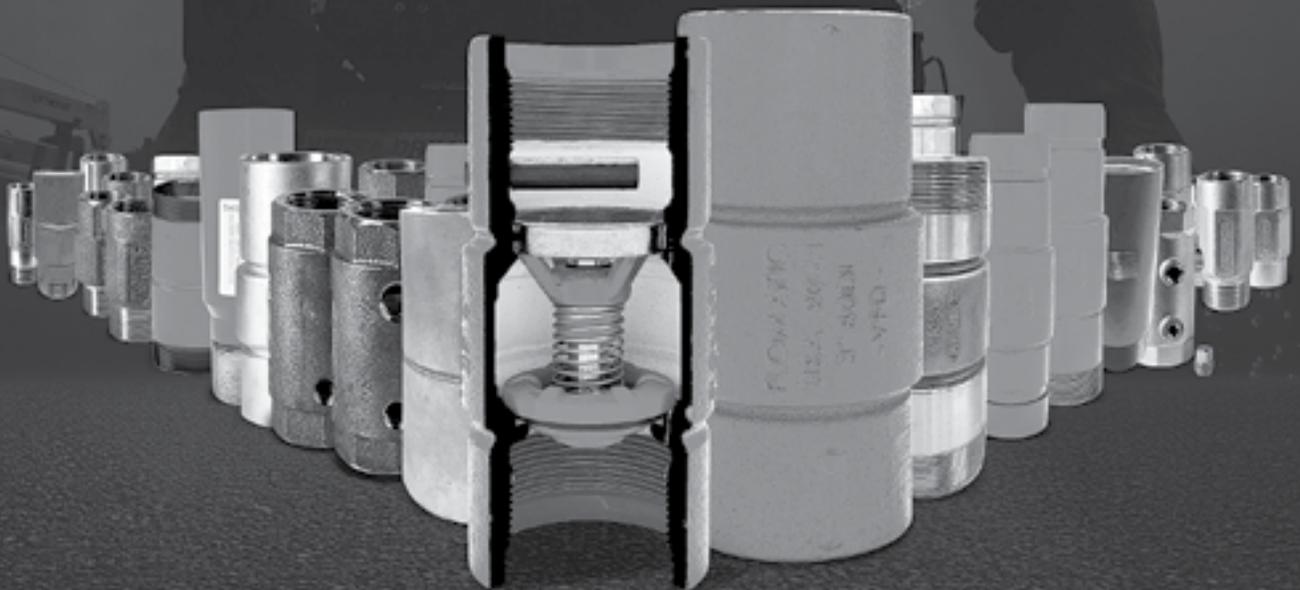


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New England Water Well 2026 EXPO

Schedule of Events at the Expo

Tickets to attend the Expo are just \$25 per person (before 3/1) and \$30 at the door for both days. Seminars are free to attend. No need to pre-register or sign-up for the seminars. All seminars will take place in the hotel. There will also be on-site registration on Friday at the hotel next to the meeting rooms where the workshops are being held. If you pre-register, all name badges will be held at the expo and you can pick them up on Friday at the hotel during the day. Friday night in the expo hall from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. or Saturday morning in the expo hall at 8:00 a.m. when it opens.

Friday, March 13

Educational Workshops (at hotel):

- 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. *“2026 State of the U.S. Water Well Industry Report”*, Margaret Martens, WSC (**Salon A**)
- 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. *“Navigating Fleet Safety: Strategies for Success”*, Matthew Keith, Water Well Drillers Insurance Program (**Seminar Room**)
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *“Drill-Proof Your Wealth: Lawsuit Shields & Tax Hacks for Water Well Pros”*, Larry Oxenham, American Society for Asset Protection (**Seminar Room**)
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *“Making the Most of Your Camera in Dirty Water”*, Ray, Well-Vu (**Salon A**)
- 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. *“Multiple Wells Control Panels using VFDs”*, Chris Arbouw, Phase Technologies (**Seminar Room**)
- 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. *“Down Hole Video”*, *“Are you Getting Paid Enough & Giving Customer Enough Info to Justify it?”*, Ray, Well-Vu (**Salon A**)
- 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. *“SQ’s and SQE’s and our New 302 Controller”*, Bill Schlotter, Grundfos (**Seminar Room**)
- 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. *“Features and Benefits of the VersaBoost Pro, Constant Pressure Booster Pump”*, Ryan Horner, Franklin Electric (**Salon A**)
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. *“Enduring Capacity: Rewriting the Rehab Rules for the Long-Term”*, Jim Bruneio, Airburst Technology (**Seminar Room**)
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. *“PFAS/PFOS in Drinking Water”*, Conor Driscoll, Walter Morris (**Salon A**)

Exhibit Hall (Trade Center):

- 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Expo at the **Exhibit Hall**

Saturday, March 14

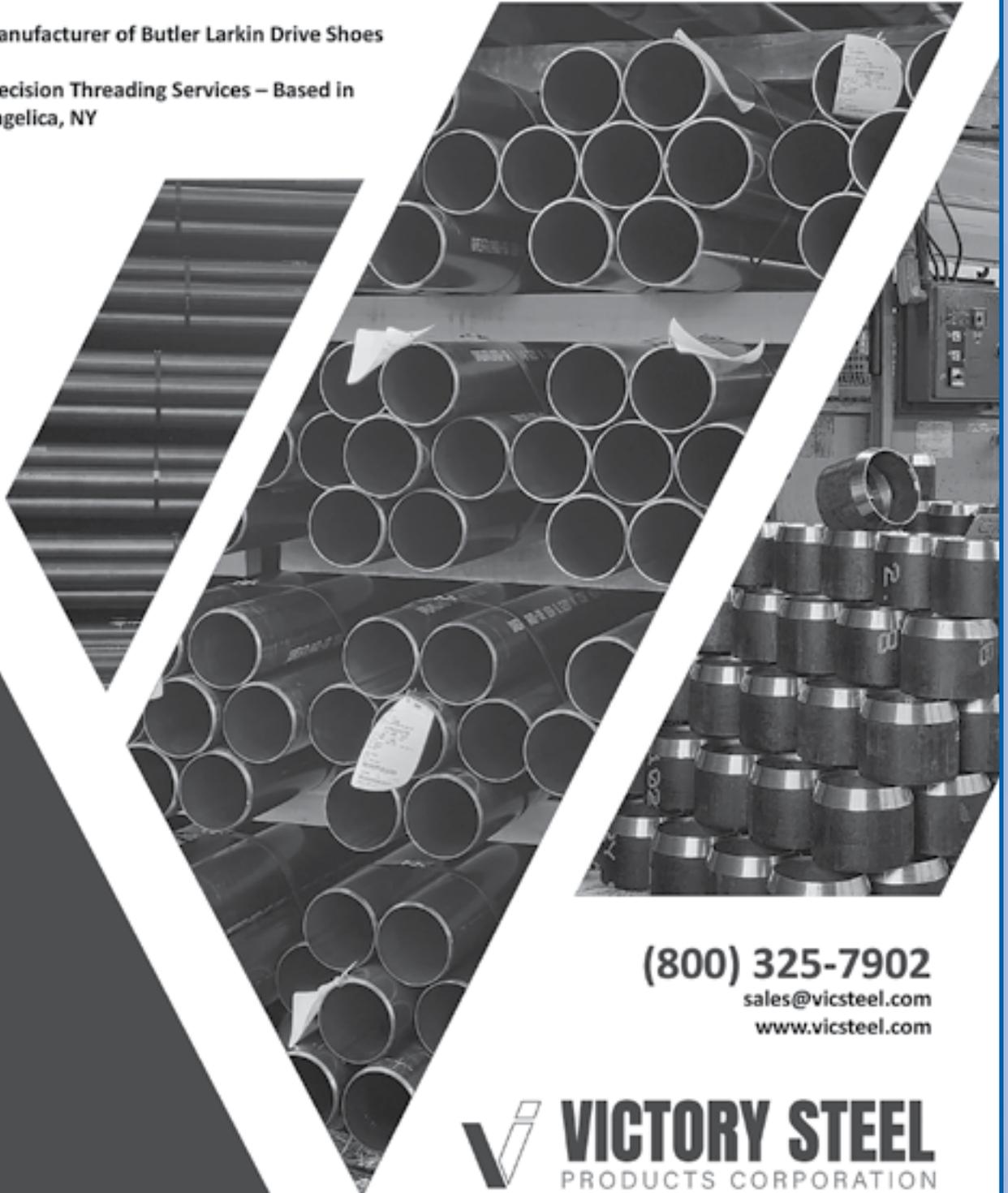
- 8:00 a.m. **Exhibit Hall Opens (Trade Center)**, *Coffee & Breakfast Courtesy of D&S*

Educational Workshops (at hotel):

- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. *“Water System Electrical Basics and Tips”*, Tom Stephen, Gould’s (**Seminar Room**)
- 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. *“Strange Taste and Odors in Your Water?”* Deep Dive behind these Issues, Peter Melle, AO Smith (**Seminar Room**)
- 12:00 p.m. **Exhibition Hall Closes (Trade Center)** 🗨️

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Condolence Corner



Robert W. Reichart, our beloved father, grandfather and great grandfather, 83, of Spring Grove, passed away peacefully on **Monday, September 15, 2025** at his home.

Born on Saturday, June 20, 1942 in Hanover, he was the son of the late **William W. and Dorothy O. (Reaver) Reichart**. He was also preceded in death by his wife of nearly 60 years, **Vonnie J. (Woodward) Reichart**, who died in 2020; and a sister, **Jane Poole**.

A 1960 graduate of **Eichelberger High School**, he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and Mathematics from **Shippensburg University** in 1964 and later received a Master's Equivalency degree from **Bowling Green State University**. Robert taught at **Susquehannock High School** from 1964 to 1976

before becoming a partner with his father at **Reichart Well Drilling** until his retirement in 2008. Robert was a member of **Trinity United Church of Christ**, the **Pennsylvania Ground Water Association**, where he served as President from 1994-1996 and as Executive Director from 2010-2019, and the **National Ground Water Association**, serving as its President in 2000. He took great pleasure in hunting, and enjoyed watching sports, traveling (especially to Germany to drink a good beer!), challenging his forever curious mind, cooking, going to the casino and completing puzzles. His greatest pride and joy was his family and he loved spending time with them.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the **Pennsylvania Ground Water Association Scholarship Fund** by contacting PGWA at 814-553-3883 or at pgwadirector@gmail.com

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Thank you for your support of the ground water industry and ESWWDA!

"Support the Suppliers Who Support You"

Any ESWWDA member wishing to voice their concern with the contamination of ground water by injection wells should contact:

Ms. Nicole Kraft, EPA Section Chief at (212) 637-3093 or NicoleKraft@EPA.com. 

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General permitting questions:

Bureau of Energy Project Management, Division of Environmental Permits
DEPEnergy@dec.ny.gov

SPDES permitting questions:

Bureau of Water Permits, Division of Water
SPDESGeothermal@dec.ny.gov

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See DEC's website for the ECO roster in the county where the violation occurs

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Scholarship Money Available

As we approach the beginning of another school year, college-bound students and their families are searching for available funds to help offset the cost of further education. The ESWWDA offers a scholarship to applicants whose course of study is **related to the water well industry**. Preference is given to family members of association members and secondly to those attending 2-year programs at an accredited school.

Further information is available by contacting the **Scholarship Committee Chairperson, Jim Utter**.

Albert H. Mack Scholarship Guidelines

Guidelines for the establishment of the scholarship fund and awarding of scholarship monies for ESWWDA:

A. Scholarship Fund

1. Maximum funds available in one calendar year: \$2,500.
2. One thousand dollars per year to be set aside until the fund reaches \$7,500.

B. Awarding of Scholarships

1. Preference to be given to sons or daughters of association members.
2. Preference to be given to students attending 2-year programs.

3. Scholarships available only to persons whose course of study is related to the water well industry.
4. Persons may make application to the scholarship committee only after acceptance at an accredited school, offering a program related to the water well industry.
5. Funds may be distributed to more than one person in any one calendar year.
6. Scholarship funds are released upon acknowledgment of grades.

Daniel M. Shultes Scholarship Fund Guidelines

This scholarship is a one-time award to children of Contractor members in good standing who are attending college in a field of study outside the industry or areas not covered by the Al Mack Scholarship.

Awarding of Scholarships

- Preference to be given to children of Full Contractor members
- Preference to be given to students attending minimum of a 2-year program
- Persons may make applications to the scholarship committee only after acceptance at an accredited school.
- Funds may be distributed to more than one person in any one calendar year.
- Application deadline is April 1st of each year.

- Applicants are selected via a blind selection process.
- The number of scholarships and the amount of the scholarship are at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee and cannot exceed a total of \$1000 per calendar year.
- Scholarship funds are released upon acknowledgment of grades.

For more information contact the scholarship committee or go on our website at **www.nywelldriller.org**

ESWWDA Hole Talk Ad Rates (per year - 4 issues)

Business Card ... \$200

1/4 Page ... \$500

1/2 Page ... \$1000

Full Page ... \$1,500

Please call Susan Bates at (315) 225-3060 if you have any questions, or email your advertisement to: **gramsue67@gmail.com**



Affiliate Organization
member of NGWA

The membership of the
ESWWDA consists of
contractors involved
in the water supply industry
including but not limited to:

- Drilling Contractors
- Water System Installers
- Manufacturers and Suppliers
- Engineers & Hydrogeologists
- Contractor Associates
- Student Associates

Send us your events!

To place an item in this calendar,
or to submit an article
or advertisement, please email
Jewels2564@aol.com
or **Gramsue67@gmail.com**
no later than **May 1, 2026**,
the next **Hole Talk** deadline.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEWWA Expo

Dates: **March 13-14, 2026**
Location: **Marlborough, MA**
For details: www.newwassociation.org

2026 NGWA Fly-In

Dates: **March 24 -25, 2026**
Location: **Courtyard by Marriott**
Washington Capitol Hill/Navy Yard
For details: www.ngwa.org

2026 WSC Members' Meeting and Congressional Fly-In *(Registration Coming Soon)*

Dates: **March 24-26, 2026**
Location: **Phoenix Park Hotel**,
Washington, D.C.
For details: www.watersystemscouncil.org

ESWWDA Spring Meeting

Dates: **April 23-24, 2026**
Location: **Frey Well Drilling**

*Thursday evening, 5 p.m. Board meeting
at the Alabama Hotel in Basom, NY

*Friday morning, 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at Frey
Drilling, Alden, NY followed by speakers,

local vendors and a chicken BBQ lunch.
Drilling activities will begin at 1 p.m. and will
continue through 5 p.m. At 6:30, dinner and the
general membership meeting at Ripa's Italian
Restaurant in Lancaster, NY.

*Further details are available in this issue
of *Hole Talk*, on our FaceBook page as well
as on the website www.nywelldriller.org.

ESWWDA Summer Meeting

TBD - **July 2026**
Hosted by **Reliable Well Drilling**
& **DNA Water Well Maintenance**

2026 WSC Members' Meeting and WWT Fundraiser

Dates: **October 13-15, 2026**
Location: **La Cantera Resort**, San Antonio, TX
For details: www.watersystemscouncil.org

ESWWDA Fall Meeting

TBD - **October 2026**

Visit www.nywelldriller.org