

I can't believe that it is already time for my first presidential message. I guess time flies when you are having fun. We had a fantastic council last year, and I would like to thank Tom and the rest of the council members for a wonderful year. I hope that our council this year can build on their momentum.

I first would like to thank the membership for giving me this wonderful opportunity to have an impact in the soil science profession by serving as your president. We have a lot of wonderful opportunities sitting in our laps and I look forward to making these opportunities become a reality for our profession.

We currently have several different irons in the fire that we need to tend to; the first and foremost is obviously the new sewage rules. I hope everyone is doing their part to build a strong name for certified soil scientist and specifically certified soil scientist of AOP. We always hear how there aren't enough of us to meet the demand, but yet I talk to consultants across the state who would love more work. How is it that we can't meet the demand, yet several of our consultants need more work? Just because you may be swamped with business doesn't mean that others are as well. We have to put our best foot forward, and see to it that we do everything we can to meet this demand. If you feel like you can't handle the work, contact another consultant and find a way to make it happen. In order for us to meet the demand we have to **work together**, and see to it that the work gets done.

As you have probably heard by now, the new rules are being challenged with two new "emergency" bills to completely rescind the law. The first bill is Senate Bill 83, which is being sponsored by Senator Timothy Grendell of the 18<sup>th</sup> district. From my understanding, this

bill would rescind the rules, reinstating the 1977 rules until January of 2008 at which time the current rules would be effective again. Cosponsors of this bill are Joy Padgett of the 20<sup>th</sup> district, Capri Cafaro of the 32<sup>nd</sup> district, Larry Mumper of the 26<sup>th</sup> district, and Tim Shaffer of the 31<sup>st</sup> district. You can read about SB 83 at [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127\\_SB\\_0083](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127_SB_0083)

The other bill is House Bill 110, and it seems to be a little more severe than SB 83. I don't think that Steve will give me the space to type on about this bill, but as I understand the bill, it pretty well waxes everything that was put into the new sewage rules. This bill is being sponsored by George Distel (99), Sandra Harwood (65), Dan Dodd (91), Tom Letson (64), Lorraine Fende (62), Kenny Yuko (07), Lynn Wachtmann (75), Diana Fessler (79), Brian Williams (41), and Eugene Miller (10). Please read more about this bill at [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127\\_HB\\_110](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=127_HB_110), but to summarize, I think it says that citizens of Ohio would rather drink their own waste, than pay more for a system.

Soil Scientist are one of the perceived problems being mentioned as justification for these new bills. We are apparently charging \$3,000 dollars per lot (don't we all wish), and the obvious "there aren't enough of us". The realtors are making these false accusations, and they obviously aren't true. Please make every effort to contact your local Representatives and Senators and explain to them the truth about soil scientist, and the rules.

Another Iron that we have in the fire is the State Based Certification Program through ARPACS. We received the draft MOU from the Soil Science Society of America and I am happy to say that the

**Inside this issue:**

Association News 2  
Point of View 3  
Cert. Program Vote 4  
ARCPAC MOU

**2007 Directory of Officers**

- Matt Deaton, President**
- Aaron Lantz, President-elect**
- Tom Zimmerman, Past President**
- Dan Benyei, Secretary**
- Jim Svoboda, Treasurer**
- Steve Miller, Newsletter editor**
- Neil Smeck, Academic Rep.**
- Don Burgess, Federal Rep.**
- Todd Houser, Private Rep.**
- Rick Buzard, State Rep.**

Cont. on page 2

Todd Houser made a motion for the AOP Executive Council to endorse the draft MOU for the Ohio CPSS/Certifying Board Pilot Test by the Soil Science Society of America, with the following conditions:

- 1.) No new applications for Certified Soil Scientist (CSS) are to be entertained by AOP,
- 2.) AOP will continue to recognize Certified Soil Scientists until all current AOP Certified Soil Scientists have discontinued their certification, and
- 3.) AOP will establish and use a "CEU Review Board" to review CEUs for AOP Certified Soil Scientists, as long as the Certified Soil Scientist designation exists.

Rick Buzard seconded the motion, all the rest were in favor, and the motion passed.

**Certification Update**

**Certification Vote**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Check one

Vote to accept motion \_\_\_\_\_

Vote to reject motion \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your response to:

Jim Svoboda, AOP Treasurer  
520 West Main Street, Suite 3  
Cortland, Ohio 44410

Must be submitted by May 4, 2007  
Thanks for you participation!

**Ohio Pedologist**  
The Ohio State University  
School of Natural Resources



Barrett, Linda  
Dept. of Geography & Planning, Univ. of Akron  
Akron, OH 44325

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

Cont. from page 1

Executive Council unanimously endorsed the MOU with a couple of conditions in place. In this newsletter, we will be asking for a vote on the MOU with the applied conditions, and I hope that you will all support the approval of this MOU and conditions attached to it. The main condition to the MOU is that we currently keep our AOP Certification Program intact while we work out all of the bugs with SSSA. The fact of the matter is that the state based certification program is still a pilot program, and we want to make sure that before we disband our current program, if we ever decide to do that, we have a better solution in place. So in the mean time, the vote that we are asking for is that we accept the MOU, and start working with SSSA in this state based certification program, while in the mean time we keep intact our current program.

We need to move forward in this initiative, and to do that we need to approve the MOU. If you have any questions, or concerns about the MOU, please call me and let me know so I can potentially work out any questions or concerns prior to us failing the passing of the MOU. It is highly unproductive to vote something down, if you don't first give the leadership team an opportunity to remedy a perceived problem. ARPACS has chosen us as one of their leaders in this initiative, and I want to make sure that we don't let them down. Again, please call me, or any of the other Executive Council members with any questions, and give us the opportunity to help fix any perceived issues. My number is (937)-456-9559.

Well I have probably rambled on enough and I am sure that Steve is probably ready to beat me with his bucket auger so I will bring this to a close. It is just that we have so many important issues currently in the works for AOP that I could go on forever. Happy field season to all and to all a good night. God Bless.

*Matthew Deaton*

AOP President

## State Licensing Fund

A fund to help establish a state licensed soil science program has been established. As many of you are aware this could cost approximately \$20,000. Remember donations are welcomed anytime and are always tax deductible. Send donations to:

Jim Svoboda, AOP Treasurer  
520 West Main Street, Suite 3  
Cortland, Ohio 44410

## EVENTS

### September 28th & 29th— AOP's Fall Workshop

Fall 2007—Indiana soils workshop

Summer and Fall 2007—PA Association of Professional Soil Scientists Technical Sessions.

### Fall Workshop and meeting September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

The event will be held in Stark County in NE Ohio. During the first day much time will be spent in a gravel pit or two on outwash terraces in the Tuscarawas River valley. This will allow for exposed faces large enough for each person to perform thorough investigations. We will also have group discussions while viewing the face. The second day will consist of an AOP meeting and more. Emails will be sent to all members as soon as more details about the event are finalized.



Tom Zimmerman, Luther Smith, & Matt Deaton



Tom Zimmerman presents Neil Smeck an Honorary Membership plaque.

## Points of View

Submitted by Kathryn Sasowsky

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to your submission: Determining Reasonable Costs from the Ohio Pedologist, Vol. 33 No.1 of Spring 2006. My response may be delayed, but I hope it is "better late, than never"? I was happy to see you address this issue in the AOP newsletter.

The rate structure you suggested still substantially under values the benefit that we provide clients, as well as being out of line with fees charged by other professionals. There is, however, a different approach to pricing professional soils work. Rather than basing price on what a person needs in order to make a living, pricing can be based on the "going rate".

Let me explain... when I started consulting on my own 20 years ago in Pennsylvania I had a new master's degree and 1 and 1/2 years of experience in the working world. I had been referred the job from my boss (and former soils professor), so I asked him how much I should charge. He said \$300/day would be a fair rate (at an 8-hour day this is \$37.50/hour). The rate he suggested 20 years ago is \$10/hour higher than you were suggesting in your article (Vol. 33 No. 1)! In consulting you never know when that next call will come in, so it is different than a salaried job. You are paying about 40% of earnings out in self-employment taxes. You have expenses for insurance, vehicle-use, phones, computers, etc.

Environmental consultants (geologists, hydrologists, etc, in which we should be included as Soils Professionals) in the Akron-Cleveland area charge \$50/hour for someone with a bachelor's degree and \$75/hour for someone with a master's degree. I believe that if we, as soils professionals, want to be respected for what we know, then our fees should reflect the value of our training and services. Unfortunately, in our society, the amount someone charges for services is correlated with how much respect we give (hence the big bucks for physicians).

How does this compare to hourly rates charged by other service providers? A technician came to service my garage door at a rate of \$56/hour. I don't know much about fixing automatic garage doors, but I know a lot more about soils than he could possibly know about garage doors. My plumber came to fix a leaking pipe at a rate of \$65/hour. My car mechanic charges \$95/hour. Plumbers and car mechanics probably have about two years of technical training. I have 4 years of undergraduate training and "2 years" of graduate school training. C.P.A.'s and lawyers charge \$150/hour or more and I figure I have about the March 29, 2007 equivalent training that they have. Then, we could go to the physicians' hourly rates: my general practitioner charges me about \$62 for a 15 minute visit or \$248/hour, a specialist \$79 for 15 minutes (\$316/hour), and my dentist charges \$50 for a 5-10 minute visit (\$300-600/hour).

We provide value to our clients through information that will help them have working septic systems, drier basements, more stable foundations, etc. This can help them avoid future costs with repairs and replacements. We provide value to society by helping to prevent surface and ground water pollution; for the client this may be their well water, and could impact their health as well.

As soil scientists we hold knowledge that few other environmental consultants have; it is time we start respecting ourselves. AOP has been struggling to achieve professional certification of soil scientists and

state licensure. Could these two issues be related? We are not technicians; we are professionals. Many of us have extensive experience. We have an integrated knowledge of geology, hydrology, and biology. We understand how people and landscapes interact, and can offer that expertise to others.

In Ohio, much soil advice has been given over the years for free because many of us serve as government employees (federal, state, and county). This has made it difficult to establish a market for soils consulting in Ohio. In states where environmental laws have respected and required soils input for decades, there is a recognized acceptance of consultants. Now, in Ohio the "times they are a-changing", as the song goes, and we finally have new septic system laws that respect the soil conditions. Will we continue to view ourselves as technicians and charge unreasonably low fees, or will we ask that the public and our clients value our unique contributions and compensate us in a way that reflects this worth?

**Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!! From Aaron, AOP's new President Elect.**

I am truly honored to be able to serve AOP as we go through many changes and as we become an even more professional and credible organization. I feel fortunate that I will be serving AOP during the pivotal next several years. I feel confident soil scientists and AOP will both be held in higher regard as the current executive council and certification board builds on what their predecessors laid before them. It is exciting that we have many members that are passionate about AOP and it's credibility (I stress credibility). As we become more and more recognized as the experts of the natural filter, foundation and seedbed of Ohio, reference to AOP soil scientists will continue to be added to legislation. We need to remind those outside our organization that AOP will increase water quality throughout Ohio and will protect Ohio's property owners from unnecessary expenses. I am looking forward to working as a team with all of AOP. Feel free to contact me any time if you have any suggestions or concerns, because it will take everyone's input to make AOP the organization we want. [aaron.lantz@gmail.com](mailto:aaron.lantz@gmail.com)