

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?

In Kansas there are several agencies and local entities that work very closely with the state's water resources. It is important to understand the duties and responsibilities of each.

**DWR (Division of Water Resources)**-The Division of Water Resources is a regulatory branch of the Kansas Department of Agriculture. They administer 30 laws and responsibilities including the Kansas Water Appropriation Act which governs how water is allocated and used; statutes regulating the construction of dams, levees and other changes to streams; the state's four interstate river compacts; as well as coordinating the national flood insurance program in Kansas. Of the four statewide field offices, most interaction associated with Northwest Kansas takes place through the field office in Stockton. Here you will find a very knowledgeable staff, administering duties such as the following; Administration of available water supplies, responding to public inquiries, processing certain water right changes, conducting field inspections and investigations, investigating water related complaints, and determining water right compliance. For more information regarding DWR's role in working with Kansas' water resources contact the Stockton field office at (785) 425-6787.

**KWO (The Kansas Water Office)**- The KWO established in 1981 is the state's policy development and planning agency providing research and staff support to the Governor and the Legislature on water resource issues. Their mission is to achieve proactive solutions for resource issues of the state and to ensure good quality water to meet the needs of the people and environment of Kansas. The KWO also develops and implements the *Kansas Water Plan*, the purpose of which is to accomplish coordinated management, conservation and development of the water resources of the state. The Water Plan is then presented to the Kansas Water Authority or KWA. The KWA consists of 13 voting members who are appointed by the Governor or Legislative leadership. The KWA is responsible for advising the Governor, Legislature and Director of the Kansas Water Office on water policy issues and for approving the *Kansas Water Plan*, federal contracts, administration regulations and legislation proposed by the Kansas Water Office. For information regarding these agencies please contact the KWO office in Topeka at (785) 296-3185.

**GMD4 (Groundwater Management District No. 4)**- The Groundwater Management District is located in Colby, KS and is involved only within the 3.11 Million acres that make up the district. Founded on March 1, 1976 the GMD is responsible for serving water users and irrigators in all of or parts of Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties. A locally elected board of 11 landowners and/or water users is in charge of district activity, and each board member represents all land owners and water users within the county borders of the position they hold. The Groundwater Management District is a local tax supported entity. GMD4 works closely with all state agencies in order to represent and assist the landowners of Northwest Kansas. Within the state of Kansas, there are a total of five Groundwater Management Districts with offices in Scott City (GMD1), Halstead (GMD2), Garden City (GMD3), Colby (GMD4) and Stafford (GMD5). The purpose of the district is the proper conservation and management of the groundwater resources. It is also to provide local land owners and water users with the ability to be directly involved in the process by establishing their own regulations regarding the resource. Moreover, all necessary research and education are to be conducted under local direction. Lastly, GMD4 is to successfully communicate with other local, state and federal agencies. For further information please contact the GMD4 office in Colby, at (785) 462-3915.

## GMD4'S 39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING-FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>

The Groundwater Management District No. 4 will be holding its 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 1:30 P.M. MST at the Wolak Community Center at 1006 Center St. in Goodland, KS. The agenda topics to date include 1.) The approval of 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting minutes 2.) The 2013 financial audit 3.) 2015 proposed operating budget 4.) The election of 3 board positions (Cheyenne, Sherman/Wallace and Thomas counties). If you would like any additional information regarding this meeting please feel free to contact the GMD4 office at (785) 462-3915 or visit the website at [www.gmd4.org](http://www.gmd4.org). This meeting is open to the general public.

## A SLOW TRANSITION TO ONLINE?

The Groundwater Management Districts of Kansas are currently participating in a trial session with the Kansas Geological Survey, the Division of Water Resources and Department of Agriculture in order to begin looking at an online version of the required water use report cards that are submitted annually before the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. The online version would allow water users to fill out their water use report cards via computer versus the traditional hard copy version. At this time the online water use report cards are not available to the general public, but if you are interested in testing a trial version of the card please contact the GMD4 office in Colby. GMD4 staff will keep the district's water users informed as to the continued development of this study.

## KWO VISITS COLBY AND GOODLAND

The Kansas Water Office held informational meetings on January 9<sup>th</sup> in Colby and January 10<sup>th</sup> in Goodland. These public meetings were held in order to discuss the Governor's 50 Year Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas. In these informal meetings, community members were given the opportunity to share their personal recommendations, which are to be taken into consideration as the KWO moves forward in drafting the vision plan which will then be submitted to the Governor's office this coming winter 2014 for review. GMD4 staff will keep you updated as this process is continued. For more information regarding the 50 Year Vision and its formation please contact the KWO at [www.kwo.org](http://www.kwo.org).

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- 1) **Re-drilling a non-domestic well? Make sure you have a permit!**
- 2) Meters are getting more and more important - keep them up;
- 3) Remember your water right terms & conditions & honor them;
- 4) GMD4 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting February 19<sup>th</sup> 2014, Goodland KS;
- 5) Need a speaker on groundwater? Contact the GMD4 office
- 6) Next Board Meeting – January 22, 2014

Northwest Kansas Groundwater  
Management District No. 4  
PO Box 905  
1290 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Colby, KS 67701-0905

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## RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY-USDA

RMA Representative Shawn Beach will be holding an informational meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> in Hoxie in order to discuss the Limited Irrigated Crop Insurance that is available for **SD-6 LEMA** participants:

### RMA LIMITED IRRIGATED CROP INSURANCE MEETING

JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2014 AT 5PM (CST)

FIRST STATE BANK BUILDING, HOXIE KS

The following information has been provided by RMA in order to detail the available Limited Irrigated Crop Insurance:

With the creation of the Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA), the Topeka Regional Office of the Risk Management Agency (RMA) has worked in conjunction with the Kansas Water Office and the Kansas Division of Water Resources to develop a crop insurance limited irrigation written agreement option. This article will explain the general requirements for reporting an irrigated practice under the crop insurance program and how the limited irrigation written agreement works.

The current policy definition of an irrigated practice is: "A method of producing a crop by which water is artificially applied during the growing season by appropriate systems and at the proper times, with the intention of providing the quantity of water needed to produce at least the yield used to establish the irrigated production guarantee or amount of insurance on the irrigated acreage planted to the insured crop." As you can see, the policy definition sets the standard for the irrigated practice. The quantity of water available for the current crop year must be enough to produce the irrigated APH yield.

The policy also goes on to state what the reporting requirements for an irrigated practice are. Section 9(b) of the Common Crop Insurance Policy states: "You must report as irrigated only that acreage for which you have adequate facilities and adequate water, or the reasonable expectation of receiving adequate water at the time coverage begins, to carry out a good irrigation practice. If you knew or had reason to know that your water may be reduced before coverage begins, no reasonable expectation exists." In terms of the irrigation allocations in the LEMA, this means you can only report as an irrigated practice those acres you have adequate irrigation water to produce your current irrigated APH yield.

What options does that leave a producer under the current policy provisions if you are under the irrigation allocations required by the LEMA? The first option would be to plant fewer irrigated acres and report the rest of the planted acres as non-irrigated. Option 2 would be to continue to plant all your acres with limited water and insure them under a non-irrigated practice.

What would happen if you didn't follow one of those options and planted and reported all of your acreage as irrigated, even though you no longer were applying the amount of irrigation water it would take to produce your established APH yield? This is where things could get ugly! During loss adjustment, the number of insured acres reported under the irrigated practice would be reduced to the number that could be adequately irrigated. The highest yielding acres in the field would be the ones designated as irrigated. Then any appraised reduction caused by applying the available water across the entire acreage would be assessed against the irrigated acreage as an uninsurable cause of loss. The rest of the acres that had originally been reported as irrigated would be revised to non-irrigated with a corresponding non-irrigated premium rate and non-irrigated guarantee assigned to these acres. If you had already reported some other non-irrigated acres in this unit, things really go from bad to worse. The loss liability for the unit will be held to the liability reported by reducing the production guarantee on the unit by the liability adjustment factor.

For the 2013 crop year RMA developed a special provisions statement for Thomas and Sheridan Counties for corn and soybean production. This special provisions statement authorizes limited irrigation written agreements for the Sheridan County 6 High Priority area. These agreements are between the producer and RMA and are used to insure all the irrigated acres when the new water allocation restricts the amount of irrigation water to something less than was historically applied. The written agreement supplies the producer with a yield by which their limited irrigated acres can be insured.

The estimated reduction in APH yield is based on a comparison of the anticipated amount of water to be applied for the current crop year to the historical average amount of water used to produce the irrigated APH yield.

For example, let's assume the average historical water use over the last 10 years used to produce an APH yield of 190 Bushels was 18 acre-inches. The producer is going to apply 11 acre-inches of water for crop year 2014. This results in a reduction of 7 acre-inches in applied water for 2014. Using the production functions supplied by the University Irrigation Specialists, this translates into a 28 bushel reduction in APH yield. The limited Irrigation APH yield for 2014 would be 162 Bushels. This yield would be supplied to the producer as a limited irrigation T-Yield via the written agreement.

The T-Yield will then be used to set up a separate database for the limited irrigation practice. Actual production for the limited irrigation practice will be used to replace the T-Yield until the producer has at least four years of limited irrigation production and then that unit will be insured based on the actual production history. In other words, it will work much like regular APH does right now. The nice thing about this is that the fully irrigated APH database and the limited irrigation APH database are kept totally separate. That way, if rotations and growing conditions allow the producer, sometime down the road, to go back to a fully irrigated situation (18 acre-inches applied for a given year) the original irrigated database can still be used.

During the 2013 crop year, approved written agreements were much lower than anticipated. However, through conversations with agents and producers, it appears many producers were limiting water at a lower level than what was used to establish the irrigated APH. This same program is being offered again for 2014. The requirements to apply for the agreement are:

1. Your LEMA order from the Chief Engineer or delegate to apply less irrigation water within a five year period than historically used to support your irrigation practice.
2. Your historical water use for each unit or APH data base for which a limited irrigation practice yield is requested. Water use records must be provided for at least the most recent 4 years of APH yields to be considered. Acceptable water use records include your annual water use reports, as recorded on the State's Water Right Information System (WRIS) or the water right file in the Division of Water Resource's Stockton office and must be expressed in gross acre inches.
3. Your intended maximum level of irrigation for the current year, in gross acre-inches.
4. Your type of irrigation system (Center Pivot, Improved Gravity, or Gravity).
5. Any other pertinent information to establish the distribution of irrigation water from a point of diversion to multiple fields, if applicable.

The request for written agreement and all supporting documentation must be submitted to the Regional Office through your crop insurance agent on or before the acreage reporting date.

When submitting a request for written agreement through your crop insurance agent, make sure the following documents are included for a complete request: a completed request for Actuarial change, a complete APH, the legal description of the land and FSA aerial photographs of legible maps delineating field boundaries where the applicant intends to plant the crop for which insurance is requested, the Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) order from the Chief Engineer or delegate, a "Documentation Tool for Limited Irrigation" [www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/fields/ks\\_rso/](http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/fields/ks_rso/) and lastly a hard copy of documents verifying water use

Sheet <http://hercules.kgs.ku.edu/geohydro/wimas/index.cfm>

We hope this helps explain how the limited irrigation written agreement may help provide more flexibility to the irrigated producers in LEMA HPA SD-6.

### The Water Table

Sponsored by the NW Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4, 1290 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Colby, KS 67701-0905. Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except the noon hour) - closed for State holidays.

**DIRECTORS:** Roger Zweygardt - St Francis, CN Cty; Monty Biggs - Atwood, RA/DC Cty; Jeff Deeds - Secretary, Goodland, SH/WA Cty; Dave Rietcheck - Treasurer, Goodland, SH/WA Cty; Jon Friesen - Colby, TH Cty; Justin Sloan - Colby, TH Cty; Mitch Baalman - Menlo, SD Cty; Brent Rogers - Vice President, Hoxie, SD Cty; Doug David - Hill City, GH Cty; Scott Maurath - President, Oakley, LG Cty; Shane Mann - Quinter, GO Cty.

**STAFF:** Katherine Wilkins-Wells - Manager; Ray Luhman - Assistant Manager; Dan Simmering - Field Technician; Rita Wade - Secretary/Receptionist; Ron Vignery - Attorney.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS ARE APPRECIATED