

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Reorganization: Update – Office of Air Quality

Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog



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The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (“ADEQ”) Office of Air Quality (“Office”) has circulated both a personnel chart and a news release describing changes and additions to the leadership team and the goals/objectives of the Office.

As previously noted, ADEQ has placed its former regulatory or environmental media Divisions into three “Offices” (i.e., Air Quality, Water, and Land Resources).

Two posts last week reviewed the Office of Land Resources personnel chart.

<http://www.mitchellwilliamslaw.com/arkansas-department-of-environmental-quality-reorganization-update-petroleum-tank-program-and-enforcement-personnel-chart> and

<http://www.mitchellwilliamslaw.com/arkansas-department-of-environmental-quality-reorganization-update-mining/compliance-and-emergency-response/regulated-waste-personnel-charts>.

The personnel chart circulated for the Office of Air Quality lists Stuart Spencer as the leader of the Office as Associate Director. Mr. Spencer previously served as Chief of the former Air Division. Prior to becoming Air Division Chief, he served in the agency’s Legal Division and as the Director’s Legal Policy Adviser.

The structure of the Office will have some continuity with the former Air Division in that it will be comprised of what are characterized as “three major programs”:

- Compliance
- Permits
- Planning

Two additional programs are characterized as “support” and include Enforcement and Asbestos.

Key personnel referenced in the Office’s announcement include:

- Tom Rheume – Senior Operations Manager. Mr. Rheume’s role is stated to focus primarily on implementing measures that promote consistency, innovation and certainty in the Compliance and Permits branches. He served as the Permits Branch Manager in the former Air Division.
- Will Montgomery – Policy Adviser. Mr. Montgomery’s duties are described as “providing research and legal opinions on policy issues related to Arkansas’s response” to federal plans such as the Clean Power Plan, Regional Haze and other federal rules and regulations. He formerly served as an attorney in the agency’s Legal Division.

- Tony Davis – Planning Branch. Mr. Davis is slotted to supervise the Planning branch until his retirement later in the year.
- Heinz Braun – Compliance Branch. Mr. Braun previously supervised and will continue to head the Compliance Branch.
- Torrence Thrower – Asbestos Group. Mr. Thrower will continue to supervise the Asbestos Group.

In describing the Office and agency changes, the announcement notes in part that they will:

... enhance our ability to carry out our primary mission of protecting and improving air quality in Arkansas while fostering responsible economic expansion opportunities. ... At every opportunity, the OAQ will implement measures that improve efficiency, enhance productivity and reduce redundancies. A primary goal of the reorganization is to increase communication and cooperation between the branches and sections within the Office of Air Quality in order to implement our programs in a consistent and uniform manner.

[Click here to download a copy of the personnel chart and accompanying announcement.](#)