

8/13/14

A brine spill was reported at the Hutchinson #5710 well on 8/12/14. The well is an old shallow well not associated with the Marcellus Hutchinson Pad and is in another part of the reservoir watershed.

Upon investigation it was determined that the manifold pipe that joins the 2 brine tanks at the well had disconnected at a fitting allowing the liquid in the tanks to exit onto the ground during normal operation. The spill area was contained by an earth dike and some grass in the containment was killed by the brine. A slight petroleum odor also was in the area of the leak. There was no evidence of killed grass below the containment.

The well tender and DEP inspector were also on site during the investigation. They agreed that this condition did not exist during the last inspection. The pipe threads were not destroyed nor was there any evidence of tampering. The inspector was going to require removal of the contaminated soil in the dike and taking of soil samples downhill from the site.

My observation was that the connection was not at 90 degrees possibly due to shifting of the 2 tanks. The tanks appeared to be on wood platforms which could settle or rot over time.

Brian Beskitt
Water Quality Superintendent MAWC