


NISQUALLY CHAPTER OF THE  
ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL &  
ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS

The Official

# AEG Nisqually Chapter Newsletter

	<h2>Radon – the invisible geological killer</h2>
<b>Meeting Details</b> <b>Tuesday, May 4th</b>	<p>Radon is a natural, invisible, tasteless and non-smelling gas that naturally comes out of the ground all over the world. It gets trapped in homes as we try to conserve heat, and the EPA now tells us that this radioactive gas causes 20% of all of the lung cancer deaths in North America. Scott Burns has led a team of students at Portland State University for 30 years studying this problem. His talk will discuss how radon gas is formed, how one can test for it, and if the levels are high, how one mitigates it. It is easy to test for and easy to mitigate – no one needs to be dying from it. He will discuss the factors that affect the amount of radon in the home: geology under the house, the soil permeability, groundwater, and construction of the house. Geological conditions that lead to high radon production are rocks (such as granite, phosphate rocks and dark shales), landslides and faults. Short and long term tests determine the levels of radon in the home. The EPA says the “action level” is 4.0 picocuries per liter above which a home should be mitigated. He will show how radon susceptibility maps are produced for zip codes in the state of Oregon and in the Portland area. He will explain about the outreach that is happening in Oregon to get everyone to test their houses.</p>
<b>Location: Go To Meeting</b>	
<b>6:00 Presentation</b>	
<b>Dinner: At your home</b>	
<b><u>FREE for Member or Non-Member</u></b>	<p><b>Meeting Info:</b></p> <p><b><u><a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/982090581">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/982090581</a></u></b></p> <p><b>You can also dial in using your phone.</b></p> <p><b>United States: +1 (408) 650-3123</b> <b>- One-touch: <u><a href="tel:+14086503123">tel:+14086503123</a>,982090581#</u></b></p> <p><b>Access Code: 982-090-581</b></p>
<b>Upcoming Meetings:</b>	<p><b>Join us for Social Hour on Gather!</b></p> <p>If you haven't already done it, please create a Gather avatar and join us in the virtual <a href="#">Tavern</a> , anytime between 5:00 and 5:45 pm for our social hour.</p> <p>The password is OTR2020.</p> <p>If you have problems connecting, we will try to assist you. Just go to the meeting link and let us know what's happening.</p>



## Bio: Scott Burns

Scott is a Professor Emeritus of Geology at Portland State University where he just finished his 30th year of teaching. He was also Associate Dean at P.S.U.(1997-1999). His BS and MS degrees are from Stanford University, plus a Ph.D. in geology from the University of Colorado. Scott was national president of the Association of Engineering Geologists from 2002-2003. For the past four years he has been president of the International Association of Engineering Geologists. Scott has won many awards for outstanding teaching such as the Faculty Senate Chair Award at Louisiana Tech University in 1987, the Distinguished Faculty Award from the Portland State Alumni Association in 2001, and the George Hoffmann Award from PSU in 2007. He has authored over 100 publications and has had over 25 research grants. His most famous book, Cataclysms on the Columbia, the Great Missoula Floods came out in 2009.



## Message from the Chair

### Unseasonably awesome (but I'll take it)!

Greetings, AEG Nisqually! I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and well. I write this note after a weekend of much needed rain following a week of even more direly needed sunshine! I know that our 'April heat wave' was unseasonable, and we worry about the wildfire season (just for starters), and the cherry blossoms set a new early record, but I'll take it regardless! Wow! That felt great. I found myself some field work to do that week. I hope everyone reading this also got a chance to bask in the radiance and get a good dose of Vitamin D.

### Internship opportunity at WSDOT

WSDOT is looking for an intern to hire (that's right, it comes with a paycheck) for the Engineering Geology side of the Geotechnical Office. The selected intern would assist with WSDOT's Unstable Slopes Management System, which involves traveling around the state evaluating unstable slopes and collecting data on geotechnical assets. Additionally, this position often includes the chance to assist with mitigation of highway-affecting natural hazards and some construction observation experience. This internship been a good experience for several entry-level EGs (no license required), and provides some statewide travel opportunities and industry experience. For more information, please click [here](#).

### HB1400, HB1401, HB1402 Wrap-up

As promised, we have mailed a letter to each of the members and staff of the House Consumer Protection & Business Committee expressing our AEG Nisqually's concerns with deregulation or weakening of licensure laws. As a reminder, these bills did not make it out of the Committee. Nevertheless, our letter will hopefully give those Committee members who opposed these bills some industry support. Those Committee members who supported these bills will have a chance to review our letter and hopefully reconsider their position and understand our opposition. I have passed on this news to Puget Sound Chapter, but I do not know if they wrote their own letter. As suggested, we will try to improve our cross-Chapter coordination in the future, as new legislation comes our way.

### Virtual socializing on Gather

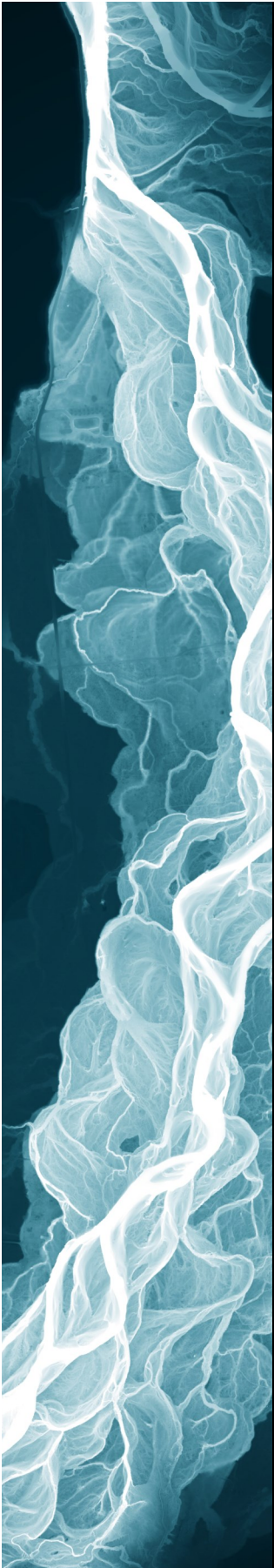
Some of us tried out Gather, just prior to our April Chapter Meeting. There's a link in the newsletter, if you're not sure what I'm writing about. Gather looks like a video game. You move around on a small map and see other people (your fellow AEG members). When you walk up to people, you can hear what they are saying and join the conversation, much like you would in Zoom/Teams/etc (or IRL). You can easily walk away or spilt up into smaller groups and have side conversations, etc. It is kind of fun and novel and Nisqually Chapter is blazing a new path. We will be offering this from 5:00 -5:45 pm, just before our Chapter Meeting starts. The link is in the newsletter above.

Of course, we hope to be able to resume in-person meetings this fall. That said, the technology and lessons learned from this year will provide AEG Nisqually with the opportunity for future 'hybrid' meetings, with in-person attendance and as well as a remote meeting option for those who would prefer to attend from home (wherever that may be).

It's great to be part of AEG Nisqually! I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Gabe Taylor

taylorg@wsdot.wa.gov





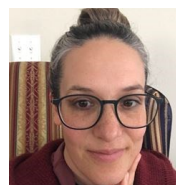
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Gabriel Taylor  
WSDOT



Vice Chair:  
Brittany Dayley  
Washington DNR  
Brittany.Dayley@dnr.wa.gov



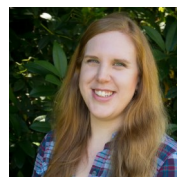
Treasurer:  
Samantha Denham  
Mud Bay Geotechnical  
denhamsamm@gmail.com



Secretary:  
Ashley Cabibbo  
Washington Geological Survey  
Ashley.Cabibbo@dnr.wa.gov



Newsletter:  
Kate Mickelson  
Washington Geological Survey  
Kate.Mickelson@dnr.wa.gov



Virtual Meetings Chair:  
Kara Jacobacci  
Washington Geological Survey  
Kara.Jacobacci@dnr.wa.gov

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**National AEG webpage:**  
<http://aegweb.org>

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## The AEG Nisqually Chapter Newsletter

The Association of Engineering Geologists (AEG) contributes to its members' professional success and the public welfare by providing leadership, advocacy, and applied research in environmental and engineering geology. AEG's values are based on the belief that its members have a responsibility to assume stewardship over their fields of expertise. AEG is the acknowledged international leader in environmental and engineering geology, and is greatly respected for its stewardship of the profession.

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