

# Wyoming Oil & Gas Supervisor Resigns

MEAD GRUVER, Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — Wyoming Oil and Gas Supervisor Grant Black announced his resignation Monday after less than a year on the job, and the state Oil and Gas Conservation Commission named an interim oil and gas supervisor to replace him.

What prompted Black's resignation wasn't clear. He didn't return messages seeking comment, and commission officials declined to comment on any reasons he might have given.

The five-member Oil and Gas Conservation Commission held a special, two-hour conference call Monday primarily to discuss "personnel matters," the legal reason the commissioners gave for holding most of the call in executive session, which is closed to the public.

At the end of the call, the commissioners accepted Black's resignation, effective Tuesday, and named Mark Watson acting supervisor starting Tuesday.

Bridget Hill, who as Wyoming's state lands director occupies a seat on the commission, said Black resigned orally and commissioners expect a written resignation letter later.

The commission has been busy with a variety of issues lately. They include an ongoing state investigation of groundwater contamination in the Pavillion area and review of the minimum allowable distance between wells and homes.

"These efforts will move forward and we are confident the staff at the commission will advance these projects and they will remain on schedule," Gov. Matt Mead, who as governor is chairman of the commission, said in a news release.

Mead thanked Black for his work and Watson for his willingness to be interim supervisor.

The Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission is a state agency that regulates oil and gas development in Wyoming. The oil and gas supervisor serves as the agency director. The agency also is overseen by the five members of the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.

Watson is lead petroleum engineer for the commission and has worked for the commission for about 30 years, according to the governor's office.

Black began as oil and gas supervisor last May. Previously, he was a regional government affairs director for Samson Resources, and before that, he supervised

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