

Wastewater Operator Certification Council Meeting
February 18, 2016 — 2:00 p.m.
Great Salt Lake East #3134, 195 N 1950 W, Salt Lake City, Utah

MINUTES (draft)

1. Roll Call conducted by Mike McFarland
2. Attending: Board Members: Lawrence Burton, Jim Callison, Giles Demke, Gordon Evans, Mike McFarland, Tom Pendley; DWQ Staff: John Mackey, Paul Krauth, Judy Etherington; Excused: Kerry Eppich
3. Introductions of new and existing council members, verify contact information. ***Tom Pendley will now be representing Treatment Operators, along with Giles Demke. Gordon is representing Collection Operators.***
4. Election of Chair & Vice-Chair for 2016 conducted by Mike McFarland
(Judy needs signature of new chair for certificates)
Nomination for Chair:
Mike McFarland nominated Tom Pendley, seconded by Jim Callison
Nominations for Vice-chair:
Mike McFarland nominated Lawrence Burton, seconded by Jim Callison
Nomination for Chair:
Tom Pendley nominated Giles Demke, seconded by Mike McFarland

Motion for Nominations to be closed: made by Jim Callison; with no second. Voting: Lawrence accepted by acclamation as Vice-chair; ballots for Chair: 4 for Tom Pendley; 2 for Giles Demke.

Tom requested that Mike continue conducting the balance of the meeting.
5. Discussion and Approval of Minutes of October 26, 2015
Motion to accept the minutes from the last meeting. Moved by Lawrence Burton; seconded by Jim Callison; Approved unanimously, with the exception of Giles Demke abstaining since he was not in attendance at the previous meeting.

6. DWQ updates:
- a) Status of credit card payments for certification fees—*Judy reported that the online credit card payments are still not available, but phone payments and walk-ins are available.*
 - b) Any feedback from DWQ using postcards for renewal notification instead of mailing CEU Reports in letters?—*Response was positive, acknowledging that there is a learning curve. On-line CEU Report is good. Reduced workload and costs. Some problems with the wrong form being submitted, but mostly good. When people see that they don't have as many CEUs, it motivates them to do something to get more.*
 - c) ABC 2016 Annual Conference—report to council by Judy & Paul—*Paul reported on the Trainers Workshop and exam development presentation. One interesting presentation showed the average nationwide passing rates for all collection and wastewater treatment exams during the 2013-2015 time period. It is interesting to note that there is about a 20 point difference in the passing rates between the drinking water exams and the wastewater ones. National average passing rates for all grades of Collection exams was 72%, and Treatment was 45%, which is very close to our overall averages.*

The association is in the middle of another re-evaluation of the major exams. They expect to be distributing the new exams toward the end of this year. They had 14,000 respondents to the need-to-know questionnaires.

There was a lot of discussion about whether there are things that can be done to assist the operators in preparing for the exams. Options included requiring experience, or education prior to testing, like some states do; encouraging cross training between different types of facilities through tours, etc., which does require support of supervisors; encouraging understanding the water-related math; but, mostly encouraging personal study time--especially using the Sacramento courses that are a basis for the exams. Many people don't know about the lists of references and need-to-know criteria that are posted on the website. We still allow exam review of questions missed, but we are almost the only state that does. We will not be publishing a list of questions that are "going to be on the exam," nor will we require sequential testing. "Teaching to the test" is not an ethical practice and would not ensure a qualified, capable operator.

7. Small Lagoon System exam re-evaluation status—*Judy showed the current breakdown provided by ABC that shows the Small Lagoon System exams current questions are all from the current Wastewater Treatment exam question bank. None of the current questions are from the Collection question bank, but we currently accept the Small Lagoon System exam as an adequate certification for the operators in those small systems. Paul suggested that we ask ABC to use 50% of the questions representing the Collection I exams, including lift stations, and that the other 50% be pulled from the*

Treatment I exams, with only using questions related to Lagoon treatment and associated safety questions, but not the other types of treatment. We can specify the ratio of questions that we want to include. We would want to do a follow-up evaluation after a couple of testing cycles to make sure that the questions are performing properly. Staff had considered trying to do a "need-to-know" survey of operators, but it probably would be better to use the questions from the standardized exam bank, but adjust the ratios to meet our need, and do the statistical evaluation of the test questions afterwards.

Motion by Jim Callison, seconded by Gordon Evans, that at the earliest opportunity we have ABC make changes to include half collection and half treatment questions; approved unanimously.

8. Facility Compliance Worksheet—*Judy explained that "R2"U is the abbreviation for "restricted to unrestricted" and the color coding is to denote the status of the facility since the last meeting: Yellow = out of compliance; White = watch list; Green = have resolved the problem. Current compliance issues with Central Weber SID, Neola W&SID, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, St. George City, Tooele City, and White Hills SSD. Problems resolved with Emigration ID, Magna Water District, Spanish Fork, Tabiona, and Vineyard. Tooele City has not had a Grade IV Treatment Operator since Dan Olson left in July 2014, even though some people have taken the exams. White Hills has had an NOV issued due to a sewer overflow, but there is no record of it having actually been received by the district yet.*

9. December 2015 Wastewater Exam Scores:

Mandatory

GRADE EXAM	TOTAL EXAMINEES	MEAN SCORE	HIGH SCORE	LOW SCORE	# PASS (≥70%)	# FAIL (<70%)	PASS %
C-I	10	71.6	89	53	6	4	60
C-II	21	72.1	89	55	13	8	62
C-III	9	67.0	83	46	3	6	33
C-IV	30	65.2	86	40	9	21	30
SLS-I	4	72.0	85	62	3	1	75
T-I	20	63.0	83	40	7	13	35
T-II	15	67.1	89	50	6	9	40
T-III	13	61.2	72	49	2	11	15
T-IV	39	55.9	82	32	3	36	8
TOTAL	161	NA	NA	NA	52	109	32

Voluntary

B-I	1	79.0	79	79	1	0	100
L-I	1	93	93	93	1	0	100
M-III	6	68.5	75	57	3	3	50

—*Discussion again about the passing rates. Judy did not have the statistics to show whether there may be a benefit to requiring some prerequisites before taking the higher grade exams. It was noted that the passing rates are higher for the voluntary exams that they are for most of the mandatory ones. There was some discussion about whether there should be more time allowed for the exams, but most agreed that giving more time was not going to help. We just need to be sure that the test is a fair test. There are advantages to letting them test when they are still in a "studying" mode from taking classes in school, but there are not a lot of other enticements to bring new people into the wastewater field. Encourage taking practice tests and using some of the online training tools. We are trying to figure out how to use the online testing option, but at the present time, we would still need to try to find a way to allow for the review if they failed. We have 10 computers in our training room that we used for a review of the last exam. (**Note following this meeting--Recent security upgrades changed the computers so that the next review was not able to happen as scheduled). All of the other options will incur a hefty fee increase for testing. It gets back to the basic idea that if an operator cannot overcome his fear of math, or of testing, he will not be able to do well. It takes time away from work, and even if time is allotted at work, they often don't use it, or get discouraged when they don't pass the test and quit trying. It takes regular study.*

10. Need another proctor for exams on Friday, March 4th at 8:45 a.m. (probably need to arrive by 8:00 a.m. to allow extra set-up time before hand). We have 52 people signed up. —*Paul should be able to help if he doesn't have to teach. Kerry Eppich has said that he could arrange to go, if necessary. Paul Wright, a District Engineer, might be able to help, also.*

11. Plan now for Exams on April 7th at 1:00 p.m.—*Paul will not be available.*
 Provo *Jim Callison, Lawrence Burton*
 North Salt Lake (ULGT) *Giles Demke, Gordon Evans (maybe Provo, instead), or Kerry Eppich*
 Ogden (Central Weber SID) *Mike McFarland, Tom Pendley*
 Price *David Ariotti (DE)*

12. Determination of CEUs, if any, for:
 - a) Safety - URMMA Supervisor Training - Evaluations, Cedar (in-house training - 2 hours, 1/14/16 (0.2 CEUs?)—*OK, 0.2 WW CEUs*
 - b) Safety - TAP (Trust Accessment Program), 1 hour, 1/20/16—*actually Accident Prevention Evaluation, required by Utah Local Governments Trust, OK, 0.1 WW CEUs*
 - c) AWWA IMS Leadership Forum Session #6 - Engineering, Construction,

- Operations & Maintenance, GHID, 6/18/15 (agenda provided) —**Only water, No WW CEUs.**
- d) AWWA Leadership Forum Utility Financial Management Session Two - Kearns ID, 11/10/15 (agenda provided) —**Only water, No WW CEUs.**
 - e) Intermountain Section AWWA Leadership Forum Session Two - Employee Management and Leadership, Jordan Valley WCD, 1/14/16 (agenda provided) —**Only water, No WW CEUs.**
 - f) RWAU & Governor's Office of Energy Development - Water & Energy Nexus Forum, Layton, 1/21/16—**OK, partial credit, 0.1 WW CEUs.**
 - g) Annual Storm Water Training, request dated 11/9/15 from SDSO that full CEU credit now be received, instead of only half credit, since discharge permits now include a requirement for annual training—**Required in-house stormwater training for operators will now receive full credit from this point on. However, optional stormwater related training will still receive half credit towards wastewater.**
 - h) StormCon, Portland, OR, August 3-7, 2014—**partial WW credit, need to find out how much training time was involved, then give half credit as discussed previously for optional stormwater training.**
 - i) Storm Water training, Logan, March 24, 2015—**required in-house training, 0.1 WW CEU.**
 - j) Murray City Storm Water Management SOP training, 3/25/15, 1 hour—**required in-house training, 0.1 WW CEU.**
 - k) NDSO - SWPPP & Spill Response Required Training, 12/16/15, 1 hour—**0.1 WW CEU.**
 - l) Clinton City Inhouse Backflow Prevention Training, 1/26/16, 1 hour—**Reconfirmed the previous determination that it is only water, No WW CEUs.**
 - m) ABC 2016 Trainers Workshop - 1/19/16, Denver, CO, 4.75 contact hours—**This is a "trainers" training, not a wastewater subject. No WW CEUs.**
 - n) NPS Safety - What you should know about Flint Water Crisis, Bullfrog, 2/1/16, 1 hour—**No WW CEUs.**
13. Convene Closed Session for Reciprocity Application Consideration and Exam Question and Comment Reviews:
Motion to convene a closed session to consider the reciprocity application and consider exam questions and comments. Moved by Giles Demke ; seconded by Mike McFarland; approved unanimously.
14. Reciprocity Request
- a) Kevin Clites - requests WWT2 reciprocity for Arizona DEQ Grade 2 Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Expires 8/31/2018.
Motion to issue a restricted Utah Wastewater Treatment II certificate that will expire at the end of 2018. Motion by Mike McFarland; seconded by Jim Callison; approved unanimously.
15. Responses to Exam Question/Comment Forms review

- a) December 2015 (RWAU) Session
- C3 - ABC1015C V.9 - #16—***OK, You over-thought the obvious answer***
 - C3 - ABC1015C V.9 - #72—***OK, Reading too much into it***
 - C3 - ABC1015C V.9 - #95—***OK, Big safety issue, can't take independent action***
 - C4 - ABC1005C V.9 - #62—***OK, Correct answer, no alternate***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #14—***OK, Only one right answer***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #16—***OK, It wasn't asking for an exact answer - conversion problem***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #30—***OK, No matter which formula you used, you get the same answer***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #31—***OK, only one device listed is for wastewater measuring***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #46—***OK, This is an "observation only" question, not controlling anything***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #69—***We agree this question should be removed from future tests***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #72—***OK, We agree the terminology needs to be updated***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #74—***OK, His calculation was incomplete, one step missing***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #88—***OK, Need to understand the effect of cooling waters***
 - T4 - ABC1040S V.9 - #100—***OK, Both of your answers would exacerbate the problem, not solve it.***
 - T4 - ABC1030S V.9 - #11—***OK, you can't ship an unstable product no matter how expensive it is.***
16. Conclude Closed Session for Reciprocity Application Consideration and Exam Question and Comment Reviews and Resume Open Meeting:
Motion to conclude the closed session and return to the open meeting. Motion by Giles Demke; seconded by Jim Callison; approved unanimously.
17. Motion on Action to be taken as a result of the Closed Session:
Motion to issue a restricted Wastewater Treatment II certificate to Kevin Clites by reciprocity, and that all of the test questions are valid, but one should be submitted to ABC for review. Motion by Jim Callison; seconded by Giles Demke; approved unanimously.
18. Other Business: ***None***
19. Adjourn
Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Lawrence Burton; seconded by Giles Demke; approved unanimously.

Affidavit of Confidentiality

The Wastewater Operator Certification Council went into closed session during its meeting on February 18, 2016, following a motion by Giles Demke to "go into closed session to consider the request for certification reciprocity and review exam comment forms with associated questions." The motion was seconded by Mike McFarland.

(Tom Pendley)

Wastewater Operator Certification Council Chair

2-18-2016

Date

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