

**Wastewater Operator Certification Program  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
Minutes**

*April 16, 2008  
City of Spokane*

*Wastewater Treatment Plant*

**Members:**

Breshears, Willy	CH2M HILL OMI	X
Carlson, Todd	Pierce County Utilities	Absent
Carre, Poppy	DOE WWTP Operator Cert. Program	X
Erickson, Mike	King County Westpoint Treatment Plant	X
Holmes, Tom	City of Snoqualmie	Absent
O'Neill, Andy	City of Pullman	X
Parker, Jill	Evergreen rural Water of Washington	X
Pelton, Tim	City of Spokane	X
Windh, DeAnna	Lakehaven Utility District	X
Glaser, Russ	Clark Public Utilities	Absent
Emmett, Kathleen	DOE WWTP Operator Cert. Program Coord	Partial -via Telephone
Wilson, Melinda	DOE WWTP Operator Cert. Program	Absent
Cheryl Bergener	Department of Health, Waterworks OpCert	Absent
Scribe: Rickertsen, Cheryl	CH2M HILL OMI	X

The meeting opened at 12:30 pm

Opening

- 1) Reviewed Agenda; lunch was moved to front of meeting.

Certification Program Update

- 1) 1,905 Operators currently registered; this last renewal cycle showed a decrease of 52 operators.
  - a) Reviewed Exam Stats – *See attached*
    - i) Group 3 operators did not do very well; overall a 69% pass rate
- 1) Poppy gave an overview of the of SecureAccess Washington presentation; Operator Certification information on-line – *See attached*
  - a) Poppy will be sending a letter to the facilities and/or PW Directors to give access information to those in need that are not operators; ie: Employers & Admins
    - i) Quick links have been added and are available on the DOE Wastewater operator website at [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op\\_cert/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op_cert/)
    - ii) Links include changes add/remove operators, applications request, affidavit of employment, etc.
- 2) Electronic Testing Sites
  - a) Viewed the ABC website electronic testing free demonstration at <http://www.abccert.org>
    - i) Suggestion: Place the “Help” information page as first page you see
  - b) Poppy doesn't feel the system will be up and running by the completion of the June testing date; probably the 1<sup>st</sup> of next year.
  - c) Poppy needs a resource contact for all of the colleges
    - i) Mike Erickson suggested [WAOL.org](http://www.waol.org) (Washington on-line)

### Professional Growth

- 1) Poppy to email Melinda's Excel list; Poppy will ask for comments from the group at that time. Questionable items will be discussed at the next WW Op. Cert. Program Advisory Committee meeting.
- 2) Backflow Prevention/Cross Connection is relevant training.
- 3) Military Education Evaluation: Discussed what is and is not acceptable for education exchange. Mike will email website for military credit exchange to Poppy. The group agreed that the applicant must send specific documentation.
  - d) Military files have a DD214 that will list all the codes.
- 4) Distance Training – less than one hour increments accepted?
  - a) Group discussions included what durations of time are acceptable. Poppy will have Melinda post this change on the website.
  - b) Speakers would still speak for one hour increments. Conferences are counted as a whole blocks with accumulated hours.

### Sub Committee Update

- 1) Sub-committee did not meet – report below.

### Rule Change Update

- 1) Kathleen Emmett joined call via phone 2:10 – 2:32
  - a) The Tim Eyman I-960 Tax Reform Initiative has currently impacted program by \$1 million w/ a 5% reduction each year every two years.
    - i) Looking for solution ideas from the group.
  - b) Jill Parker reported that the sub-committee contacted 2 – 3 people and that this wasn't going to make this legislature. Initiatives like this typically take 5 years to go through.
  - c) Sub-committee and Poppy will email actions that have been taken thus far to be incorporated into notes to Scribe at [crickert@ch2m.com](mailto:crickert@ch2m.com).
  - d) Discussed how other changes to the WAC could occur. Kathleen suggested noting items such as Technology issues in the plant at the next legislative session.
  - e) Poppy will be sending an email – maybe a phone conference to make future plans if drastic changes occur.

### Roundtable

- 1) Deanna: Operators are protective of their certifications at her workplace. They would like to see endorsements added to the certifications ie: activated sludge, re-use, lagoon, etc.
  - i) Options: 10 questions for free from ABC or standard test.
    - (1) Group agreed that the operators needs to be well versed in all areas of the industry
  - b) Deanna feels her people will go to the WEF or PNCWA to get this going.
- 2) Poppy reviewed emails from:
  - a) Tom Holme's email: Would like to see WW endorse the water lab certification. Any operator may take any of the ABC tests they would like.
  - b) Russ Glaser email: WETRC's Fred Delvecchio will be retiring at the end of June.
  - c) Email on pesticide training: Is this acceptable for relevant CEUs? Group agreed to add it to "marginally relevant". Group will adapt for now and if it is not on the ABC list, it will be removed.
  - d) NSR Enforcement email: No.
  - e) Skagit Training Certificate: Group agreed that this program is a good foundation type of curriculum for entry level OITs. – *See attached*
- 3) Tim: Thanks for coming to Spokane.

- 4) Mike: Operator certifications are feeling the supply and demand; as it flows, wages are going to drive up and naturally will drive more applicants. It may eventually work itself out.
- 5) Willy: None
- 6) Jill: Would like to keep in contact with the group prior to the November meeting. Any information regarding cuts to the program need to be emailed to the group.
- 7) Andy: Thanked everyone for allowing him to join the group.

Other

- 1) At the November meeting, discuss only having one meeting per year.

Next Meeting: November 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:00, Shelton, WA

- Suggested Lodging: Little Creek Casino & Resort; they offer government rates and reservations are recommended.

Meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.