

## **FINAL ONE WATER RECOMMENDATIONS – May 2023**

**OBJECTIVE #1:** Certified drinking water treatment operators working in advanced water reuse purification facilities can qualify for the experience requirements towards their drinking water treatment certification.

**Recommendation:** Consider, update, and adopt draft language to Title 22 CCR; Article 4, §63800 that would allow certified treatment operators to fulfill experience requirements while working at facilities that utilize Advanced Treatment processes to meet regulatory standards for water quality.

*“A certified operator may substitute on a day-for-day basis the experience requirements in (c)(2) with experience gained while working at treatment facilities that utilize Advanced Water Technology (AWT) processes to meet regulatory water quality standards.*

*Advanced Water Technology Treatment processes include Membrane Filtration, Membrane Desalination, Biological Filtration, Iron and Manganese Removal, Advanced Oxidation, Disinfection by Ozone and Ultraviolet light, Membrane Bioreactors, Adsorption/ Exchange through ion exchange.”*

### **Rationale:**

\*\*As water purification plants ramp up to full production, employing advanced treatment processes to further refine tertiary treated wastewater for potable reuse, the experience of drinking water certified operators working in these treatment plants is not currently recognized as experience for certification renewal. This presents a barrier to career advancement.

Also, for treatment plants like these, the melded experience of wastewater operators and drinking water operators is optimal. Drinking water operators should be able to count hours working in such a facility toward their certification requirements.

**OBJECTIVE #2:** To increase collaboration and coordination between the Drinking Water and Wastewater Operation Certification programs to prepare for a One Water future.

**Recommendation:** Consider putting in place an annual or biannual Joint Advisory Committee meeting of the Drinking Water Operator Advisory Committee and the Wastewater Operator Advisory Committee, with a One Water focus. The Joint Operator Advisory Committee will have a cross sector focus and commitment to ongoing engagement that is reflected through its organization, structure, work group participation, and Advisory committee membership.

### **Rationale:**

Many members of the sub-workgroups have expressed value in working with “the other side” through this process. It has enhanced the knowledge and perspective of Advisory Committee members on both sides and has enhanced the ability to think through creative solutions and provide recommendations to move the Operator Certification Program into the future. As One Water increasingly becomes a reality in California, communication and collaboration of both programs will be essential to ensure that the Operator Certification Program is meeting the needs of the industry and achieving its goal of protecting public health and safety.

**OBJECTIVE #3:** To create an equal standard for the development and ongoing maintenance of Operator Certification Exams.

**Recommendation:** That the Wastewater Operator Certification program commit to making it a part of their regular process to conduct a Job Task Analysis of the Wastewater Operator job role every 5-7 years and publish “Need to Know” criteria for candidates.

**Rationale:**

Validity of a certification exam is established by creating strong ties between the exam content and the practice of the job role. It is considered best practice for certification programs to conduct a Job Task Analysis study every 5-7 years, and to rebalance the exam specification to assure proper alignment with the job role. The Drinking Water Operator Certification program is required to do this every five years per Federal Regulations, however, there is no formal requirement or process established for the Wastewater exams. It is also recommended that the Wastewater Operator Certification program publish “Need to Know” criteria for the exams like what is currently available to Drinking Water candidates, that outlines the exam content and helps candidates understand what they are expected to know to be successful on the exam.