

Minutes to  
Drinking Water Operator Certification Program Stakeholders Committee Meeting  
October 14, 2014 at 10:00A.M.  
California Rural Water Association Bldg., 4125 Northgate Blvd., Sacramento, CA

Members in Attendance:

Ken Kerry  
Dan DeMoss  
Kevin Ryan  
Tsai Tseng  
Darcy Burke  
Steven Garner  
John Hammer  
Robert A. Funk  
Charlie Judson  
Wendell Wall

State Water Resources Control Board Staff

Doug Wilson  
Annette Caraway  
Alice Webber  
Michael Rohner  
Karen Hinrichs  
Bonnie Sutherland  
Jon Strutzel  
Wes Wilkinson  
Tony Wiedemann  
Julie Osborn

Guests in Attendance:

Bruce Macler  
Kerri Morgan

1. Doug Wilson, Chief Administrative Section

Welcome/Opening Remarks:

- I. Call to order, participants welcomed by Doug Wilson at approximately 10:00 a.m. Participants introduced themselves; Water Board staff distributed the Agenda, Organization Chart and Exam Results to in-house participants (copies sent via email to telephone attendees).
- II. Doug informed the Committee that it is bound by the tenets of the Bagley/Keene Open Meeting Act as the Stakeholders Committee is considered a "State body". The main point being; as this is an "open meeting" members should not participate in any discussions regarding Stakeholder issues in private (email, letters, conference calls, etc.). Members were provided a link to the Bagley/Keene act prior to the meeting.
- III. Also noted: since the Stakeholders Committee is subject to Bagley/Keene the Water Board is required to post the agenda on-line 10 days prior to the meeting. Meeting minutes must be taken. The minutes will be distributed to attendees and posted to the Drinking Water Operator Certification Program's (DWOC) webpage.

2. All Attendees

Agenda Review:

- I. Brief review of agenda attendees were asked if they had any additions to the agenda; no items were added.

3. Annette Caraway, Section Chief - New Organization Structure/Changes to the DWOCP Organizational Structure

- I. Reviewed the Organization Chart and stated that the DWOCP retained all staff and added two new members.
- II. Notified attendees that there are currently no changes to regulations and how the unit will operate beyond the slight changes to the Stakeholder's Meeting formalities; DWOCP merely moved from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to the State Water Resources Control Board.

Validation Process:

- I. Jon Strutzel stated that he had the Treatment validation survey ready and he has given it to several operators to determine the time it takes to complete. The intention being to give contact hours for completion of the survey. The survey is formatted in Excel and has a tab for each grade level.
- II. Darcy questioned whether Jon was cross-referencing the survey questions with water permits being issued to water systems. Jon stated that we do not. The exam is based on tasks performed by at least 60% of certified operators. There was some discussion regarding the type of task listed on the survey, i.e., Reverse Osmosis, Arsenic, Chrom 6, UV, membranes, etc.
- III. Many operators say that the exam does not match their actual duties. As this is a statewide exam it cannot exactly match everyone's duties. The purpose of the validation process is to ensure that the exam is based on duties performed by a majority of operators and tests the knowledge and abilities required to operate a water treatment facility in California.
- IV. A poster is to be provided for the American Water Works Association (AWWA) conference for the week of October 20<sup>th</sup>. This would provide assistance or at least awareness to the operators of the upcoming opportunity for contact hours.

Exams/Exam Cycles

- I. Exam schedules will remain the same. The cities that the exams are held in are listed on the website. Exact locations for the exams are given to the examinees approximately three weeks prior to the exam.
- II. John Hammer asked about "E-testing". Some states have electronic testing with the examinee showing up at the H & R Block office to take the exam. We currently do not have the capacity to offer E-testing however it may be available in the future (no timetable provided).
- III. Dan DeMoss suggested that testing take place more often. Currently it is not possible to offer more testing dates.

Transition Issues:

- I. DWOCP merged with the Water Board on July 1, 2014 and physically moved to the Water Board's offices on October 1, 2014.
- II. All deadlines for submitting applications will remain the same.
- III. Fax lines will not be operational until November 3, 2014.

Continuing Education:

- I. There are currently no changes to the continuing education regulations. Wastewater Operator Certification is considering requiring continuing education for renewals, however this would require a change in the regulations.

4. All

Drinking Water Operator Certification Annual Report to the USEPA (FY13/14)

- I. Kevin stated that the USEPA report is still missing some critical information. The number of non-transient/non-community systems that have submitted annual reports is incomplete. Also, the number of systems that have operators at the appropriate level needs to be more accurate and the number and type of operator enforcement actions is insufficient.
- II. Darcy Burke asked if the annual report and the Water Board's response will be provided to Stakeholders. Answer: Yes, the report and response, if completed by the next Stakeholders meeting, will be provided to the members for review. This issue will be an agenda item for the next meeting on April 21, 2015.
- III. Darcy also asked if the Water Board's review of the report would be completed by the next meeting date and if there is anything the Stakeholders can do to assist. Answer: USEPA's review is not completed. The Water Board will try to have the response to the USEPA review completed by the next meeting.
- IV. Doug stated that the Water Board is interested in performing more outreach and requested the Stakeholders provide a calendar of events through June 30, 2015 if possible. All members agreed to provide a calendar of events.
- V. Kevin stated that USEPA has a group that meets via webinar regarding operator certification issues.

5. All

Regulations/Discussion

- I. The regulations were reviewed while DWOCP was with CDPH. These changes were sent up the chain for review however, a regulation writer was not assigned. It is likely that the Committee will need to re-review these regulations prior to submittal to the Board.
- II. Robert Funk asked what we do if a city wants to opt out of Certification. Answer: A city may not choose to opt out of their regulatory obligations. If this occurred enforcement action would need to be taken. If a system is unable to

meet requirements it is likely a funding issue and they should bring their issues before their community to discuss increasing rates. Water systems should also contact the appropriate Water Board District Engineer.

6. Action Items

- I. Michael Rohner will send out documents distributed at the meeting to committee that attended by phone.
- II. DWOCP will work with the Waterboards' IT unit to send a link to the Validation spread sheet and lyrics list of operators to committee members.
- III. Provide the city location(s) for upcoming exams.
- IV. Annette Caraway will email a copy of the previous USEPA review including the responses from CDPH.

7. Schedule Next Stakeholder Committee Meeting

- I. The next meeting was scheduled for April 21, 2015, 10:00a.m., at the CRWA offices in Sacramento. A meeting notice and agenda will be posted to the DWOCP webpage a minimum of 10 days prior to the meeting.
- II. Meeting closed.