

One-hundred forty-ninth meeting  
 Water and Wastewater Advisory Council  
 March 12, 2010  
 Helena, Montana

**CALL TO ORDER**

The one-hundred forty-ninth meeting of the Water and Wastewater Operator’s Advisory Council was called to order at 2:36 p.m. by Council Chairperson Joanne “Joni” Hall Emrick, Kalispell. This was the first meeting held via conference call.

Council members present on the phone:

Joni Emrick, Carol Reifschneider, Roger Skogen, Donald Coffman, Grant Burroughs.

Tony Porrazzo not present.

Department personnel attending all or portions of the meeting:

Shelley Nolan, Operator Certification Program Manager, Reta Therriault, Operator Certification Technician, Julie Allen, Operator Certification Technician, and Bill Bahr, Environmental Science Specialist, PPA/TFA.

<b>Minutes Approved</b>	A motion to approve the minutes from the previously held meeting of September 25, 2009 was made by Carol and seconded by Roger. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.
<b>Advisory Council Member Update</b>	Reta reported that Roger’s reappointment had been approved. Those present congratulated him.
<b>PWS Update</b>	<p>Shelley Nolan reported on the OpCert Budget:          Shelley reported that the department is keeping a tight watch on spending of the EPA grant. There is a possibility of moving some money from the Honorarium spending to reimbursements if needed.</p> <p>There was discussion of fee increases and renewal increases if the grant goes away. Also discussed the possibility of revising Operator-In-Training renewal processes and updating OITs to Fully Certified Operators. Reta is looking at operators with lower classifications as fully certified and still holding the higher OIT classification. Currently, OITs do not need CECs unless they hold a fully certified certificate of a different classification. It was suggested that those who hold only an OIT certificate should take training to stay current. Bill suggested looking at OIT only’s versus OITs with a FC lower classification and how people would be affected if they could not hold both. Roger and Don both suggested that they would not want to lose their higher OIT certificate. Shelley suggested a fee to hold the OIT. Reta will generate a list of OITs and mail it.</p>

<p><b>New Certification Classifications And Updates</b></p>	<p>Shelley Nolan reported on the Industrial and On-site Wastewater Operator certification and classification meetings. She stated that exams should be ready by the Fall school. Bill Bahr asked about public notice for the new classifications. He also asked if a lagoon operator could run an on-site system under the new classifications. Is there propriety processes and types? Joni also mentioned the more advanced types. Bill suggested the Council be advised to look at the 1C and new on-site classifications. Shelley stated that Scott Anderson of Anderson-Montgomery Consulting was doing site visits and inspections. Scott provided a Project Summary Report (addendum A).</p> <p>There was a discussion of ABC's ability to generate test questions for these exams.</p>
<p><b>Water Schools and In-Office Exams, Compliance Status Report and Enforcement Update</b></p>	<p>Exam stats for the Fall School in Bozeman, 9/26/09 and updated In-Office stats were added to the stats previously provided. Julie stated that the exams from the MRWS Conference and the Spring School in Kalispell had not returned from ABC at meeting time. She commented that the Kalispell School ran very smoothly. Shelley brought up the idea of running all three Spring school at the same time via polycom. Grant asked for an explanation of the polycom and Carol mentioned internet possibilities. Shelley also mentioned that EPA may see this as a creative way to use new grant funds. It would also present a cost savings on trainers and travel. Shelley also mentioned the idea of having some schools every other year. Julie brought up the thought of dropping the Helena Summer school or changing it to every other year. Bill suggested looking at bringing in staff for the schools rather than speakers from outside. Shelley said it would reduce the burden on the staff to do three schools.</p> <p>Julie stated that there was a rise in in-office exams.</p> <p>Updated compliance reports were provided in meeting packets but not discussed.</p>
<p><b>CECRC Update and ATP's Received</b></p>	<p>Reta informed the Council that the CECRC meeting had been canceled due to costs. She is sending out letters to council members on two training providers.</p>
<p><b>Renewals &amp; Revoked Operators Update</b></p>	<p>Reta reported that she had not received all the CEC sheets from the MRWS Conference or the Kalispell Spring School. She stated that renewal notices would go out in the latter part of April.</p>
<p><b>Other Issues</b></p>	<p>Transient systems and certified operators: This has to go through the legislature and PWS/OpCert needs support from outside the department. Shelley stated that coliform monitoring would be reduced with a certified operator in these systems. There are approximately 1200 transient systems in the state and 900 of those that treat the water. There was discussion on</p>

	<p>whether transient systems should have their own classification and take lower level exams. Transient systems only monitor coliform and nitrates. Reta mentioned that Nebraska has a transient system program and she will bring it to the next meeting.</p> <p>CECs and Operator lists on the website: Shelley and Jon added this to the agenda. Shelley said that making this information available to the operators would be a good step in customer service. Joni was concerned about privacy issues and discussion around how much information should be available. The council agreed that having the CEC information available to the operators on line was a good idea and asked that it become a priority for developing.</p> <p>A question was brought up concerning taking the exams on line. Convenience and instant results could be obtained. Reta explained about the computers needed and how ABC works with H&amp;R Block sites in other areas. Could be costly.</p> <p>Also discussed the possibility of trainers inputting CEC information versus the State doing it.</p>
<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	The date of the next meeting will be September 10, 2010. It will be held in Helena at the DEQ, Metcalf building, Rm 111. This will be an “in-person” meeting.
<b>ADJOURN MEETING</b>	At 3:59 pm Carol moved to adjourn the meeting. Grant seconded and the motion carried. Joni Emrick adjourned the meeting.

Note: It cost \$62.74 to hold this conference call meeting.