

GOVERNOR'S WATER/WASTEWATER WORKS ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the March 9-11, 2015 Meeting, held at the AWWU Board Room, 3000 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage, Alaska.

Attendees: Mark Buggins, Board Chairman
Mike Pollen, Board Recorder
Jana Littlewood, Board Member
Paul Trissel, Board Member
William Justice, Board Member
Richard Steckel, Board Member
Tammy Helms, Board Member
Ben Stacy, Board Member

ADEC Staff: Carrie Bohan, ADEC Operations Assistance Program, Manager
Ken Smith, ADEC Operations Assistance Program
Martin Suzuki, ADEC Operations Assistance Program
Scot Fiscus, ADEC Operations Assistance Program

Other Attendees: March 9, 2015:

Brett Jokala, AWWU General Manager
Jeanne Swartz, Regulation Specialist, ADEC Division of Water

March 10, 2015:

Jeanne Swartz, Regulation Specialist, ADEC Division of Water

March 11, 2015:

Joe Polowy, AWWU Distribution Operations Superintendent
John Weddleton, Home And Landowners Association, Inc,
(HALO), Anchorage, Alaska
Michael Gallegos, Fairbanks, Alaska (by teleconference)

March 9, 2015, 1:00 PM

Board and staff introductions were made and new members were welcomed. AWWU General Manager Brett Jokala greeted the Board and staff and welcomed all to the AWWU Board Room.

A workshop was held to review proposed changes to 18 AAC 74, the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification and Training Regulations.

March 10, 2015, 8:35 AM

A workshop was held to review the materials prepared for Board consideration during the March 11, 2015, meeting. The workshop regarding proposed changes to the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification and Training Regulations also continued.

March 11, 2015, 8:12 AM

Chairman Mark Buggins called the meeting to order. Paul Trissel moved and Jana Littlewood seconded that the agenda be approved. Mark Buggins recommended minor changes in the schedule to accommodate public input. The agenda for the meeting was approved by unanimous vote.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 29-30, 2013 BOARD MEETING

Approval of the October 29-30, 2013 minutes: Paul Trissel moved and Richard Steckel seconded approval of the minutes. Mark Buggins recommended several typographical corrections [page 5, 2nd paragraph: “A new AMOSS **plan** dated . . .”; 4th paragraph, third sentence: “which has reduced the **impact** of high turbidity events . . .”; page 7, second paragraph, second sentence: “The Board approved the proposed AMOSS plan (delete “**was approved**”) in November 2012.”] The Board approved the corrected minutes by unanimous vote.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Department Updates from the March 10, 2015 Board Workshop: Staff provided updates on the following program activities:

- a. **Budget Update** – Carrie Bohan provided an update on the Operator Certification Program budget history and current status. She noted that Drinking Water State Revolving Fund set aside funds are declining at approximately 3-5% per year. The State of Alaska General Fund allocation is expected to decline by about 25% over the next several years.
- b. **Exam Results** – Martin Suzuki presented the ABC certification exam results for the period October 2013 through February 2015. The number of operators taking paper/pencil exams during the Spring and Fall exam cycles is declining significantly while the number of operators taking online exams is growing.
- c. **Operator Certification Report to the EPA** – Ken Smith presented a copy of ADEC’s Annual Operator Certification Program Report to EPA. The full text of the report was provided in the Board packet.

- d. **Operator Certification Database** – Martin Suzuki provided an update on the status of the database used to track operator certification, system classifications, compliance, and enforcement.
- e. **LXR Test Changeover to ExamProfessor** – Scot Fiscus described a change that has been made to the Small Treated and Small Untreated Water System Certification Exams using a proprietary program called ExamProfessor.
- f. **Operator Turnover** – Carrie Bohan presented some data on operator turnover in the State of Alaska.
- g. **ABC Exam Development** – Ken Smith provided an update on ABC’s efforts to revise the needs-to-know criteria for water and wastewater operator. Ben Stacy described his participation on one of the ABC job task analysis committees in Des Moines, IA as part of the initial work. The ultimate output of this process will be the next generation of ABC standardized exams.
- h. **Davidson Pie Wheels** – Scot Fiscus showed a video on the use of Davidson pie wheels that he developed for a conference, and which is also available as a YouTube presentation.
- i. **System Specific Training Module Development Update** – Ken Smith provided an update on the development of the modules by the Cadmus Group and the status of reviews by the volunteer review committee.
- j. **Operator Certification Compliance Information** – Ken Smith gave an update on the status of system compliance with the certification regulations.
- k. **Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Best Practices** – Carrie Bohan provided an update on a collaborative effort between ADEC and the RUBA program to develop the O&M Best Practices scoring criteria. A ranking system for best practices in operating and managing utility systems, resulting in an O&M Best Practices Score for each community, is developed using this process. O&M Best Practices Scores will be considered when ranking rural sanitation projects for funding.

Counting Biosolids Hauling as Wastewater Collection Experience: Ken Smith presented a request from Christopher Sant to review a staff decision not to count biosolids hauling experience as wastewater collection experience. Staff recommended that this type of experience be considered as wastewater treatment experience if it is part of the normal duties of the operator. Richard Steckel moved and Mike Pollen seconded a motion to approve Mr. Sant’s request for discussion purposes. After discussion the Board voted against the motion to approve Mr. Sant’s request. The Board recommends to the

Director that Mr. Sant's biosolids hauling experience not be counted as wastewater collection experience.

Ken Smith then presented possible amendments to Board Policy Statement 2009-09. Mike Pollen moved and Richard Steckel seconded a motion to adopt the recommended modifications proposed by staff. Carrie Bohan recommended that the policy provisions be renumbered such that the raw water provision be number 1, the potable water provision be number 2, the provision for collection systems be number 3, and the provision for biosolids be number 4. Mike Pollen and Richard Steckel accepted the suggested renumbering as a friendly amendment to the motion. After discussion, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amended motion to modify Board Policy Statement 2009-09.

8:30 AM PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Joe Polowy commented that he was attending the Board meeting to observe the process.

John Weddleton with the Anchorage HALO organization presented a recommendation to consider supporting funding of a proposed study of nitrate in groundwater wells on the Anchorage Hillside area. Board Chairman Mark Buggins advised Mr. Weddleton that the Board's primary function is oversight of the water and wastewater operator certification program, and support of such projects was not in the domain of its responsibilities. After some discussion with the Board, Mr. Weddleton thanked Board members and invited any individuals to support this project on their own.

CONTINUED AGENDA ITEMS:

Operator Certification Requirements for Consecutive Water/Wastewater Systems:

Ken Smith provided an update on consecutive water system operator certification requirements. After discussion, the Board concurred that no action should be taken to amend the department policy at this time.

Counting Repeat Courses for Full CEU Credit: Ken Smith presented a request by Michael Gallegos to count a repeat of the California State University Pretreatment Facility Inspection course for full credit. The two classes were taken in 1996 and 2013. Mr. Gallegos joined the Board meeting by teleconference to discuss his request. The Board also reviewed Board Policy 2010-01.

Carrie Bohan moved and Richard Steckel seconded a motion to recommend to Director Michelle Hale that Mr. Gallegos' request be denied. After hearing testimony by Mr. Gallegos and discussing the issue, the Board unanimously approved the motion to deny Mr. Gallegos' request to receive full credit for a repeated, core course.

Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) Alternate Method of System Supervision (AMOSS) Plan Update: Ken Smith provided an update on the LKSD AMOSS plan, which was approved October 30, 2013. A 2015 annual report from Bob Miller, the LKSD AMOSS Supervising Operator, was presented. The report shows that LKSD continues their efforts at providing training opportunities for their operators and having them take certification exams. They have had some success in passing the Small Treated exams, but are still having limited success with level 1 and 2 water treatment exams.

ADEC staff presented a spreadsheet showing the compliance status of the LKSD systems, which shows that they are continuing to make progress on their AMOSS plan. The Board would like to have staff extend an invitation to Mr. Miller to attend a future Board meeting to present an update of the status of their AMOSS program.

Jana Littlewood moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the LKSD AMOSS plan report be accepted and that the AMOSS plan be continued. The motion passed unanimously.

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) Alternate Method of System Supervision (AMOSS) Plan Update: Martin Suzuki provided an update on the KPBSD AMOSS plan, which was approved October 30, 2013. The plan has been working well and staff recommends that approval of the plan be continued.

Mike Pollen moved and Richard Steckel seconded that the KPBSD AMOSS plan report be accepted and that the AMOSS plan be continued. The motion approved unanimously.

Contract Operator Administration and Operations Review: Scot Fiscus and Carrie Bohan reviewed the current contract operator policy. Data for three contract operator companies operating in the Anchorage and Mat/Su areas were presented and discussed. Jana Littlewood provided an explanatory overview of how contract operators provide service in the Anchorage and Mat/Su area. Jana Littlewood also noted that the list of violations for systems supervised by Anchorage Well and Pump was not completely accurate due to data entry errors. Staff discussed the issue of retrieving data from the Drinking Water Program database and when compliance data might be most accurate.

Richard Steckel commented that a useful parameter to help evaluate the performance of the respective contract operators would be to include the average number of hours that operators visit each system. Jana Littlewood also suggested that the operator of record for the systems under a specific contract operator should be listed as the company rather than their employees (operators).

The Board concurred that this is a useful report to routinely present to the Board and requested that staff continue to refine this report as a way to monitor the performance of contract operations in Alaska.

Revision of the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification and Training

Regulations: The Board recommended that the following revision be made to 18 AAC 74:

1. Filter Backwash Water or Sludge Supernatant Recycling: Treatment systems that recycle either filter backwash water or settled sludge supernatant should be assessed points depending on their water source - 2 points for groundwater systems and 3 points for surface water systems.
2. UV Disinfection: 4 points should be assessed for systems using UV to meet Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2ESWTR) disinfection/inactivation requirements, and 2 points if UV is used, but not for purposes of meeting LT2ESWTR requirements. Small Treated systems using UV disinfection to meet LT2ESWTR requirements should be considered as water treatment systems, and classified according to the point rating scale.
3. Ozone: Water treatment systems that generate ozone without using pure oxygen should be assessed 3 points, 4 points if they use liquefied oxygen, or 5 points if pure oxygen is generated on site.
4. Granular Activated Carbon: The term “granular activated carbon contactors” should replace the term “granular active carbon filters,” and should not be assessed more points than powdered activated carbon. Both should be 4 or 5 points.
5. Water Storage Tanks: Any water treatment system using water storage for CT should be assessed 2 or 3 points for the tank.
6. Water Storage Tanks Without a Classified Distribution System: Any water treatment system that has a water storage tank, but that does not have a classified water distribution system, should be assessed 2 or 3 points for the tank.
7. Raw Water Storage Tanks: Raw water storage tanks should be assessed 2 or 3 points rather than 4.
8. Groundwater Systems that Serve >500 Population or that have >100 Service Connections and are Treated with Chlorine: Should be classified as water treatment systems even if chlorine addition is the only treatment.
9. Membrane Systems (water or wastewater): MF, UF, NF, or RO systems should be assessed 8 points rather than 10, but if an integrated membrane system is used (e.g. MF/NF or UF/NF) then the system should be assessed 12 points.

10. In-Plant Odor Control (Wastewater Treatment): Five odor control technologies are assigned points ranging from 2 to 6. Recommend that wet scrubber be assessed 3 rather than 6 points, then cap all odor control techniques used in a plant at a maximum of 6 points.
11. Chloro-Alkali on Site Generation: The Board passed a motion at the October 30, 2013, meeting recommending that 12 points be assessed for this process.
12. Electrodialysis, electrodialysis reversal, distillation, (wastewater treatment): 10 (rather than the current 20) points should be assessed as with potable water systems.
13. Pressure Tanks (hydropneumatic): 0 points

Mark Buggins moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the above 13 recommendations be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Disciplinary Options in Addition to Certification Revocation:

Martin Suzuki presented the issue that 18 AAC 74.830(a) permits revocation of a water or wastewater license, but does not allow the flexibility of assessing a penalty that varies with the severity of the offense. The Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) published a set of Model Standards of Operator Certification in 2013 that provides a mechanism to address this issue. The Board generally concurred that ADEC should consider adopting a disciplinary matrix such as the ABC model.

Defining Shift Operations, 18 AAC 74.010: Carrie Bohan reviewed the current definitions of operating shifts, including primary and secondary shifts. Possible revisions to the requirements for a supervising operator, secondary shift operators, operators during reduced operations, and first response personnel were presented for consideration. The following recommendations to clarify the suggested list presented in the Board packet were discussed:

- The primary shift in a multiple shift operation should be at least 6 hours;
- First responders should have some level of certification and possess adequate training for the duties assigned.

Jana Littlewood moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the basic principles presented in the Board packet to clarify the definition of shift operations under 18 AAC 74.010, including the two above recommendations, should be adopted. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

It was moved, seconded, and approved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:17 PM.