

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

WATER UTILITY OPERATOR LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 18, 2018

9:00 a.m.

TCEQ

12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. B, Room 201

Austin, Texas

Meeting Summary

Members Attending

Robb Starr
Russell Hamilton
Leonard Leinfelder
Tanny Busby
Gary Sober

TCEQ Staff Attending

Jaya Zyman, PE, PRS
Linda Saladino, PRS
Deric Patton, PRS
Paul Munguia, PRS
Jenn Grossman, PRS
Laurie Fleet, WQD
Kenny Dykes, WSD
Steven Swierenga, WSD
Brittany Wortham-Teakell, WSD
David Yager, WSD
Craig Stowell, WSD

Members Absent

Tony Bonaventure
Tony Moreno
Larry Bell
Donald Reese
Tim Crosswhite
Kenneth Hutchins
Roy Staggs
Rey Davila

Visitors Attending

Celia Eaves, Texas Rural Water Association

Call to order:

Quorum check – quorum not present.

A motion & second were made to approve the meeting summary from January 31, 2018. Motion was tabled to next meeting as there was not a quorum present to approve the motion.

Attendee introduction:

Round table introduction.

Water Quality Division (WQD) Updates: Laurie Fleet

HB 3618: Repeal of Basin Cycle Permitting

House Bill 3618 repealed TWC §26.0285 which required, to the greatest extent practical, that all Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) permits within a single watershed contain the same expiration date (known as basin permitting). Additionally the bill amended the Texas Water Code (TWC), Section (§) 26.0135(d) to remove language that coordinates submittal of water quality summary reports by river

authorities with the existing “basin permitting rules” as currently required under TWC §26.0285.

WQD has initiated the rulemaking process to repeal 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §305.71 which requires basin cycle permitting for wastewater discharges. Repeal of this section will allow wastewater discharge permits to be issued for five year terms. Additionally 30 TAC Chapter 220.4 and 220.6 will be amended to replace cross-references to basin permitting with an established frequency for submittal of water quality summary reports.

The commission adopted the rules on March 7, 2018 and they became effective on March 29, 2018.

Federal Rule regarding Dental Office Pretreatment Standards

On June 14, 2017, the Environmental Protection Agency issued technology-based pretreatment standards to reduce the discharge of mercury-containing dental amalgam to publicly owned treatment works. These new regulations are found in 40 CFR Part 441. TCEQ initiated rulemaking to amend 30 TAC §305.541 to adopt 40 CFR Part 441 by reference.

The rule was published in the Texas Register on February 9th and a public hearing was held on March 8th. The comment period ended on March 12th. The commission is expected to take action on the proposed rule on June 27th.

The Texas Dental Association is helping TCEQ with distribution of information about this rule to its membership. The Texas State Board of Dental Examiners will be working with TCEQ to get information about this rule out to dental offices in the state. Rule pertains to dental offices.

Linda Saladino asked how many wastewater permits in the State of Texas are performing biological nutrient removal. Ms. Fleet provided this information from the Water Quality permitting database:

Our reference list had the following selections: Bio-Disc (rotating biological filter), biological denitrification, biological nitrification – combined, and biological nitrification – separate stage.

There are 70 facilities that have one of these treatment technologies. See attached spreadsheet.

WUOLAC members can run queries of wastewater treatment plants using a variety of search criteria at the following website: www1.tceq.texas.gov/wqpaq. One of the search criteria is the treatment technology. So if anyone is interested in other treatment technologies, they can search for facilities with that specific technology.

A spreadsheet outlining the wastewater permits with biological denitrification systems is being provided to WUOLAC members.

Water Supply Division (WSD) Updates: Kenny Dykes

Plan Review Team (PRT): Number of plans and specifications submittals processed by the Plan Review Team during January - March: 546

The Plan Review Team, with help from staff on the Technical Review and Oversight Team and Resource Capacity Development Team, has been extra busy in March with the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Intended Use Plan Ranking. There are 133 Project Information Forms (PIFs) submitted by 121 public water systems for FY19. The ranking will be completed and sent to the Texas Water Development Board by May 4, 2018.

Technical Review and Oversight Team (TROT): Number of exception and Alternative Capacity Requirement requests processed by the Technical Review and Oversight Team during January - March: 295

TROT has recently approved and posted a challenge study for the Nanstone CM-151 Ultrafiltration Ceramic Membrane Module.

The Nanstone and all previously approved challenge study letters are posted on the TCEQ website. You can find them here:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/trot/membrane-challenge-studies>

Response and Capacity Development Team (RCDT): Number of free on-site Financial, Managerial, and Technical (FMT) Assistance assignments made by the Response and Capacity Development Team during January – March: 436

Capacity Development:

- The next Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee (TWICC) meeting will be on Friday, May 18th at TCEQ. TWICC is also having a workshop at the TRWA's Office Professionals Conference in San Antonio June 8th and one at the TCEQ's annual PDW conference in August. For questions, please contact Dorothy Young at (512) 239-6064 or Alex Latham at (512) 239-6908. TWICC member information, information about funding and other resource links are available at www.twicc.org.
- EPA has announced more funding for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA). This funding is geared to larger projects and is administered by EPA. For more information please see: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia/wifia-resources#handbook>

Texas Optimization Program: From September 2017 to April 2018:

- TOP staff have taken part in five public drinking water recognition program ceremonies and five recognition program site visits.
- TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have participated in 20 Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) Level 2 Assessments.
- TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have performed two Special Performance Evaluations (City of Victoria & City of Gonzales) and one Comprehensive Performance Evaluation (City of Mart).
- Additionally, TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have performed customized technical assistance activities at 13 PWSs throughout the state.

- TOP staff are working on a Revised Total Coliform Rule presentation that will be approved for 2 hour continuing education credit. This presentation will be offered at 25 monthly Texas Water Utility Association District meetings and TWUA Regional Schools. The presentation will be presented in the Special Topics section of these operator training schools. A survey is being considered for topics and the results will determine the presentations needed in specific areas. Linda Saladino asked if this presentation could be made available to WUOLAC members through the meeting summary or be placed on the TCEQ public website.

Drought:

- Drought has returned to the state. Approximately 27.86% of the state is in moderate drought and 8.36% of the state is in severe drought and 11.7% of the state is in extreme drought. Drought is predicted to persist and possibly intensify throughout the panhandle and western parts of Texas.
- Staff continue to monitor one system, and have moved three systems from High Priority and Watch Lists to the Resolved List since January 2018.

Assistance for At-Risk Public Water Systems:

- TCEQ staff worked with TEEX, Communities Unlimited and Presidio County officials to organize operator training sessions April 10 & 12th to help train people interested in being operators in remote parts of the state.
- Staff continue to monitor 9 systems in receivership, 7 systems under temporary management and 63 systems designated as “At Risk.”
- Staff were able to remove six systems from the At-Risk List, since September 2017.

Cross-Connection Control:

- Staff in the TCEQ Cross-Connection Control Program presented Directed Assistance Module No. 12 to the Abilene regional office investigators. Investigators from the Lubbock regional office also participated.
- The Cross-Connection Control Program continues to assist Training/Exam Program by reviewing training materials that are submitted to them for approval.
- Cross-Connection Control program staff will conduct a record number of water system Cross-Connection Control Program Surveys during the fiscal year. The regional offices provided a list of 35 water systems throughout the state in need of program surveys. Water systems continue the trend of using electronic means to comply with the TCEQ Cross-Connection Control Program record keeping requirements. This requires TCEQ approval which entails a detailed review of the approval request by program staff and issuance of an official approval letter.

North Texas Water Quality Concerns Related to Licensed Operators: Gary Sober

Mr. Sober shared a presentation given by an associate of the Ms. Erin Brokovich relating to North Texas Municipal Water District’s drinking water quality. Discussion about this presentation followed.. Kenny Dykes in the TCEQ Water Supply Division along with Steven Swierenga and Brittany Wortham-Teakell contributed to the discussion on

proper procedures related to chlorine conversion including managing storage tank levels, using residuals of 3-4 mg/L max., unidirectional flushing, sampling to determine the status of conversion. Training materials are being developed to assist public water systems communicate with the public prior to conversion.

The Powerpoint presentation is being provided to WUOLAC members.

Alternative Langelier Index: David Yager & Craig Stowell

Mr. Yager gave a presentation on the Tetra Tech (RTW) Model and its use by the TCEQ in evaluating potential corrosivity. Discussion about the presentation followed and the members asked if the presentation could be included in the meeting summary.

The powerpoint presentation is being provided to WUOLAC members.

Occupational Licensing (OL) Update:

2nd Quarter FY18 (12/1/17-2/28/18) Licensing Results – Deric Patton, PRS OL

A handout with the number of licensing applications received and processed, pass rates, and exams administered were discussed. Deric asked if the members would like additional data related to the information on the handout.

WUOLAC Nomination Status – Paul Munguia, PRS OL

Paul Munguia gave an update regarding the WUOLAC membership nomination process. A total of 66 applications were received to fill seven vacancies. The OL Section in the PRS Division in the Office of Waste will present the recommended appointments to the TCEQ commission for the final decision at the TCEQ Agenda on June 27, 2018.

General Updates– Staffing, Projects, Exams – Deric Patton, PRS OL

Mr. Patton provided an overview of OL's current staffing. OL licensing team consists of 11 staff members – 1 new hire started April 16, 2018. The licensing team is currently processing new applications in 3 weeks or less in most of the programs. Once OL receives the exams, the exams are scanned and licenses issued or failure analyses mailed within 14 days. OL is currently conducting an audit of the receipt of exam answer sheets from the TCEQ regional offices and TEEEX in order to provide feedback and improve OL response time as part of the exam submission process.

Effective February 1, 2018, Paul Munguia was moved to the training & exam workgroup to assist Sarita Nazareth and provide WUOLAC support. The training work group will be interviewing in the coming weeks to fill two (2) NRS III positions.

The current online eApp project is on track and includes enhanced security measures. The eApp will include supplemental forms, an initial search, criminal history, and more validation throughout the eApplication process. The process will also include a review and approve portion so that an operator can review and approve all information in an application that is being submitted on his/her behalf before signing and submitting the application.

The WUOLAC members indicated the need for more information to make licensees aware that they have to use the online exam registration or pre-register with regional schools even if they are only going to take the exam. Applicants with approval or deficiency letters are presenting at events where TCEQ exam proctoring is offered but they are not preregistering for the exams on the TCEQ website.

Old Business: Robb Starr, WUOLAC Chair

- **Disinfection Topic in Basic Water Training Courses** – Ms. Saladino passed out a course outline for Basic Water Works Operation along with the water operator critical tasks. and asked members to review the information, suggest the amount of time needed to be spent on each module and offer suggestions for how the Module 6: Disinfection should change. One of the members suggested a shorter term for the class D Water Operator license or adding additional training requirements to the license so that all the topics can be covered in a longer period of time – possibly 30 total hours. These suggested changes would require changes to the rules. Streamlining or modifying the Basic Water Works Operations curriculum can be considered now.
- **Clarify WUOLAC's Request for Criminal History Information** – members are looking for criminal history data prior to HB1508 and after as related to the number of applicants that are requesting evaluations prior to submitting applications. Members were also curious about the statistics related to a licensee that holds a low risk license and then makes application for a high risk license and is denied. OL staff will look at potential queries of the ERC database and put this as a topic on the next meeting agenda.

Wrap-up Discussion: Robb Starr, WUOLAC Chair

The next meeting will be in July 2018. Mr. Starr would like an email sent to members with the next proposed meeting date and and RSVP included in all meeting requests so that a quorum will be present in future.

Meeting Adjourned.

Enclosures:

- 2nd Quarter FY18 (9/1/2017-9/30/2017) Licensing Results