

# ***Texas Commission on Environmental Quality***

## **WATER UTILITY OPERATOR LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

July 26, 2018

9:00 a.m.

### **TCEQ**

**12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. B, Room 201**

**Austin, Texas**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **Members Attending**

Robb Starr  
Tony Bonaventure  
Donald Reese  
Celia Eaves  
Russell Hamilton  
Tim Crosswhite  
Rey Davila  
Leonard Leinfelder  
Tanny Busby  
Gary Sober  
Kenneth Hutchins  
Cory Moose  
Joseph McDaniel

#### **TCEQ Staff Attending**

Linda Saladino, PRS  
Deric Patton, PRS  
Paul Munguia, PRS  
Sarita Nazareth, PRS  
Robin Maiorisi, PRS  
Jenn Grossman, PRS  
James Murphy, PRS  
Brynn Bodwell, PRS  
Sandra Lowe-Leseth, PRS  
Jan Ramirez, PRS  
Fayyaz Mughal, PRS  
Shannon Frazier, WSD  
Dorothy Young, WSD  
Letty DeLeon, WSD

#### **Members Absent**

Tony Moreno  
Larry Bell  
Roy Staggs

#### **Members Attending – Call**

David Garza

#### **Visitors Attending – Call**

James Fischer – TEEX  
Steve Ash – TEEX

#### **Call to order:**

Quorum check – quorum present.

A motion & second were made to approve the meeting summaries from January 31, 2018 and April 18, 2018. Motion was approved.

### **Attendee introduction:**

Round table introduction. Recently nominated and appointed members were invited and although their terms begin officially on September 1, 2018, several new members attended either in person or via phone.

### **Overview of WUOLAC for new members:**

Linda Saladino gave a brief overview of the Water Utility Operator Licensing Advisory Committee (WUOLAC) Operations & Procedures handout. She requested that everyone on the committee sign the non-disclosure forms in the packets they received and give the forms to Paul Munguia before leaving the meeting.

### ***Water Quality Division (WQD) Updates: Laurie Fleet***

No update available. An update will be provided at the next WUOLAC meeting (tentatively scheduled for October 18, 2018).

### ***Water Supply Division (WSD) Updates: Shannon Frazier, Letty DeLeon, and Dorothy Young***

See enclosure for summary.

### ***Occupational Licensing (OL) Updates: Deric Patton/Linda Saladino, PRS OL***

#### **Applications received and processed, pass rates and exams administered – Deric Patton, PRS OL**

Third quarter information will be sent to the members via email.

#### **Update on Spanish Wastewater/Water Operator exam statistics – Deric Patton, Linda Saladino, PRS OL**

Members received a summary of the pass rates and counts for exams offered in Spanish/English reflecting data collected from January 1, 2017 to July 25, 2018.

- Overall, few applicants registered for the Spanish exams offered in the regional offices. Evidently, many applicants are not aware that the TCEQ offers a Spanish version of the Collection I, Wastewater class D, or Water Operator class D exams.
- Are training providers offering training and study materials in Spanish? Yes. Information on Spanish exam offerings is provided on the TCEQ public website; and in TCEQ Occupational Licensing presentations. Linda requested that committee members send their ideas to Paul Munguia about getting more information related to Spanish training & exams to the regulated community. Does OL have a flyer or printed materials about Spanish exam options? No – currently the information is on the website. Russell Hamilton suggested that TWUA could put whatever information TCEQ chose to provide in their monthly publication.
- Computer-Based Testing (CBT) centers do not offer Spanish exams as the format is not compatible with the current CBT system.
- Does TCEQ take Spanish exams to exam sessions offered at regional schools sponsored by TWUA? Yes. OL would like for participants to request Spanish exams ahead of time during the exam registration process as this option is

included on the exam registration web pages for all TCEQ regional offices. Spanish exam booklets are included in the exam cases when staff travels.

- A vocabulary list for Irrigation Technicians is on the TCEQ website - <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/licensing/NeedToKnow/IrrigationTechnicianVocabularySpanish.pdf>. If the committee thinks that a Spanish/English vocabulary list would help water & wastewater operators, the OL Section could work on creating these references. Special accommodations including oral exams are offered for a documented learning disability. Speaking Spanish is not considered a learning disability.
- How often do operators request and take oral exams? Requests must document a diagnosed learning disability from a certified specialist, documented health professional, educational specialist trained to identify the particular disability, or documentation of previous accommodations (typically school district records). For FY 18, OL received 13 requests: 12 granted, 1 pending.

### **Criminal History Statistics Related to Low & High-Risk Licenses – Deric Patton, PRS OL**

The number of Repeat ERC Evaluations & Their Outcome summary was provided to members.

- ERC is the abbreviation for Executive Review Committee – consisting of attorneys, PRS director, OL manager, team leader, and program coordinator. This group follows specific criteria in statute for criminal history reviews. Outcomes include eligible, request for more information, and ineligible resulting in the intent to deny, suspend, or revoke a license.
- 594 applicants have been through ERC more than once. Only 10 had a different outcome on a subsequent review.
  - 6 out of the 10 will be eligible to hold a higher risk license after their adjudication requirements are complete. (Convictions include drug-related offenses, driving while intoxicated, etc. ~ not violent or property crimes or crimes related to the license, etc.)

Committee members would like a review of RG-521: regulatory guidance entitled *Consequences of Criminal Convictions for Occupational Licensing* which guides the ERC process including more in depth information related to the review process, risk category explanation and the appeal process available to licensees that have received a negative response from ERC.

### **Status of Exam Updates & WUOLAC's role – Linda Saladino, PRS OL**

The Occupational Licensing Training/Exam work group is now fully staffed with Sarita Nazareth as work leader and includes Paul Munguia, James Murphy, and Sandra Lowe-Leseth.

- Updates/revisions to OL exams are a priority for this group. The following are the current projects under consideration:
  - Wastewater Collections II & III – prepare for CBT and finish major revisions.
  - Groundwater C – reprint to include major revisions and update for any rule changes.

- Distribution C –reprint to include revisions and update for lead and copper rule changes.
  - Currently giving credit for the out of date question on this exam.
- Distribution B –Requires a major revision including more detailed categories.
  - Currently giving credit for out of date questions on this exam.
- Class A Water & Class A Wastewater – plan to eliminate essay questions that are currently hand-graded.
  - Concerns in the past related to multiple choice questions considered too easy for this level of exam (ex: “all of the above” or “both B & D”). Future versions will have multiple-answer questions which will make these exams more difficult even without the essay questions. Questions requiring analysis and evaluation versus memorization will be included to match the level of critical tasks associated with the class A license level.
- Job task analysis, technical guidance, and rule changes are other focus items for this Training/Exam work group.
  - Water Treatment Specialist – job task analysis & implementation.
  - 30 TAC chapter 334 rule changes related to Underground Storage Tank (UST) license exams.
  - Review existing exams that are not currently available through the TCEQ computer-based testing (CBT) system such as for the On-site Sewage Facilities (OSSF) program.
- There will be an exam review session following the next WUOLAC meeting in October. The committee meeting will be held in the morning and is open to the public and the exam session will be held after lunch and is a closed session to protect exam integrity. The exam types & topics to be reviewed will be shared via email before the next meeting along with the agenda. All members should have a current nondisclosure form on file with TCEQ. Only members with the appropriate licensing and experience should attend the exam session.
- Exam Inventory – Paul Munguia is the contact and organizer of a physical exam inventory including all TCEQ regional offices. This effort was initiated to improve exam security and accountability. An updated guidance or SOP related to exam proctoring was also sent to all regional offices.
- Do the surface water operator exams have any basic math questions and/or calculations? Yes – math-based concepts & calculations are introduced in the Basic Water course and are included in the class D Water Operator exam and every subsequent exam.
- Pass/Fail Rates by category for both D Water exams and D Wastewater exams will be considered again at the next meeting.

***Upcoming Upgrades to the Occupational Licensing Electronic Application (OLEA) for New License Applications: Robin Maiorisi, PRS***

Robin Maiorisi gave a presentation outlining the differences between eApp and OLEA.

- OLEA is a total new construction rather than an update to overcome the deficiencies created by the current eApp. Robin's presentation included several screen shots of OLEA.
- OLEA leverages sustainable technologies that can be maintained, updated & corrected by TCEQ staff. The initial eApp was built by a contractor and TCEQ staff were not able to maintain or upgrade the application.
- The many upgrades were discussed and members had positive responses to inclusion of forms, payment, and programming allowing the application to be printed, saved, and electronically prepared by others but signed only by the applicants.
- Implementation schedule: OL testing begins 8/20-9/27/2018. Several WUOLAC members volunteered to come into the TCEQ OL office area to act as testers. WUOLAC will be invited as TCEQ nears the end of the testing. OLEA is scheduled to be released to the public by 9/27/2018, but timing is dependent on system testing outcomes.

### ***Water Quality – Operational Schemes with BNR/Small Footprints: Gary Sober, WUOLAC Member***

Industry product providers are coming up with new methods for biological nutrient removal (BNR) and different wastewater treatment schemes that have a smaller footprint and are more energy efficient by reducing sludge production, eliminating the need for aeration, and/or making energy recovery possible.

Examples are:

1. Membrane Bio Reactor-side and recycle streams.
2. A2/O...anaerobic/anoxic
3. SHARON....Single reactor system for High Ammonium Removal Over Nitrite (single stage)
4. Anaerobic Ammonium Oxidation or ANAMMOX (usually in combination with #3, in that the NO<sub>2</sub>-NO<sub>3</sub> phase is bypassed and NH<sub>4</sub> goes to N<sub>2</sub>).
5. A/B system....air basin A before Primary Clarifier followed by air basin B
6. UASB or Upflow Anaerobic Sludge Blanket reactor is a form of anaerobic digester used for treatment.
7. Thermal Hydrolysis.. anaerobic digester

With the exception to # 6 & 7, all the rest are types or modifications of BNR systems. Others that could be on the horizon, but not considered BNR, are Ringlace with deep bed filtration and a subsurface biofilter.

### ***Modifications to the Basic Water Works Operation (Basic Water) Curriculum: James Murphy/Sarita Nazareth, PRS OL***

Committee members discussed the draft Basic Water curriculum guidance, critical job task lists, and the potential location for the additional information on chloramination. Members were asked to also provide approximate timing for the various chapters or

modules referenced in the curriculum guidance and any other items that members find missing. The TEEEX and TRWA manuals will need to be updated to be in compliance with the final curriculum guidance. Comments can be sent back to Paul Munguia.

***Wrap-Up Discussion and Out-going Member Appreciation:  
Robb Starr, WUOLAC Chair***

Linda Saladino presented out-going members a certificate of appreciation for their service to the WUOLAC. Certificates will be mailed to those out-going members not in attendance.

Tony Bonaventure from the Houston area served from May 16, 2014 through August 31, 2018

Tim Crosswhite from the Lubbock area served from September 1, 2014 through August 31, 2018

Roy Staggs from the Midland-Odessa area served from September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2018

Larry Bell from the east Texas area served from May 16, 2014 through August 31, 2018

Meeting Adjourned.

Enclosures:

WSD Update Summary

## ***Shannon Frazier***

**Plan Review Team (PRT):** Number of plans and specifications submittals processed by the Plan Review Team during March - May: 632

Interviews for the Engineer vacancy are complete. The team is hoping for an August 1 start date for the new member.

The Surface Water Treatment Plant (SWTP) Step 1 and Step 2 checklists have been posted. This implements a two-step process for SWTP improvements. Similar to the well and reverse osmosis process, Step 1 is for construction approval and Step 2 is for approval to use. You can download the forms here: [Forms and Checklists for Submitting Plans or Specifications for Public Water Systems - TCEQ - www.tceq.texas.gov](#)

**Technical Review and Oversight Team (TROT):** Number of exception and Alternative Capacity Requirement requests processed by the Technical Review and Oversight Team during March - May: 279

TROT has recently approved and posted a challenge study for the Graver Technologies QCR™ II Series Filter Cartridges on April 18, 2018. The Graver Technologies 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 March - May: 345

### **Capacity Development:**

- The next Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee (TWICC) meeting will be on Wednesday, July 18, 2018, at the USDA offices in Temple. 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](http://www.twicc.org).
- TWICC will be holding a funding workshop on August 7, 2018 at the annual PDW conference in Austin.
- EPA has announced the deadline for applying for funding from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) has been extended to July 31, 2018. For more information please see: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia/wifia-resources#handbook>.

### **Texas Optimization Program:** From March 2018 to May 2018:

- TOP staff have taken part in two public drinking water recognition programs.
- TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have participated in 15 Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) Level 2 Assessments.
- TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have performed one Comprehensive Performance Evaluation.
- Additionally, TOP staff and TOP Support contractors have performed customized technical assistance activities at 5 PWSs throughout the state.

**Drought:**

- Approximately 28.24% of the state is in moderate drought, 15.10% of the state is in severe drought, 3.14% of the state is in extreme drought and 0.64% is in exceptional drought.
- Staff continue to monitor three systems and have moved four systems from High Priority and Watch Lists to the Resolved List since January 2018.

**Assistance for At-Risk Public Water Systems:**

- Staff continue to monitor 9 systems in receivership, 7 systems under temporary management and 9 systems designated as “Primary at Risk.”
- Staff were able to remove 7 systems from the At-Risk List since September 2017.

**Cross-Connection Control:**

- Program staff provided technical presentations to the:
  - Central Texas Environmental Health Association (CTEHA) Conference in San Marcos;
  - The City of Port Arthur; and
  - The Biennial Investigator Training in Tyler
- Work continues conducting on-site Cross-Connection Control Program Surveys for water systems. Staff recently conducted nine surveys in the Tyler region.
- The TCEQ Cross-Connection Control Subcommittee conducted its quarterly meeting in June. It was well attended with very good participation from the members.
- The Cross-Connection Control Program continues to receive many requests for approval of alternate forms. These requests are evaluated in detail and approval or denial letters are issued.

***Water Supply Division (WSD) Updates: Letty DeLeon*****Drinking Water Standards Section:****RTCR**

- [https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP\\_QAPP\\_Addendum4\\_Rev1\\_RTCLabs.pdf](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP_QAPP_Addendum4_Rev1_RTCLabs.pdf)
- <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/microbial/revised-total-coliform-rule>
- <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/pwss.html>

Proper bacteriological monitoring, including documentation of the monitoring, is critical for the protection of public health.

- The RTCR program is continuing an on-going data QA/QC project to ensure the adequacy and defensibility of data submitted for compliance with the RTCR. This includes reviews of documentation submitted with samples for compliance with QAPP requirements.
- Microbial Reporting Form (MRF) guidance can be found on the RTCR and PWSS webpages as well. Direct links are provided below.



- PWS Guidance:
  - <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/tcr/Complete%20the%20Microbial%20Reporting%20Form.pdf>
- Laboratory MRF Guidance:
  - <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/tcr/Laboratory%20Guidelines.pdf>

There was a question concerning whether contract lab staff are properly licensed and trained to collect samples for water systems. Contact person for reporting lab issues is Mr. Gary Regner (512 239 4528)

Note: Members agreed that they would like a presentation from Gary Regner to further address & discuss lab issues and the current training that lab staff are receiving.

### **Lead and Copper Rule Program:**

**QAPP Addendums 2 & 3 are available on the LCR Program and PWSS webpages, as well as directly linked below.**

- [https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP\\_QAPP\\_Addendum2\\_Rev1\\_LCR\\_Labs.pdf](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP_QAPP_Addendum2_Rev1_LCR_Labs.pdf)
- [https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP\\_QAPP\\_Addendum3\\_Rev1\\_QWP\\_Labs.pdf](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/permitting/watersupply/pdw/qapp/PWSSP_QAPP_Addendum3_Rev1_QWP_Labs.pdf)
- [https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/chemicals/lead\\_copper](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/chemicals/lead_copper)

### **Water Quality Parameters (WQPs)**

- Currently in the first quarter of the second six-month monitoring period of 2018 (6M2-2018). This monitoring period began July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.
  - Systems scheduled to collect WQPs are reminded to sample and are highly encouraged to sample early in the quarter.

### **Lead and Copper**

- Reminder letters for RED-2018 lead and copper tap sampling were sent in April. If you have questions about when you are required to sample, please check the Texas Drinking Water Watch (DWW) website or give the LCR compliance officers a call.
- Systems scheduled to collect lead and copper tap samples during RED-2018 and 6M2-2018 are reminded to sample early and follow the summarized steps below.
  1. Review the approved sampling sites in your monitoring plan. If changes are needed, submit an updated Sample Site Selection and Materials Survey (Form 20467).
  2. Visit the TCEQ's Drinking Water Lead and Copper Program webpage for current forms and instructions.
    - Sample Site Selection and Materials Survey (Form 20467)
    - Homeowner Tap Sample Collection Procedures

- Lead Consumer Notice (Form 20680)
- 3. Contact a Drinking Water, TNI accredited laboratory to obtain sample bottles and for analyzing samples after collection.
- 4. Follow-up with Texas DWW to make sure your data has been received and accepted by the TCEQ. Data is due no later than 10 days following the end of the monitoring period.
  - RED-2018 data due by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
- 5. Complete the Lead Consumer Notice after receipt of results and deliver to customers and certify the delivery to the TCEQ.
- The TCEQ encourages public water systems to make information regarding the location of lead plumbing, fixtures, and/or pipes including lead service lines available to the public. Methods to make this material publicly available include posting maps or other locational information on your system's website, and adding the information into your Consumer Confidence Reports, Lead Consumer Notices, and Lead Public Education documents, as applicable. The TCEQ also encourages that the information be made available to your customers upon request.

### **Drinking Water Quality Team:**

#### **Statistics:**

- Chemical Samples total collected to date 28,756

### **Drinking Water Special Functions Section:**

- PDW Section Responses to Public Information Requests Completed – **29**
- 57 Enforcement cases completed 1<sup>st</sup> Q2018
- 92 Enforcement cases completed 2<sup>nd</sup> Q2018
- Pre-Enforcement – The section is contacting water systems to help them resolve violations before the system becomes eligible for Enforcement.
- Q2nd 2018, section has received notification of 428 issued Boil Water Notices and 377 Boil Water Notices rescinded.
  - 7,000 total water systems in Texas ~ most of the continual boil notice violators are small systems with less than 250 total connections
- Public Notices Submitted - Q2, 2018 Total: 1,464
- Public Notice Violations Issued - Q2, 2017 Total: 443
- 46 Emergency Preparedness letters as of April -June 26, 2018. Will be more by end of the month this includes all types from EPP waiver enquiries, EPP approvals, and EPP affected utility notifications for new water systems.
  - Most of the 52 waivers are issued to systems that are either purchasing water from another system or their system is so small that they do not have the funds to purchase a generator ~ essentially systems with no way to prepare for power outages that last more than 24 hours.
- TCEQ will be holding the Public Drinking Water Conference scheduled for August 7-8, 2018 in Austin.

### **Safe Water Drinking Act Capacity Development Program - Dorothy Young:**

- Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee (TWICC) – Funding & Technical assistance – business cards with program information provided as well as a brief discussion about the committee.
  - TWICC is providing a free workshop at the Public Drinking Water (PDW) Conference 2018 in August.
  - Forum to share stories about operator to operator coordination; system to system support and brainstorm ways/ideas to help small systems that are in trouble.
  - Capacity Development & Operation Certification Conference (EPA) in Indianapolis, IN, this year.
    - Previous conference topic for badges to be issued to water and wastewater operators to designate them as public health officials.
  - Widespread issue with operators in the State of Texas is basic math. A basic math course will be provided at the PDW Conference 2018 in August. People not already registered for PDW can put their names on a waiting list.