

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
WATER UTILITY OPERATOR LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**November 12, 2004  
10:00 a.m.**

**TCEQ Offices  
12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Flr., Rm. 202  
Austin, Texas**

**MINUTES**

**Members Attending**

Mary P. Baiza  
Larry Bell  
Richard E. Harbuck  
David Harris  
Cathy Henderson  
Charles R. Maddox, P.E.  
Debbie Magin  
Mike Moreno, Jr.  
Ted Neumann  
George Patterson  
Mauro J. Perez  
Robert Riley  
David L. Yohe

**Members Absent**

None

**TCEQ Compliance Support Division Staff Attending**

Tamara Calhoun  
Noreen Helmle  
Susan Hier  
Alex Hinz  
Juanita Lopez  
Irene Ritter  
Linda Saladino  
Stephanie Thompson  
Terry Thompson

**Others Attending**

Beverly Benson, Engitech Environmental Training, Bryan TX  
Alicia Diehl, TCEQ Water Supply Division  
Mike Lannen, TCEQ Water Supply Division  
Paul Muraca, Texas Engineering Extension Service, College Station TX

Michael Vollmar, Texas Rural Water Association, Austin TX

Cathy Henderson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and confirmed that a quorum was present. The members introduced themselves and explained the type of work they perform. Other guests and TCEQ staff also introduced themselves. The Minutes of the July 18, 2004 meeting were distributed for review. There was a motion and a second and all members voted to approve the Minutes.

Beverly Benson, President of Engitech Environmental Training of Bryan, Texas, was introduced as the TCEQ Contractor for the Texas Small Water Systems Training Program (TSW Program) which is funded by an EPA Expense Reimbursement Grant (ERG). The two handouts she distributed are attached to the original of these Minutes. Mrs. Benson gave an overview of the program. The grant funds cover the costs of training and licensing for small water system operators. She explained the eligibility requirements, "Coupon Training" and "Cluster Training," as outlined in the handout and the brochure. She reviewed the roles of the Contractor and the Advisory Groups, as outlined in the handout. The brochure included an Enrollment Form for systems and one for operators. The handouts included the web address, toll free phone number, and the progress of the program thus far. She answered questions of the committee members and invited them to join one of the advisory groups.

Mike Lannen of the TCEQ Water Supply Division gave an update on the 1-hr. Security Module for water systems. The goal is that it will be included in the 20-hr. courses and will be viewed by all operators within 3 yrs. He suggested that it be viewed at association meetings also. The CD-ROM will be in Power Point or Corel initially and then produced as a DVD later. A self-paced version is being worked on. A Water Watchers Program for water systems and law enforcement, based on the Neighborhood Watch Program, is in the works also. Mike also answered questions from the committee members.

Juanita Lopez, Licensing Section Manager, updated the Committee on agency matters. Since the last meeting, TCEQ has a new commissioner, Larry R. Soward; a new Chairman, Kathleen Hartnett White; a new Executive Director, Glenn Shankle; and a new Deputy Executive Director, Mark Vickery. The Legislative Session begins on January 11, 2005. She said that there would be rule revisions and she would be asking for comments from the Committee. She does not foresee major changes that would impact the operators. The process has taken 18 months in the past, but has been shortened to 9 months. Charlie Maddox asked what stage the rule process was currently in. She responded that it was in the initial stage of the concept paper for deputy approval. She will share the list of changes as soon as it is developed.

Terry Thompson, Licensing Team Leader, introduced himself to the Committee and gave an overview of his duties. Prior to joining the Licensing section, he was in Public Drinking Water Enforcement for 14 years. He distributed two handouts: Summary of Licensing Activities for FY 04 and an organizational chart of the Licensing Section. These are attached to the original of the Minutes. He stated that his staff processed 47,000 licenses in FY 04. He informed the Committee that he and his staff are required to review all applicants' history when issuing a license/registration. If the applicant has

a history of noncompliance with TCEQ rules, their application can be denied. He answered questions of the committee members. Ted Neumann

stated that the Licensing staff is an excellent group. He asked if there were any plans for licenses for storm water. Terry said there were none.

Linda Saladino, Training Specialist, introduced herself to the Committee. Her main responsibilities include:

- approving training materials for all the Occupational Licensing Programs with regard to RG-373 requirements, quality control, relevant content, and licensing requirements.
- communicating with training providers concerning approvals, disapprovals and procedures.
- composition, evaluation and revision of licensing exams.
- managing the job task analyses and analyzing results.
- providing assistance to the EPA ERG program.
- tracking training approval requests and ensuring accuracy of the database for training providers, courses and training approval.
- maintaining the inventory of approved training manuals.

Currently, she is overseeing four major projects: the revision of RG-373, revision of exams, job task analysis, and Surface Water Production II.

A copy of RG-373, Approval of Training for Occupational Licensing, was distributed to committee members. A copy is attached to the original of the Minutes. Areas where revisions may be necessary include: distance learning; clarifying the qualified instructor section; and re-evaluating the association meeting training credit. The Advisory Committee will be utilized for input. Drafts will be e-mailed to them for comments within the next two months.

Linda explained that she is currently developing the procedure and priority for revising exams. The Advisory Committee may be involved in the review of exam categories, development of exam questions, and participation on special subject matter expert committees. "A" level licensees will be utilized for some of these projects.

All water and wastewater licensing programs have had a job task analysis (JTA). The most recent JTA was for the BPAT and CSI programs. CDs of that JTA were distributed to committee members. TCEQ is open for comments on the JTAs while staff analyzes the results.

Cathy Henderson asked when the Surface Water Production II (SWP II) manual would be completed. Linda directed the question to Richard Harbuck of TEEEX, as they are completing the final revision. Richard said that the final course and manual materials would be overnight mailed to Linda on Tuesday, November 16. George Patterson and Cathy asked when operators would be required to have SWP II for licensing requirements. There was a discussion about this. Cathy asked if there was a Motion for a recommendation from the Committee. Richard made a Motion to recommend that the requirement be

one year from the time of the first course approval. The Motion was seconded. The vote was unanimously in favor of the 1 year recommendation.

Alex Hinz introduced himself to the Committee. He is the program lead for the follow licensing programs: Water, Water Treatment Specialist, BPAT and CSI. He also assists with the EPA ERG program. Recently, he has been heavily involved in the preparation of renewal notices for BPAT licenses. There will be approximately 159 renewal notices mailed out by the end of November, 2004. A large number of those licensees are not eligible for renewal because they don't have the required 24 hrs. of continuing education that is required or they haven't completed the practical skills (hands-on) training that is required. BPAT licenses became renewable licenses approximately 3 years ago. Alex answered questions from the Committee.

Susan Hier, Program Lead for Wastewater, introduced herself to the Committee and gave an overview of her duties. Susan has been in the Wastewater program for 19+ years. Her duties include: day-to-day oversight of wastewater licensing program; Class A and reciprocity applications; rule revisions and clarifications; special projects, i.e., new database, staff changes; complaint investigations; enforcement; and, presentations and exam administration at regional schools. Her guiding principles are customer service, consistency, accuracy, and fairness. Tamara Calhoun assists her with the regional school activities. Stephanie Thompson's duties include: new application review; wastewater operations companies; and, complaint investigations. Thelma Thomas handles renewals, scanning and phone coverage. The Wastewater staff receive over 600 phone calls per month. Susan distributed a copy of RG-002, Process Control Tests for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Facilities, which was prepared with the assistance of the Committee. She also distributed a hard copy of the TCEQ Occupational License Database web page and the Wastewater Companies and Operators Licensing web page, along with information about what can be accessed on the Operator Licensing website. A copy of all of these handouts are attached to the original of the Minutes. She said that future projects include renewing on-line through Texas On-Line and computer based exams. Susan answered questions from the Committee.

Noreen Helmle introduced herself to the Committee and gave an overview of her duties. She has been with TCEQ and its predecessor agencies for 16+ years. She is the Grant and Contract Manager for the EPA ERG that funds the TSW Program. She introduced Irene Ritter who will be assisting her with tracking the licensing renewal fees of eligible small water system operators that will be paid with EPA ERG funds. Alex Hinz and Linda Saladino are also working on the TSW Program with her. Noreen also oversees the activities of this Advisory Committee. She encouraged the committee members to take as many of the TCEQ publications as they wish from the table. She provided copies of the Committee's Mission, Goal and Objectives for review. It had been revised to reflect the agency name change to TCEQ and the term "certification" had been changed to "licensing." Cathy Henderson, Chair, asked for a vote to accept the revised version. There was a motion and a second and all members voted to approve the revised version. A copy of the Mission, Goal and Objectives are attached to the original of the Minutes. Noreen also distributed copies of the TAC Title 30 Ch. 5 Advisory Committees and Groups requesting that committee members read it giving special attention to

these sections: Purpose and Duties, Membership Terms, Membership, and Attendance. A copy is attached to the original of the Minutes. Cathy added that attendance is very important and that one of the new members was appointed to fill a vacancy because a former member did not meet the attendance requirements. Noreen clarified that members may ask someone to attend for them when they are unable to attend, but that it still counts as an absence and that person may not vote for them. She also clarified that if a member must resign before completing their term, the Commission will appoint a replacement. Noreen distributed hard copies of the Advisory Committee web page and asked the committee to check the information about them for accuracy. She also asked them to check their information on the Committee Contact Information Sheet for accuracy. A copy of both of these documents are attached to the original of the Minutes.

Cathy Henderson announced that the Committee needs a Vice Chair. She asked that members contact her before the next meeting if they are interested in the position or want to nominate a member to serve as Vice Chair.

Ted Neumann distributed a draft of a Policy Advisory Opinion Regarding Water Quality Planning from the Texas Board of Professional Engineers. He asked that the members read it and consider the impact of this policy should it be adopted. He would like the members' comments at the next meeting. A copy of the Policy is attached to the original of the Minutes.

Alicia Diehl announced a technical teleconference that members may be interested in. "New Rules - Challenges - Solutions" will present technological solutions to challenges created by recent or upcoming rule changes: membrane filtration, ion exchange (and other media) for inorganic chemical removal, ultraviolet disinfection, and chloramination. The teleconference will be from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. CT and lunch will be provided. There will be 15 locations throughout the state. For more information, go to: [http://www.tawwa.org/new\\_rules\\_challenges\\_solutio.htm](http://www.tawwa.org/new_rules_challenges_solutio.htm)

Cathy Henderson suggested that the next meeting be held in College Station during the TWUA Annual Regional School on March 8, 2005. The Committee agreed with her recommendation. George Patterson offered to reserve a room for the meeting for 1:00 p.m.

Cathy Henderson, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

