

**Minutes to
Operator Certification Advisory Committee Meeting**

September 28, 2001 at 10:00am.

TNRCC Bldg A, Second Floor

Members in Attendance:

Richard Harbuck
Larry Bell
Debbie McReynolds
Bobbie Jean Porcher
Cathy Henderson
Fernando Rico
Todd Henry - Mauro Perez
Curtis Smalley - Clark Benson
Craig Sherwood - Dan Allen

TNRCC Members in Attendance:

Juanita R. Lopez
Tammy V. Jaimes
Robert Tinstman
Carol Batterton
Alexander Hinz

Guest in Attendance:

John Fenoglio-SWTQI
Walt Shaw-SWTQI

1. Call to order by Ms. Debbie McReynolds at approximately 10:00a.m.
2. Quorum Check - Total of 12 of 13 members attended.
3. Approval of minutes- for the meetings of June 22, 2001 motion by Cathy Henderson - Mauro Perez seconded.
4. Agency Updates-Carol Batterton (Please review hand-out)
 - I. Occupational Licensing Bill - By statute, the deadline for TNRCC to adopt rules is December 1, 2001. The comment period closes on October 18th. Recommendations were made to get comments in to the TNRCC as soon as possible so that staff may be able to review them and consider them for modification. The date to adopt rules is set for Nov. 20, 2001 agenda (might be a Nov 28 agenda, but not confirmed at this time).
 - II. Lab Accreditation - The drinking water lab accreditation program was transferred from Texas Department of Health (TDH) to the TNRCC, Compliance Support Division. Two staff members came over from TDH and will be working with Steve Stubbs as of September 1, 2001. CSD will be forming a rules team, which may require a stakeholders meeting in early to mid-November in reference to lab issues. Proposed rules will be ready in early March and we are planning to adopt them in September, 2002. The requirement in statute mandates lab accreditation be met within 3 years. Labs will have to be inspected regularly and we will need to define which data will be regulated.

Debbie McReynolds - Will a committee be organized for lab accreditation? Not at this time. We are considering having interested parties in a stakeholder meeting. One option at a later date would be to have a standing advisory committee.
 - III. Organizational/Personnel Changes - recent personnel/announcement from the office of Permitting, Remediation & Registration (see attachment with background information on new employees)
 - Water Quality - Mike Cowan (512) 239-4050
 - Water Supply - Dale Beebe-Farrow(512) 239-3443
 - Waste Permits - Wade Wheatley (512) 239-0655

Questions and Answers for Carol Batterton:

Cathy Henderson - Why are rules being changed for licensing from 3 to 2 years?

Discussion as the stakeholders meeting invited you to make recommendations, and no comments were received. We are trying to be consistent with all licenses.

Dan Allen - Do you think they may allow for a phase in period? We may consider it. Please submit your recommendations so we can send them to the lawyers.

Debbie McReynolds - Will the OCS be able to handle the workload? We will be updating a more efficient database and we will get one more FTE from a program which was outsourced.

Richard Harbuck - Has an administrative fee been established? \$70.00 per two year license.

Clark Benson - Would like to commend the OCS for their hard work and professionalism.

Dan Allen - How will preapproval be handled? Applications would have to be pre approved before taking an exam. How we define preapproval could be in many different ways. What we envision is to have applicants be approved onsite. We are still reviewing what the various programs' needs are.

Larry Bell - What courses will be needed for CSI and BPAT? We have added that requirement in the BPAT rules (for now, same courses).

Larry Bell suggested that after an operator receives a D license; after 6 months, possibly operators could take a practical exam to get a provisional C license. Concerns were brought up on who would provide or administer the practical exams. Larry will be sending in written comments.

5. Report on Groundwater Job Analysis - John Fenoglio, and Walt Shaw (attached is a copy of Job Analysis of Groundwater Treatment and Water Distribution in Texas)
- A. John Fenoglio-Introduced himself and Walt Shaw
 - B. Walt Shaw - Discussed when contract was granted and funded, and thanked all staff for their participation in completing the Job Analysis and the surveys needed. Had a 95% response rate.
 - C. Conclusion and recommendations are as follows:
 - 1. Operator Employee Orientation Training (EOT) in very critical areas is required
 - 2. Very Small Systems warrant a special license.
 - 3. The life of a current D license is too long.
 - 4. Repeating the same training for a license renewal limits training opportunities.
 - 5. There is a significant task difference between groundwater license and distribution licenses.
 - 6. Management responsibilities and other high level responsibilities differentiate license levels A and B from the lower level license.
 - 7. The holders of Class A licenses have overall responsibility for facility operations.
 - 8. Production of groundwater under the influence of surface water (GUI) demonstrates tasks that are different from groundwater production.
 - 9. Tasks defined On-Job-Training with certification of completion by a upper license level operator should be emphasized.
 - 10. There are numerous training resources and mediums that warrant consideration for TNRCC certification and publicity.
 - 11. The equipment identified as used by licensees is shown to be different according to the survey responses.
 - 12. The license certification structure including the recommendations outlined above are presented in the following table (see page 27 of the handout).
 - D. Test questions will be forthcoming. If you are interested in being part of the test question review process, please contact Bob Tinstman.

6. EPA Update - Juanita R. Lopez (please see attached sheet distributed)
 - A. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) authorized the EPA to reimburse the costs of training and certification, including an appropriate per diem for unsalaried operators, for persons operating community and nontransient noncommunity public water systems serving 3,300 persons or fewer.
 - B. Proposed Uses of Grant Funds:
 - └ Develop and deliver classroom, hands-on, and multimedia training.
 - └ Reimburse operators for per diem and/or mileage costs incurred for training purposes.
 - └ Reimburse operators for initial or renewal certification fees.
 - └ Administrative costs. (A state is allowed to use a reasonable amount of the expense reimbursement grant for administrative purposes.)

7. Other items - Recommend that trainers address what type of security measures can be taken at the water plants?

Dan Allen - What are utilities doing now? Some plants have PD and security at all times or randomly drive by.

8. Date for next meeting - December 14, 2001

9. Adjourn - by Debbie McReynolds at approximately 12:25p.m.