

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
WATER UTILITY OPERATOR LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
January 15, 2010
9:30 a.m.

TCEQ
12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. A, 1st Flr, Rm.172
Austin, Texas

MINUTES

Members Attending

Russell L. Hamilton (Chair)
Matthew Boober (Vice- Chair)
Carol. V. Batterton
James Fischer
Ginger Laird
William. F. Quinn, Jr
Robert A. Rowell
Carola G. Serrato
Ghulam Sumdani
Michael Vollmar
Larry West

Members Absent

Mark W. Routon

TCEQ Staff Attending

Avery Castillo, SBLGA
Lynne Haase, PRS
David James, SBEA
Barbara Mendieta, PRS
Sarita Nazareth, PRS
Linda Saladino, PRS
Allan Vargas, PRS

Russell Hamilton, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. A quorum was confirmed. The members, guests and TCEQ staff were introduced. The minutes of the August 28, 2009 meeting were approved.

WUOLAC MEETING MINUTES

Texas Small Public Water System Training Program

Since the last update:

- Water System enrollment has increased from 3418 to 3588
- The number for Classroom Training events has gone up from 654 to 1022.
- 993 cluster training courses have been delivered to date since program inception.

The program now offers additional vouchers by request to enrollees who have used each of their issued vouchers and are not soon up for voucher renewal. Moreover, program staff are conducting extensive outreach efforts to reach water operators who have used very few or no vouchers at all since their enrollment. The program also continues to offer coverage of Customer Service Inspection and Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Training and licensing costs.

The program will be ending August 31, 2010. It is important to conduct as much outreach as possible prior to this date to reach as many systems and operators as possible. If you are aware of any events or meetings staff may attend to reach interested audiences, please contact Avery Castillo at 1-877-822-5349.

Time Line for the WOULAC Nomination Process:

As of August 31, 2010, five member's terms will be expiring creating 5 vacancies. A sixth is currently vacant.

The members are:

- Carol Batterton
- Russel Hamilton
- Mark Routon
- Carola Serrato
- Larry West

The Notice of Request for Nominations was published in the Texas Register on March 27, 2009. On April 8, an electronic message was sent out to the current members requesting for nominations. By mid April, over 100 letters were mailed out to W/WW operators in Texas. A total of 24 applications were received. The review of nominations and the report have been completed.

Discussion on topics for Water Utility Management.

Ms. Nazareth initiated a discussion on the comparison of topics for the Water Utility Management course between the TCEQ Curriculum Guidance and those provided by the different Training Providers. There was concern about the topic of Budgeting which is different at the operator level vs. at the administrative level. Also small systems have very different systems when compared to large systems, making it difficult to teach the topic. Mr. Vollmar suggested that any upgrades to the Water Utility Management Course be added to the Advanced Utility Management Course.

The members suggested that they would review the topics and send in their responses. The discussion will be continued at the next WUOLAC Meeting.

Exam review Update and Job Analysis Survey

Ms. Saladino updated the members on the changes to the D Water and Wastewater exams. She also shared the rough draft of the Surface Water treatment job task survey with the members. The survey was the result of a meeting of experienced operators on January 13, 2010. The survey will be available online to the operators at surface water treatment plant beginning in April.

Mandated Rulemaking

Mr. Vargas outlined House Bill 963 and House Bill 2808. H.B. 963 requires that state licensing authorities create a process by which applicants with a criminal background may request a criminal history evaluation letter to determine the applicant's eligibility prior to beginning occupational training or investing in a licensing examination. H.B. 2808 relates to the power of a licensing authority to revoke, suspend or deny a license on the basis of certain criminal proceedings.

Proposal date to go to Agenda: January 27, 2010

Texas Register Publication date: February 12, 2010

Public Hearing date: March 8, 2010

Public Comment Period: February 12, 2010- March 15, 2010

Anticipated adoption date: June 16, 2010

Licensing Update

Mr. Vargas reported on the number of new, renewed and current licenses from the start of the fiscal year (9/01/09-1/15/10).

Licenses	New applications	Renewal applications	Total applications	Total Current licenses
Water	1450	1163	2,613	15, 514
Wastewater	933	896	1,829	11,060

Discussion of Other Business

Mr. Hamilton brought up the topic of not allowing the completion of the Basic Water course to count for renewal of all upper level water licenses. This topic was not listed as an Agenda item. Ms. Serrato pointed out that the Water Utility Operator Licensing Advisory Committee Meetings are classified as "Open Meeting" and items which are not listed on the agenda cannot be discussed during the meeting. Further discussion on the topic was suspended.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned that the topic of Webinars would be approached from a Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) standpoint with an input from Texas Rural Water Association (TRWA) and Texas Water Utilities Association (TWUA), resulting in a recommendation made to the TCEQ.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.05 p.m.