



# Nevada Water and Wastewater Operator's Forum

---

Hosted by: Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water  
901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001, Carson City, NV 89701

## Meeting Minutes Tuesday, December 13, 2016 – 2:00 pm. to 4:00 pm

Location: Richard H. Bryan Building,  
*Tahoe Hearing Room on the 2nd Floor*  
901 S. Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89701

Videoconference to: NDEP Las Vegas Office,  
Red Rock Conference Room  
2030 E. Flamingo Rd., Suite 230  
Las Vegas, NV

*Note:* Great Basin College  
1500 College Parkway  
High Tech Center Bldg Room 123  
Elko, NV

Phone conference to: 1-888-363-4734, access code 1515199

### Agenda

#### 1) Call to Order and Introductions. (Bob Foerster

Meeting was called to order at 2:00pm.

**Forum Members Present:** Max Sosa, BSDW/OpCert; Bob Foerster, NvRWA; Greg Reed, Round Hill GID, Ron Penrose; Tri Sage Consulting; Will Raymond, TMWA/ Test Administrator

**Introductions and Guests:** David Herrand, Smith Valley Baptist Church; Jason Grahmann, Lyon County; John Jones, Lyon County; Mark Johnson, Rose Water System; Paul Rose, Rose Water System; James Imperial, Washoe County; Kevin Baughman, RCAC; John Hulett, Washoe County; Daralyn Dobson, SRF; My-Linh Nguyen, NDEP/SDW; Crystel Montecinos, BSDW; Rick Norris, NVRWA; Jackie Boado, TMWA, Randy Mark, Broadbent; Chris Hoffert, Lyon County; Jason Webb, Lyon County; Tom Gardner, Lyon County; Don Lafara, BSDW; Paige Menicucci, BSDW

**Elko:** Dale Johnson, City of Elko; Dean Cernick, City of Elko; Morgan J Dingman, City of Elko; Michael Boney, NvRWA; Heather Tate, Klondex Mines

**Las Vegas:** No one at the videoconference

**On the Phone:** Ashley Jacobson, NWEA

2) **Approval of Forum/NTC Minutes from October 4th, 2016. – Action Item**

**Greg Reed-**Move to Approve

**Ron Penrose-** Second  
Unanimous

3) **Drinking Water Exam Results Review from October 6th, 2016. ( Max Sosa)**

**Max Sosa-** Now for a brief summary of the October 2016 certification exams. There were 135 applicants scheduled, 126 applicants took the exam and 79 passed. The overall passing rate was 63%.

59 out of the 96 applicants testing for the Distribution exams passed. In this test cycle water distribution Grades 1 and 2 made up the majority of the testers. That is a 62% passing rate for distribution quite an improvement from the 37% rate for the June exam. None of the topics in the exam qualified for nonmastering in any of the grades for treatment and distribution. All topics were rated by AWWA as having a partial mastering greater than 20%.

There were only a total of 30 applicants testing for treatment and 20 of them passed. That is a 67% passing rate for treatment.

It was rewarding to see that everyone was better prepared for the October 6, 2016, exam

4) **Training Needs / Forum Input**

**Randy Mark-** Trying to set up some training in Tonopah for the 12<sup>th</sup> of January and while he is out talking to the operators at the inspections they primarily would like math and some wet well instruction. Needs to know how to set it all up.

**Bob Foerster-** Will give some contact information, but agrees that math and how to operate the systems is needed.

5) **NDEP Updates (Max Sosa, Bureau of Safe drinking Water)**

**Max Sosa-** If your operator certification expires December 31, 2016 the Operator Renewal Season Started September 1, 2016 your certification expires December 31, 2016 please send in your renewals applications now, do not wait until the December 31, 2016 expiration date.

NDEP Operator Certification page:  
[http://ndep.nv.gov/bsdw/cert\\_home.htm](http://ndep.nv.gov/bsdw/cert_home.htm)

## Applications

Water Operator Application: Testing, OIT-to-Full Conversion, and Reciprocity [HTML](#)

- Water Operator Renewal or Reinstatement Application [HTML](#)
- Application for Approval of Course of Training for Continuing Education —



- *Please pass on to everyone to make sure they are taking pre-approved training for renewal contact hours. Last renewal season there were some operators that had to reinstate because they could not provide the proper documentation to get the training approved. Please check the op cert website for approved training and call me if you are not sure*
- **External Educational Resources**  
For approved contact hours

**READ and UNDERSTAND 445A.646 before selecting the “yes” or “no” box.**

**NAC 445A.646 Denial of application for certificate or suspension or revocation of certificate: Grounds.** (NRS 445A.860, 445A.880) The Division may deny an application for a certificate or suspend or revoke an operator’s full certificate, provisional certificate or certificate as an operator-in-training if he or she:

1. In applying for or obtaining a certificate, has submitted to the Division any application, document, record, report or affidavit, or any information in support thereof, which is false or fraudulent;
2. Is grossly negligent, incompetent or has committed misconduct in the performance of his or her duties as an operator of a public water system;
3. Has demonstrated disregard for the health and safety of the public;
4. Has acted outside the rights and privileges of his or her classification for which he or she holds a certificate;
5. Has been convicted of a violation of any federal law or law of any state relating to water quality, including, but not limited to, the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300f et seq.;
6. Has been convicted of a felony or other crime involving moral turpitude, dishonesty or corruption;
7. Has willfully made to an employee of the Division or any health authority any false statement which is material to the administration or enforcement of any provision of this chapter or chapter 445A of NRS;
8. Has failed to renew his or her certification; or

9. Has violated, attempted to violate, assisted or abetted in the violation of, or conspired to violate any provision of this chapter or chapter 445A of NRS.

**a) Guest Speaker Don LaFara; NDEP Laboratory Certification Branch Supervisor**

**- Chain of Custody, what is it, why we need it and how to do it.**

**Don Lafara**- When samples are collected during an enforcement action, possession must be traceable from the time of collection to sample disposal. Chain-of-custody procedures are used to maintain, transfer and document sample possession.

Chain of Custody is necessary if there is any possibility that the analytical data or conclusions based upon analytical data will be used in litigation. A sample is under custody: If it is in your possession, it is in your view, after being in your possession, it was in your possession and you locked it up and it is in a designated secured limited access area.

An essential part of any sampling or analytical event is ensuring the integrity of the sample. The process includes the ability to trace the possession and handling of the sample from sample collection to sample disposal.

This is the concept of chain-of-custody.

Labels should be affixed to the sample container prior to or at the time of sampling. When possible, labels should be filled out prior to the sampling event (except time of collection).

Evidence tape or custody seals are used to detect unauthorized tampering of samples.

Wikipedia: Chain of Custody refers to the chronological documentation or paper trail showing the seizure, custody, control, transfer, analysis and disposition of physical or electronic evidence.

**6) NWEA Updates (Jake or Ashley Jacobson)**

**Ashley Jacobson**- Stated that NWEA is redoing their website and one of the big things that they are doing is a subscription page for training. It is going to be little training videos, what to do with a small facility, what a wastewater system does, etc. These trainings will help operators with the exams. What they are asking is if anyone that wants to help out with the website would be appreciated.

**Bob Foerster**- Mentioned WEF Nationally is looking for nominations for their awards for achievement so that is available if you want to give your input.

**7) Waterlines Publication (All Attendees)**

**a) Review of Prior Issue**

**b) Discussion about changing the Water Lines magazine over to a blog format with more frequent, smaller bits of information**

**c) Article Assignments for Next Edition**

**Bob Foerster-** Needs to change the Waterline to an online format or blog or something similar. Thinks they could get more information out more frequently if it is an online format. What is envisioned is accepting articles going back and forth a couple times to make sure they are edited, say what they need to say, maybe take pictures and put that out. It would be beneficial to keep people updated.

**Daralyn Dobson-** There are some programs that they could use that are free or inexpensive. The only problem with that is that you could have problems communicating back and forth. That is one idea to get that information out there.

**Crystal Montecinos-** Mentioned that could be connected to some kind of web homepage.

**Daralyn Dobson-** Mentioned with the new website that is a good idea. Will get with the IT person.

**Kevin Baughman-**Suggested that we might need to be careful about if the issue here is trying to get the information out then the format for the Waterlines is rather formal. There are deadlines and if you we are not doing that and that is not working well, then going to something that is less formal, wants to make sure that we are careful that it doesn't let it fall far in the cracks. So we still need have to that formal process to make sure that information gets out.

**Bob Foerster-** Mentioned that they should probably make a point of reviewing everything that is being done at these quarterly meetings.

**Ron Penrose-** Asked if someone needs to review this and bring back a recommendation?

**Bob Foerster-** Stated that he is opened to a motion if ready.

**Ron Penrose-** Asked if they could bring it back next forum?

**Bob Foerster-**Agreed that it can be motioned for the next forum meeting

**Ron Penrose-** Motioned that they would like a conversion to long waterlines publication and someone here comes back with more detailed report on how to get it implemented.

**Greg Reed**-Second  
Unanimous

A. **Member's Open Comments**

**Ron Penrose**- Mentioned that what he has to say ties in with Item C, Article Assignments for the Next Addition. TMWA has been working on some enhancements to the Emergency Management Program. There are some interesting things that they are doing. Ron volunteered to write an article on what TMWA is doing on how they are improving their emergency response capability.

**Bob Foerster**- Stated to note that under comments, he would like to hear any article ideas.

**Crystal Montecinos**- Mentioned at the last meeting they had discussed on the found systems. They had a man here to attentively agreed to be an example of becoming a water system that wasn't done necessarily the best case scenario. Thought that was a great idea to be an example for small found systems.

**Bob Foerster**- Will get a hold of the gentleman volunteering. NRWA Conference is coming up on March 14-16<sup>th</sup>. Asking for nominations for operator of the year, administrative person of the year, waste water operator of the year. Would like to hear anyone's comments. Still looking for speakers for NRWA as well.

B. **Public Open Comments**

**Crystal Montecinos**- Mentioned that David Herren from Smith Valley Baptist Church. Mentioned that he is an example of a system that did exactly right so she wanted to express he has been amazing to work with.

C. **Agenda Items for the Next NWWOF Meeting.**

a) **Review of the prior suggestions in the October 4th 2016 minutes.**

**Bob Foerster**- Was asked to talk about how a sampling schedule might change given the concentration that you see in the current result. Example would be nitrates and lead.

Was asked to talk about water quality issues in schools. He noticed that the federal lever there's some legislation that about to be signed concerning that.

**Max Sosa**- Mentioned that there is going to be money available for Nevada schools to correct the issues.

**Kevin Baughman-** To his understanding that there is some money to go around 400 schools. Based on what the findings are, there could be more follow up from the EPA to the State to do some fixture upgrades if the lead and copper levels are too high.

**Bob Foerster-** There was some floor comments with Operator Certification on who is qualified to obtain certifications and the limitations on being able to go only one grade higher than the facility where you get your experience.

**b) Discussion.**

**NAC 445A.633 Full certificate: Issuance; required education and experience.**

**NAC 445A.6267 Minimum certification required; certification of persons making certain decisions.**

**Max Sosa-** Stated that the NAC 445A.633 is the regulation where it gives what the requirements for education experience to issue a certification. Everyone please look it over and we can discuss it next forum if they have any questions. The way it works is once you become a certified operator, you might be wondering what certification you might need for what facility. That is another regulation where the facility is evaluated from when they get their operating permit as to what certification is required. That is how it is determined what level of operator you need and it is based on mainly on flow and level of complexity of the system. That is one of the reasons why can't I test for a higher level and there is that limitation. Once you get higher certifications, you have the capability of being a supervisor and you don't have any experience working with that system, then the people are looking at you saying what we do and you won't know what to do. That is why that stipulation is there. You still have to maintain the CEU's for those levels.

**Ron Penrose-** Thinks that there are certain things in the NAC that point out some contradictions and how you interpret that. He asked to see if people can get together and form a subcommittee and take a look at the ins and outs of the rules.

**Max Sosa-** Stated that there is a process to go about doing that, but agrees that there is always room for improvement.

**My-Linh Nguyen-** Mentioned that she is certainly willing to work with the process of looking over the ins and outs of the rules.

**Max Sosa-** Agrees that there are some operators that work in different processes, but they don't have the flow so the facility isn't graded as high.

**Randy Mark-** Asked is there a set number of hours in order to get your full certification?

**Max Sosa**- Answered yes, at least 6 months or one year experienced at a water utility.

**Guest**- Asked how often are the certification requirements revisited?

**Bob Foerster**- Answered that it was last revisited in 2003. The need for change has come about when bureau's or groups like yourselves see the need to revisit the certification requirements.

**Bob Foerster**- Called for a motion for a working group to review the operator certification NAC 445A and come back with recommendations to the Bureau of Safe Drinking Water.

**Greg Reed**- Motion to Approve

**Dale Johnson**- Second  
Unanimous

**Bob Foerster**- Asked who would want to participate in the working group. Volunteered to be on the working group.

**Dale Johnson**-Volunteered to be on the working group.

**Mike Boney**- Volunteered to be on the working group

**Jackie Boado**- Volunteered to be on the working group

**James Imperial**- Volunteered to be on the working group.

**Greg Reed**- Volunteered to be on the working group

D. **Next Forum Meeting(s) – Action Item**

**Bob Foerster**- Requested for March 16, 2017

**Ron Penrose**- Motion to Approve

**Greg Reed**- Second  
Unanimous

E. **Adjourn**

**Ron Penrose**- Motion to Adjourn

**Greg Reed**- Second



Adjourned at 3:15pm