



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
Thursday, August 8, 2019 2:00pm to 3:00pm

Location: Tri-State Conference
South Point Hotel and Casino
Monterey Bay Room
Las Vegas, NV

Videoconference to LV: *Not Available. Please call into the phone conference number located below.*

Videoconference to Elko: *Not Available*

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

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

- o Forum's mission
- Meeting called to order at 2:05pm

Forum Members Present- Bob Foerster, NVRWA; Nathan Adams, Pioche Public Utilities; Rick Giltner, SNWA

Introductions and Guests- Kevin Baughman, RCAC; Brian Watts, CCWRD; Randen Buckles, City of Henderson; David Musselman; Chris Brennan, City of Henderson; Augustine Calleros, CNLV; Kevin McMahan, SREO; Joe Mathein, Pioche Public Utilities; Thomas McIntosh, CCWRD; Thomas Crawford, CCWRD; John Solvie, CCWRD; Jacob R Wawers, NVDDC; Bernard Dizon, City of Las Vegas, Rod Lewis, State Parks

On the phone- Reggie Lang, Max Sosa NDEP; Brian Green, NDWR; Jim Kerr, Elko County; Chris Jim, Round Mountain Gold; Will Raymond, TMWA; Ted Saxe, TMWA; Earl Hovda, TMWA

2) Approval of Forum/NTC Minutes from June 6, 2019. – Action Item

Jim Kerr-Motion to Approve
Nathan Adams-Second
Unanimous

3) Drinking Water Exam Results Review from June 13, 2019., (Linh Kieu)

Max Sosa- Brief summary of the last exam. We had 59 applicants applied for the June 17, 2019 exam, there were 58 examinees and the overall passing rate was 70%.

The Distribution areas needing improvement are:



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- Grade 1: Install equipment, perform maintenance, security safety and administration.
 - Grade 2: Monitor, evaluate and adjust disinfection, system information/components, laboratory analysis, security safety and administration.
 - Grade 3: System information/components, perform maintenance, monitor, evaluate and adjust disinfection.
 - Grade 4: Laboratory analysis.
The Treatment areas needing improvement are:
 - Grade 1: Security safety and administration. Comply with drinking water regs.
 - Grade 2: Did very well in all areas.
 - Grades 3: Did very well in all areas
 - Grade 4: Laboratory analysis, comply with drinking water regs., operate and maintain equipment, evaluate characteristics of source water, monitor evaluate and adjust treatment.
- Note: Grade 4 treatment there was only 1 applicant that did not pass.

4) Wastewater Exam Results Review: Ashley Jacobson

Bob Foerster- Mentioned that in the previous meeting there was some discussion about the feedback that we get from AWWA and ABC. In the past, we got a better breakdown of the topics missed and now we are getting a shorter list. Linh has indicated that needs to be taken to ABC and Bob agrees.

John Solvie- Mentioned that in years past, we got nothing but complaints from clients across the country and in Canada. They would get these exam results back and get 27 different categories and that is not a standard in the credential industry. Typically you have five or six categories like maintenance, process, etc. so it helps target operators that didn't pass to know what they need to study in. When there gets to be so many categories, it starts to get confusing. So in general in exams and they did it across the board to make it viable, to break it down into about 6 categories. The design is to be able to help the operator know what areas they need to study.

Bob Foerster- Mentioned that is the purpose of the list, whether it's a long list or a short list. You are saying, if you don't condense it to a short list, it gets to be confusing?

John Solvie- Stated that with testing clients it becomes not helpful at all to know what you're supposed to study when it says something like peristaltic pumps. The goal of the certification is to be able to validate someone's competence in the field so it targets the areas that they actually worked on to know what they are weak on. Feel free to catch him on the side and send him some notes. He would love to dialog further on this. This has been discussed for many years and they have actually got nothing but compliments from other testing clients.

Guest- Mentioned that it used to be a little bit better when they had more categories. When it is more detailed you know exactly what you need to study.



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John Solvie- Mentioned that the math category ended up blending in with the others because it is very challenging because what will happen is you will have an exam and you will say it is 7% math when it is really 27% math because the process questions are really math questions. That is where there was a lot of frustration and confusion. The exam is not validating an educational process, it is validating your competence to work in the field. He will bring it up in the next commission meeting in September.

Jim Kerr- He said he would like to see on the results more information on where the testers are lacking.

5) Training Needs/ Forum Input

Guest- Mentioned that Tri-State is pretty much the only place you can get a lot of your contact hours for wastewater. Las Vegas has a little bit more, but not a whole lot.

Bob Foerster- He mentioned if you wish for more trainings, request them from NVRWA or other training providers.

Jim Kerr- Asked if everyone figured out what they were going to do with the regulation requirements for the state of NV now that they will not be on the exams anymore?

Bob Foerster- Answered that Linh went over it in his presentation stating that they are considering a training requirement in place of regulatory questions on the exam for water. It is underdevelopment.

Link Kieu- Mentioned that him and My-Linh are going through user needs and test cases on what they should do. They don't know if they should have a training or some type of questionnaire at the end of our renewal cycle. There will be something not this renewal cycle, but definitely in 2020.

6) NDEP Updates: Linh Kieu

- o Drinking water tiered fee increase goes into effect July 1, 2019
- o Drinking water new contact hour requirements apply to certifications due 12/31/2019.
- o Drinking water exam (ABC) update.

Link Kieu- Mentioned that NDEP just recently had a fee increase. Make sure you get the new application on our website and see how those apply to you. In addition to the fee increase, there are the new contact hour requirements that apply to certifications that expire at the end of this year. Finally, there are the ABC exams, we are going to get pushed to the new exams probably at the beginning of next year. If you want to take the old exams, please make sure you apply by the end of this year because after January 1, 2020 we will be transitioning to the 2018 ABC exams.

7) NWEA / NDEP Updates: Ashley Jacobson / Liz Kingsland

Regulation update/Survey review

Ashley Jacobson and Liz Kingsland not available for updates



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Member's Open Comments

No Comments

A. Public Comments

Rod Lewis- Asked what is the difference between the old exam and the new exam?

John Solvie- Answered every exam that comes out goes through an exam cycle. To create exams and legally validate that we send out surveys to thousands of operators across the country. All of that information comes together to form an exam blueprint because we have to legally validate if we ask you a question that says how do you turn widget A, we have to be able to validate using data that a grade 3 operator can turn widget A. So that drives the creation of the exam. Once that exam blueprint is created, it's laid out and it's got dozens of different areas. Then, the scheme committees get together and they pull questions, rewrite questions and write new questions for the exam. It really depends on where the industry is changing. They are different exams. There is a lot that goes into the exams, but the general content will be there. Feel free to contact him if anyone has any questions.

Linh Kieu- Reiterated that is kind of where we are at with NV where we are still trying to recover the regulatory piece. The silver lining is that we are able to make sure the all of our operators are up to date with regulations.

B. Next Forum Meeting:

Bob Foerster- Will send out some calendar dates and see what everyone can do. TBD

C. Adjourn

Jim Kerr-Motion to Adjourn

Nathan Adams-Second
Unanimous

Adjourned at 1:30pm