

**Certification Program External Review**

**Certification Program Advisory  
Committee**


Harrisburg, PA  
November 5, 2015

Tom Wolf, Governor John Quigley, Secretary

## External Review Timeline

- March 11 – Identify priority elements
- May 28 – DEP provides updates and compiled data to CPAC on priority elements
- July 6 – Prepare draft external review report
- November 5 – DEP provides updates to CPAC on survey results; CPAC action needed on report
- December 10 – present findings to the State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators

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## Basics

- Survey was open July 1 to September 30 (three months)
- Advertised by:
  - *Drinking Water News*
  - All industry associations, all approved exam providers, and the Water Utility Council
  - Index card flyer distributed at exams, conferences, and other training events. Also included with certificate renewals during the survey period.
  - DEP field staff promotion with systems
  - DEP website

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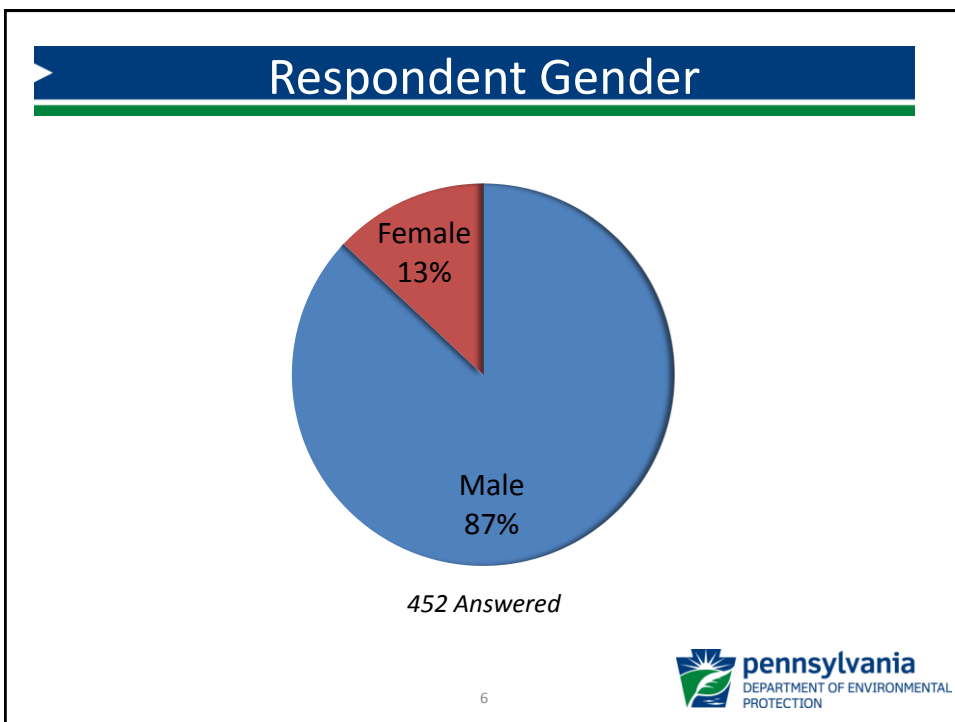
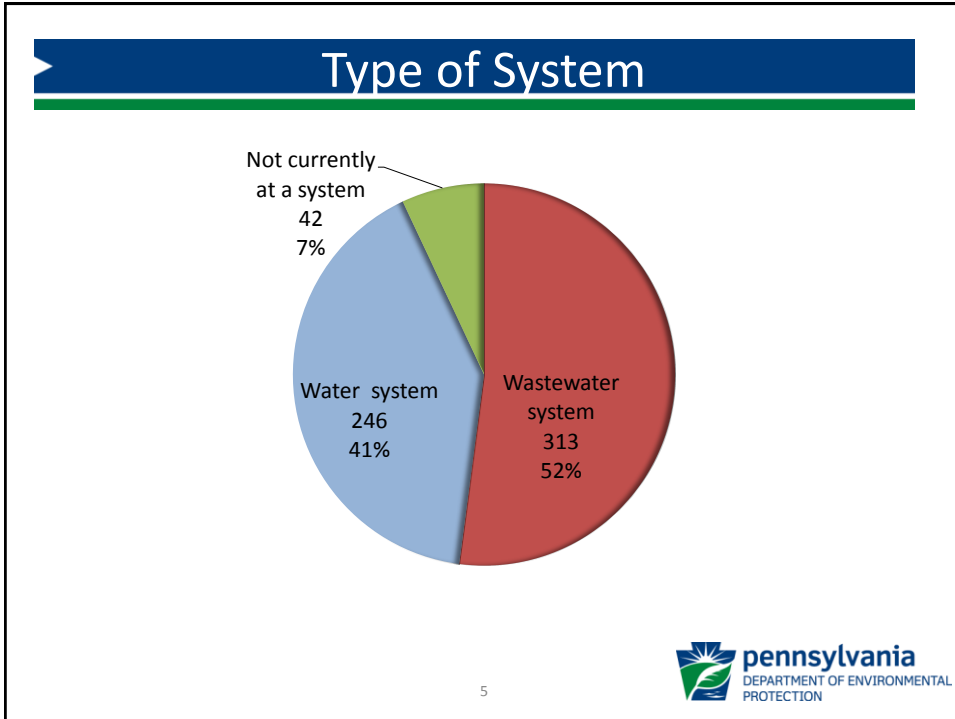


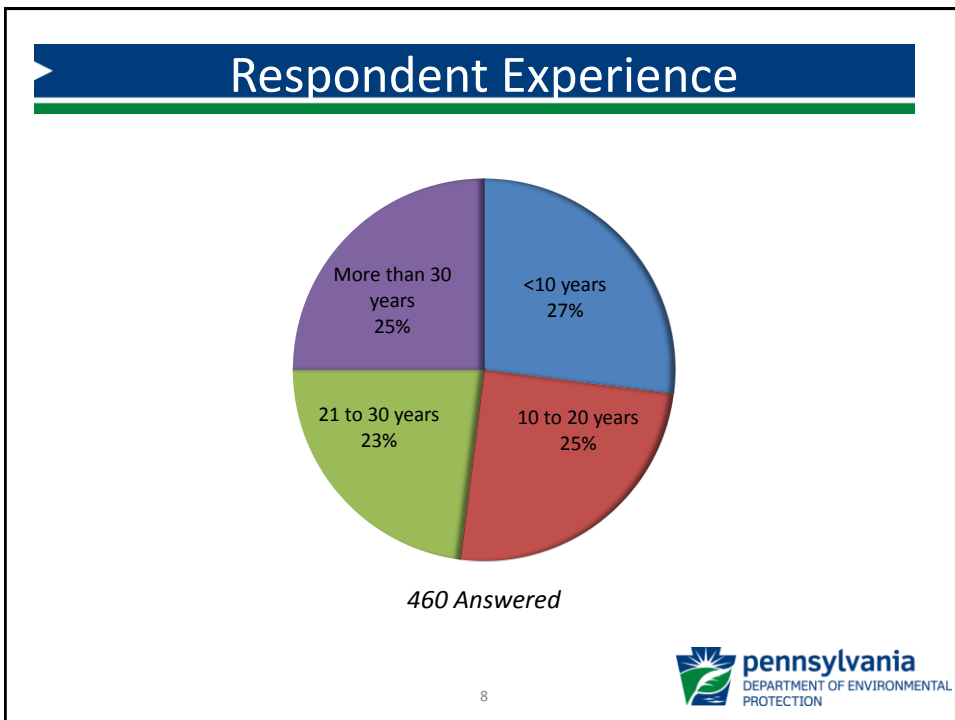
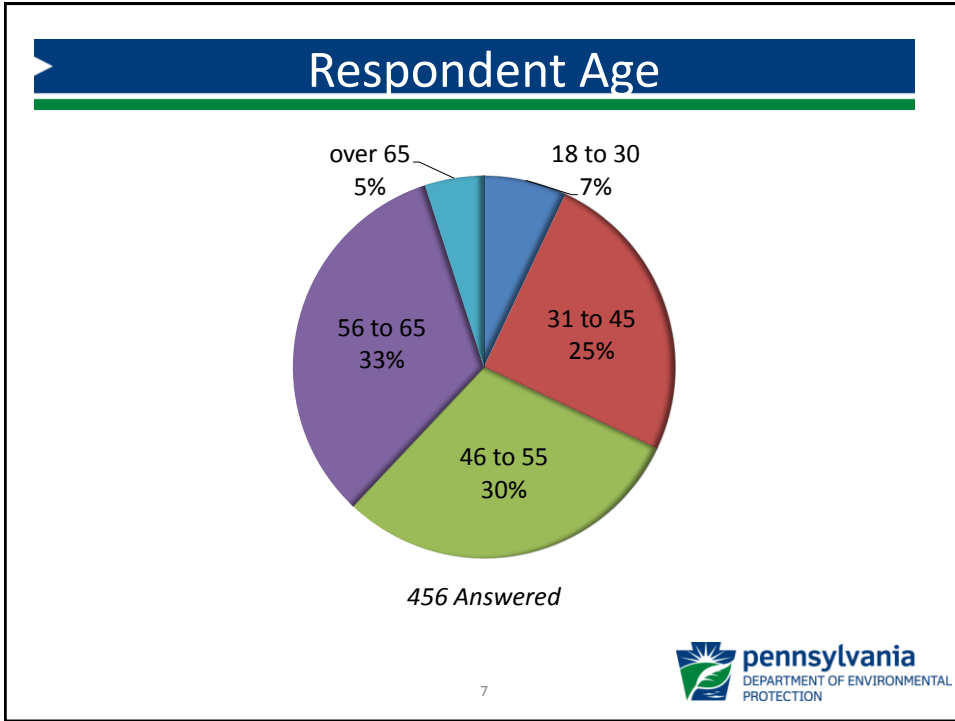
## Respondents

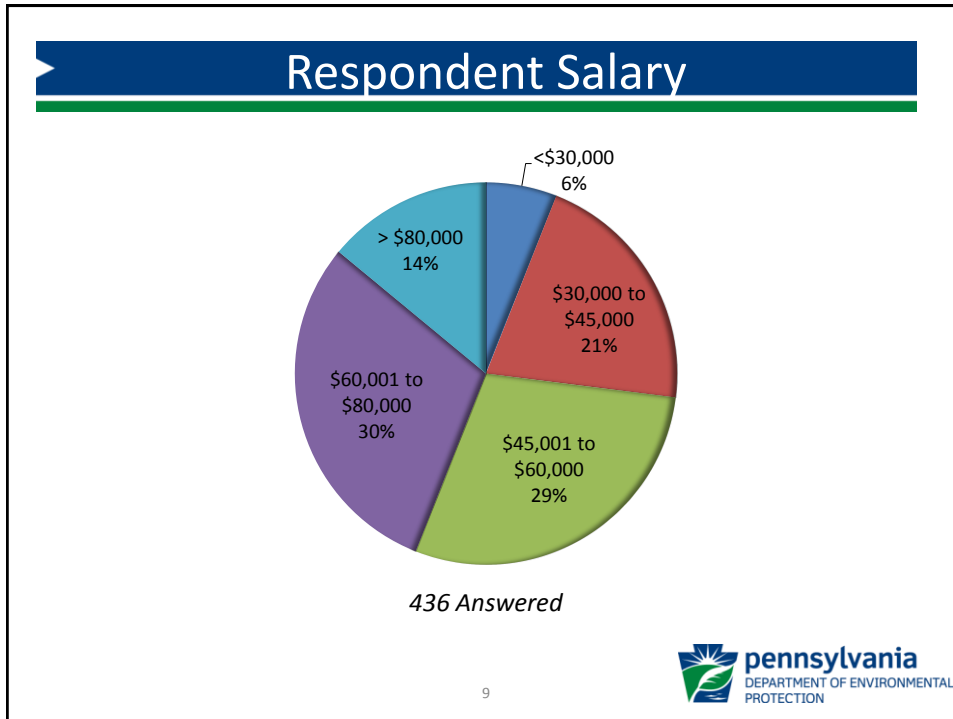
- 494 individuals completed the survey
  - 471 completed all applicable questions
  - 376 certified operators (represents 4.4 percent of certified operator population)
  - 50 circuit riders
  - 80 system owners
- Average completion time: 11 minutes

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## 2010 versus 2015

- Difficult to compare 2010 to 2015 survey results
- Although some questions were similar, the electronic survey made it possible to use rating scales
  - 2010 survey was primarily yes or no
- Cannot compare scaled responses to yes/no

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## Trends

- For many of the ranking scale (1-5) questions, we observed a bell curve tilted to the positive

**8. Please rate your satisfaction with the number of self-study materials available to prepare for the operator certification exams:**

Satisfaction Level	Percentage
Not Satisfied	8%
2	13%
3	25%
4	24%
Completely Satisfied	17%
N/A	13%

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## Category: DEP Services

- DEP services included:
  - Website
  - Earthwise Academy
  - Certification staff
  - Field inspectors
- Questions on scaled rating all received generally positive tilt

**2. The DEP Operator Certification website provide information:**

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2%
Disagree	4%
Neutral	17%
Agree	54%
Strongly Agree	17%

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## Category: Exam Services

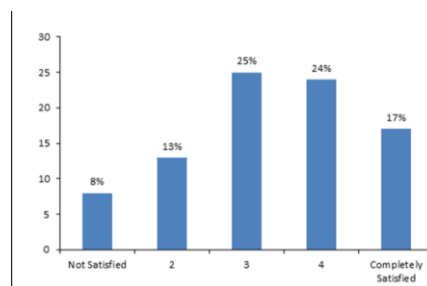
- Exam services included:
  - Travel distance to exam sites
  - Paper vs. online exams
- Results tilted to the positive
- 55 percent prefer electronic exams to paper

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## Category: Training

- Training included:
  - Materials for exam prep
  - DEP modules
  - Finding courses for Con Ed
  - Variety of course topics available
  - Delivery format preference
- All scaled question results tilted to the positive
- We also gathered data on preferred delivery format and training topic needs



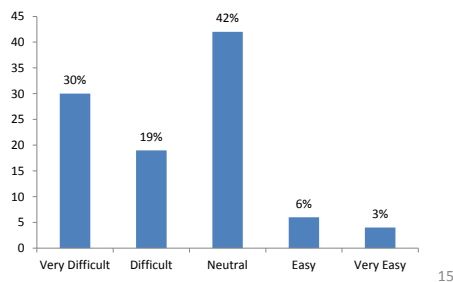
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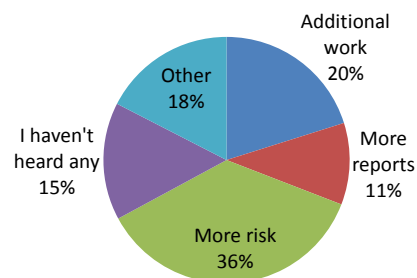
## Category: Owner Responsibilities

- Mostly information-gathering questions focusing on responsibilities
  - Results showed general understanding of requirements
- Also note:

Rate your difficulty in finding properly certified operators to run your system:



Reasons, if any, have you heard for operators not wanting to become certified?



## Category: Operator Responsibilities

- Mostly information-gathering questions with a focus on operator responsibilities
- Generally positive results, the majority of operators know their responsibilities
- About half of the 50 circuit rider respondents indicated that they have provided work plans and management plans to the system owners
- Most operators feel there should be a limit on the number of facilities a circuit rider operates



## General Comments

- DEP received 226 general comments in the “Any other thoughts” section
- DEP will consider each comment and review the information for trends

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## Summary Observations

- Survey revealed general satisfaction with DEP services (website, Earthwise, staff, exams)
- Ratings of DEP modules have improved but DEP will continue to modify
- Course topic suggestions received from 220 respondents:
  - Will be organized and shared with training providers
- Classroom courses are still preferred, but web-based training also ranked high

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## Summary Observations

- Owners reported difficulty in finding properly certified operators (of 84 owners, 49 percent reported it be difficult or very difficult)
- Majority of owners and operators appear to be aware of primary responsibilities
- There is a need for DEP to continue training and informing **circuit riders** of their responsibilities, including management plans

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## Questions?

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