

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
STATE BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF
WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS OPERATORS**

**Board Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2013
10th Floor Conference Room**

Board Members Present

Michael Kyle, Acting Chairman
Dr. Ronald Neufeld, via telephone
Mary Roland
John Schombert
Curt Steffy
Phil Consonery, BSDW
Cheri Sansoni, Board Secretary

Board Members Absent

Joseph Swanderski, Chairman
Patrick Bair, Legal Counsel

Non Board Members Present

William McNamara, BSDW
Scott Noldy, BSDW
Julianne Burke, BSDW
Sean Gimbel, Policy Office

Joseph Swanderski was absent for this meeting and Mike Kyle was the acting Chairman. Mr. Kyle called the meeting of the State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators (Board) to order at 10:08 AM.

Criminal History Report

Ms. Sansoni, on behalf of Paul Handke, presented the review committee's recommendation for the following operator certification applicant with a criminal history record (CHR):

1. Client #297176, manufacture of controlled substance, Felony charge, October 1993.

The review committee recommended that the Board approve certification for the CHR applicant. Mr. Schombert motioned to issue the license. Ms. Roland seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Ms. Sansoni informed the Board that Kevin Karmosky will no longer be presenting CHRs for the Department to the Review Committee. Gary Moyer will carry out the CHR duties for wastewater and Scott Sykes for water applicants with CHRs respectively.

Approval of December 5, 2012 Minutes

Mr. Kyle noted a typo on page 2 second paragraph under Reciprocity Requests, “collectionq” should be “collections”. Mr. Schombert motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Roland seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Approval of New, Upgrades and Reciprocity Applications New & Upgrade Applications

The new and upgrade applications were presented to the Board for approval. Mr. Steffy motioned to issue licenses for all new and upgrade applications on the Evaluation Summary Report. Ms. Roland seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Reciprocity Requests

The following wastewater reciprocity applications were presented to the Board.

John MaHaffy - His application was tabled from the last meeting because he had submitted expired licenses. He resubmitted his current licenses.

He holds two New Jersey Wastewater certificates. An N4 Industrial and a S2 Public Wastewater license and both certs expire on 9/30/13. He has 8 years and 8 months experience working at the Clean Harbors facility as a wastewater operator/supervisor, which is a B-size plant using activated sludge WW1 and Collections systems WWE4.

The Department recommendation is to issue a WWBE 1,4 certificate. Mr. Steffy motioned to issue the license as recommended by the Department. Ms. Roland seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Jared Brantner – Holds a Maryland Wastewater Class 5A certification that expires on 4/1/14. He has 4 years and 1 month experience working at the City of Frederick WWTP, which is a Class A plant using activated sludge WW1 and Collections systems WWE4.

The Department recommendation is to issue a WWAE 1,4 certificate. Ms. Roland motioned to issue the license as recommended by the Department. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Michael Silver – Holds Discharge papers documenting water system operations from the U.S. Army. He has 14 years army water treatment experience at Class C plants. He has 1 year 6 months at Tobyhanna Army Depot, which is a Class C system using fixed film treatment WW2 and Collections WWE4. He has 1 year and 2 months working at Fourth Creek WWTP, which is a Class A system using activated sludge WW1. He does not have a valid WW license, only water military discharge papers.

The Department deferred to the Board for determination to issue a reciprocity license. Ms. Roland motioned to deny wastewater certification due to lack of a valid military wastewater license. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Douglas Haasis – Holds an Industrial 4 license in Maryland that expires on 10/1/14 and an Industrial N2 license in New Jersey that expires on 9/30/13. He currently works at Del Monte Pet Products but does not list that plant as work experience. He worked at Geneva WW system for 5 years, which is a Class C system, using ponds and lagoons WW3 and collections WWE4. He also worked at Coca Cola Foods WW system for over 3 years, also a Class C system using ponds and lagoons WW3 and collections WWE4.

The Department recommendation is to issue a WWCE 3,4 certificate. Mr. Steffy motioned to issue the license as recommended by the Department. Ms. Roland seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

The following water reciprocity applications were presented to the Board.

Mark Prazak – Reports holding a Texas Class B Water certification that expires on 3/3/13. He has 3 years, 8 months experience working at City of Bellaire, which is a Class A plant using subclasses 1,3,4,7,8,11,12 and distribution. He also worked at Fort Bend Mud #30, which is a Class B system using subclasses 7,8,11,12 and distribution for 2 years and 5 months. He holds a PA wastewater license obtained through reciprocity.

Ms. Sansoni reported that the operator certification department in Texas has not responded to validate Mr. Prazak's license. Ms. Roland also questioned the number of subclass treatments issued for certification at a groundwater facility. Mr. Schombert motioned to delay issuing a PA reciprocity license until Texas verifies a valid license, as well as further clarification of why certification with multiple subclass treatments was issued for an operator at a groundwater facility. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Michael Silver – Holds a North Carolina water license that expires 12/31/13 and has Military Discharge papers documenting 14 years of water system operation from the U.S. Army at Class C systems. He has 1 year experience at the City of Statesville Water Treatment plant, which is a Class A system using subclasses 1 and 12. He has 1 year and 6 months and currently works at Tobyhanna Army Depot which is a Class C system using subclasses 7,8,10,11,12 and distribution.

The Department recommendation is to issue a WCE 1,7,8,10,11,12 certificate. Ms. Roland motioned to issue the license as recommended by the Department. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Denials of Applications for Certification Renewal

There were no denials to present to the Board.

Update on On-Line Testing

William McNamara presented the following proposal for online certification exams. During the August 2012 Board meeting, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) presented an overview of plans to develop and deploy online certification exams in 2013. Board members inquired about the feasibility of using DEP offices and/or community colleges as hosting sites for online exams. In response to the latter inquiry, DEP's findings are as follows:

- 14 community colleges are located in Pennsylvania, but none in the northwest, northcentral and central areas (gap from HACC to Pittsburgh).
- Only three of the colleges offer “testing centers” for external use. External use is primarily for students taking distance education courses at other institutions. The final exam is proctored.
- This is not an option that would provide testing throughout the state and appears to present logistical difficulties in collaborating with the colleges.

Option 1A: AEP Proctors Exam at DEP Regional Office Computer Lab

- DEP’s six regional offices maintain computer labs containing between 10 and 20 computers. One exception: the Southeast Region has not established a room with permanently installed computers. The region has the capability to set up laptops in a conference room for each training event. District offices do not have computers for training or testing use.
- DEP’s Bureau of Safe Drinking Water (BSDW) has contacted the Information Technology coordinator in each regional office. For DEP business purposes, the regional computer labs are available to the public and do not require the presence of a DEP staff member during training activities.
 - This option: an Approved Examination Provider (AEP) proctors the exam without DEP employees or Outreach Assistance Provider Program (OAPP) employees present in the room.
- The key to this process is a special log-in to the DEP network for individuals taking the test as described below.
- Exams are served up from DEP’s secure Moodle Learning Management System (LMS). DEP maintains control of the exams.
- Logistics:
 - BSDW and the AEP are required to reserve the regional computer labs well in advance, up to a maximum of 2 days per month.
 - The AEP advertises dates and registers examinees.
 - Registration information is relayed to DEP.
 - DEP performs necessary set-up procedures in eFACTS and the Moodle LMS.
 - DEP relays log-in information to the AEP prior to exam.
 - Exam will not “open” in the system until scheduled exam time.
 - The mechanism to launch and complete the exam is through a safe log-in to the Commonwealth network system called a kiosk log-in:
 - User logs in directly to DEP’s Earthwise Academy site.
 - All features are disabled in Windows and Internet Explorer, including the ability to open new browser tabs or redirect to new sites. No other software can be accessed.

- User can only take the test and log-off.
- Key Features:
 - AEPs do not need to schedule and rent appropriate testing space.
 - AEPs do not need to purchase or use their own computers.
 - No special software required (e.g., Safe Exam Browser), because of use of Commonwealth kiosk log-in.
 - DEP maintains control over the physical environment (DEP computer lab) and the electronic environment (kiosk log-in and exams on Moodle server).
 - AEP maintains responsibility for registration and proctoring.
 - DEP staff must reserve and coordinate regional computer lab use (up to twice a month).

Option 1B: AEP Administers Exam at DEP Regional Office Computer Lab with OAPP Proctors

Everything is the same as Option 1, with the following exceptions:

- OAPP/wage proctors are present to proctor the examination instead of the AEP.
- Passwords for log-in to exams are sent to OAPP proctors instead of AEP.
- DEP coordinates regional computer lab, AEP administration, and OAPP proctoring.

Option 2A: AEP Conducts Proctoring at Facilities of their own Choosing

This is essentially the option first proposed to the Board in August 2012:

- AEP is responsible for reserving a facility that meets DEP requirements.
- AEP is responsible for providing computers that meet DEP requirements.
 - AEP is responsible for selecting and supervising proctors (same requirements for proctors as Option 1A).
- Exams are served up from DEP’s secure Moodle Learning Management System (LMS). DEP maintains control of the exams.
- Logistics:
 - AEP sets up the exam appointment and relays this information to DEP.
 - DEP performs necessary set-up procedures in eFACTS and Moodle LMS.
 - DEP relays log-in information to AEP prior to exam.
 - DEP relays log-in information to the AEP prior to exam.
 - Exam will not “open” in the system until scheduled exam time.
 - Day of exam: AEP proctors the exam at their facility of choosing.
- Key Features:
 - DEP is not involved in reserving facilities.
 - Exams remain on DEP’s secure Moodle server and are set to open and close only during the examination period. Each provider has their own set of exams in the system.
 - Exams will only open in Safe Exam Browser, a software product that must be loaded on each local computer used for testing. When Safe Exam Browser is

running, no other programs can be opened, including another browser window. DEP configures Safe Exam Browser to launch the testing site and gives the software files to the AEP for loading.

Option 2B: AEP handles Administration at their own facility, OAPP Staff Proctor the Examination

This is the same as Option 2A, with the following exceptions:

- OAPP staff handles proctoring at the AEP's facility.
- DEP relays log-in information to OAPP staff rather than AEP.

After discussion regarding the various options as presented by Mr. McNamara, the Board opted to initiate Option 1B for the pilot phase of online testing. Mr. Schombert motioned to approve Option 1B for the initial phase of online testing with the stipulation that the online testing program be reevaluated at a future Board meeting with the long-term possibility of transferring the proctoring responsibilities over to the AEPs if feasible. Ms. Roland seconded the motion. Mr. Consonery abstained. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Update on Exam Scores

Ms. Sansoni presented a handout to the Board detailing the passing percentage rates for 2012 water and wastewater operator examinations. Mr. Consonery proposed lowering the cut score for the water subclass 12 (nongaseous chemical disinfection – W12) exam to improve the passing percentage for this exam. After discussion regarding the cut score for W12, the Board resolved to lower the W12 cut score from 20 to 19. Ms. Roland motioned to lower the cut score from 20 to 19 for the remainder of 2013 with the stipulation that the examination passing percentages be reevaluated at the first Board meeting of 2014. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Board Secretary Report

Ms. Sansoni presented the following extension requests:

Dwight Young requested an extension of his wastewater renewal end date of December 31, 2012. Mr. Young lacked the continuing education hours to renew due to having taken a duplicate course in the same 3-year cycle. He stated that the course IDs and titles of that CPR course were different and therefore, thought he had taken a different course. It turned out to be the same course with a slightly different title and he was not given credit. Mr. Young had since taken a course on February 9, 2013 to make up for the hours. Mr. Steffy motioned to grant an extension to February 9, 2013. Mr. Schombert seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Mr. Consonery informed the Board that the Davidson formula pie chart will be added to the formulas and conversions guide that is included in the exam packet at the time of testing. Mr. Consonery stated that the Davidson pie chart is also used in Penn State and Sacramento courses. There was no motion required.

Newton Condict Jr.'s certification request was tabled from the December 5, 2012 meeting due to not submitting any supporting document from a supervisor as required per 25 Pa. Code § 302.701 relating to minimum education requirements. Mr. Condict since submitted a letter from an employer verifying his employment in the wastewater field prior to February 2002. The regulations state the Board may grant an exemption to the minimum education requirements in such a case. Mr. Steffy motioned to grant the waiver and to issue the license. Mr. Schombert seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Ms. Sansoni informed the Board that there was an incident during an exam session in which an examinee refused to turn off and put away a cell phone as required. Ms. Sansoni suggested including language in the proctor instruction to examinees to invalidate an examinee's score if there is refusal to comply with the rules. Board agreed to include this language – "*For anyone refusing to comply with the examination rules, their scores may be invalidated for the session*". Mr. Kyle motioned to add the aforementioned language to the proctor instructions and that the Board should review whether to invalidate an examinee's scores on a case by case basis. Mr. Steffy seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Old and New Business

There was no old or new business to discuss.

Ms. Roland motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:00PM.