

## Operator Certification Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 19 · 2:00 – 3:00pm

*Google Meet joining info*

*Video call link: [meet.google.com/oqj-mqhm-mjs](https://meet.google.com/oqj-mqhm-mjs)*

**Purpose of Meeting:** Discussion the Op Cert YouTube playlist and its protentional. In additional, talk about succession planning and recruitment measures.

### **Committee Members Present:**

- Anupa Jain - City of Chandler, Water Distribution Grade 4
- Mike Osborne - Town of Marana, Wastewater Collection Grade 4 & Committee Co-Chair
- Tina Pico - ADEQ Representative & Executive Secretary
- Art Nunez - EPCOR, Water Treatment Grade 4
- Eboni Rhone - ADEQ Representative & Executive Secretary
- Rich Marsh —Town of Welton, Appointed Municipal Official

### **Committee Members Who Sent Regrets:**

- Fred Kreiss - Cactus State Water, Investor-owned water/wastewater facility
- Dawn Simpson - Sunstate Environmental, Small Public Water System & Committee Chair
- Roman Diaz - Gateway Community College, Faculty for Sanitary Sciences
- Arti Jain - ADEQ Representative
- Jason Joynes - Wastewater Treatment Grade 4
- Dawn Simpson - Sunstate Environmental, Small Public Water System & Committee Chair
- Rob McCandless - Stantec, Professional Engineer
- Blake Anderson - Remote Operator Representative

### **Guest Attendees:**

- Daria Evans-Walker, EPA Representative
- Jason Bobko, ADEQ Representative
- Dean Moulis, ADEQ Representative
- Laura Carusona, ADEQ Representative

**Call to Order:** Eboni Rhone called to order the regular meeting of the Certification Committee at 2:01PM through the virtual platform, Google Meet.

**Roll Call:** 6 of the 11 committee members were present. The Committee Chair, Dawn Simpson, was unable to attend and named Mike Osborne as her designated representative. Per Arizona Administrative Code Title 18, Chapter 5, Article 1, Section 103(F), the quorum was met and the meeting continued as scheduled.

**General Business:** No general business was discussed.

### **New Business:**

#### **YouTube Playlist**

- Many have not heard about the YouTube Playlist yet. ADEQ to get the word out and add more wastewater related content.
- Adding timestamps to each webinar and the associated presentation would make the videos more interactable.
- Recorded webinars through private links/sign-in request/check for engagement.
- AZ Water to distribute link to ADEQ Op Cert playlist.
- Adding general training from EPA. Similar to the 2005 1-hour courses.
- [EPA Drinking Water training system](#) for ADEQ or stakeholders to use.
- Operators are limit to 10 PDHs when using the Op Cert playlist.

Eboni will follow up with the ADEQ Communication's team on features we can add to the playlist.

#### **Succession Planning/Recruitment**

- Successful hiring of operators using ADEQ's search database.
- Using EPA knowledge retention tool for training works for operator recruitment.
- TA providers to use EPA tools for system operations. Help with retaining operators.
- Survey systems for workforce development needs. Success in Nevada.
- TMF 2.0 could survey water system's needs and their succession plan.
- Knowledge retention is good. Succession planning can be problematic at times.
- Recruitment is difficult, because of a lack of knowledge of the position.
- AWWA - vet initiative. Prison training as an option.
- High school/college - blocked by requiring a GED for a Grade 1. Possible training to prepare high schoolers to enter the workforce or update the rule to allow 17+ to certify.
- National RWAAZ, Department of Labor, Veteran Affairs, and AWWA working on apprenticeship programs.
- RCAC and EPCOR partners with smaller system to help fill in operators.
- High schoolers can be a hard sell – disinterested.

- Succession Planning - not a formal process and can be controversial. Further research is needed. Surveying systems with TMF 2.0 could be an excellent way to gauge what systems need to acquire stable operators.

### **Leadership Development Workshop**

- Workshop will be January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Tempe from 8am to 3pm.
- Draft agenda was sent with committee meeting minutes for members to volunteer or suggest speakers.

**Next Meeting:** The Certification Committee will receive a Doodle Poll to vote on the next meeting in 2024.

### **Meeting Adjourned at 3:00PM**

**Minutes Approved By:** Jason Bobko, Manager, Safe Drinking Water Engineering Review, Technical Assistance and Operator Certification Unit

**Minutes Submitted By:** Eboni Rhone, Operator Certification Program Coordinator