

OTCO Compliance Workshop

October 10, 2024
Andrew Barienbrock



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Andrew Barienbrock	Environmental Manager	
Vacant	Environmental Specialist 3	Developing Inspector Training, District Oversight, Reclassifications, Technical Assistance, Emergency Response and Sanitary Survey Auditing
Vacant	Environmental Specialist 2	Security, Contingency Planning, Emergency Response Planning, Operator Notifications and Enforcement
Jessica Frey	Environmental Specialist 2	Security, Contingency Planning, Emergency Response Planning, Operator Notifications and Enforcement
<i>Kevin Swiadek</i>	<i>Environmental Supervisor</i>	<i>Operations, Resiliency and certification</i>
<i>Susan Riggins</i>	Environmental Specialist 2	Contact Hours, Advisory Council, eBusiness and application processing
Vacant	Environmental Specialist 2	Contact Hours, eBusiness, green leaf Training provider program, and application processing
Julie Spangler	Environmental Supervisor	Laboratory Certification
Dan Langton	Environmental Specialist 2	Laboratory certification
Hilary Speelman	Environmental Specialist 2	Laboratory certification
Krystie Perry	Environmental Specialist 2	Laboratory certification

Operations, Resiliency, and Certification Section



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Security

- Heightened awareness of water and wastewater plant security
- Increased attacks on America's infrastructure
 - U.S. EPA and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) are warning of high risk due to Russian tensions
- Resources:
 - Implementing a cybersecurity program
epa.ohio.gov/static/Portals/28/documents/security/CyberSecurity.pdf
 - Updates on vulnerabilities and reporting attacks – CISA
waterisac.org
 - What to do if you are attacked – Department of Justice
justice.gov/criminal-ccips/file/1096971/download



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Free Cybersecurity Assessment and Technical Assistance

Cybersecurity is a broad term that refers to the security of computer network infrastructure and data. A cyber attack is an attempt to undermine or compromise the function of a computer network or system, or an attempt to track the online movements of individuals without their permission.

What is the assessment and technical assistance?

With the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Horsley Witten Group (HWG) is offering free, confidential, cybersecurity assessments and technical assistance to interested water and wastewater utilities. The assessment consists of a questionnaire completed with HWG staff, and the technical assistance consists of developing a cyber action plan based on the results of your utility's assessment focused on best practices to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident. Adoption of these practices can reduce the likelihood that a cyber attack will be successful and allow the utility to recover from any cyber attacks faster and at a lower cost. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HWG is offering this assessment and technical assistance virtually.

What are the expected outcomes?

All individual utility information gathered during the assessment will be protected and remain confidential. Trends in the anonymized, aggregated data will be shared with other utilities and agencies so that lessons learned from the assessments may benefit all.

Participating utilities can expect to receive a straightforward overview of their vulnerabilities and suggested best practices to reduce risks to their business enterprise, SCADA, and communications systems. Additionally, the utility will develop their cyber action plan with HWG and work to implement any recommended best practices.

What does the utility need to prepare before the assessment and technical assistance?

The assessment will require input from management, IT, operations/control staff and engineers as appropriate. The utility will also need to compile and provide any existing system documentation/diagrams, policies, and procedures.

Is there any follow-up?

Yes, HWG will contact the utility on two separate occasions after the development of the cyber action plan to gauge progress and see if additional assistance is required.

How does my utility participate?

To date, we have worked with over 100 utilities across the United States providing free cybersecurity technical assistance. EPA plans to expand the program as resources allow. We are continuing to register interested utilities at the link below. If you would like more information about the program, contact Gemma Kite at gkite@horsleywitten.com, or (508) 833-6600.

To register your utility, please visit:
www.horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities

U.S. EPA offers free, confidential, cybersecurity assessments and technical assistance for interested Water and Wastewater Utilities

Register Your Utility



[epa.gov/waterriskassessment/forms/
epas-water-sector-cybersecurity-
evaluation-program](http://epa.gov/waterriskassessment/forms/epas-water-sector-cybersecurity-evaluation-program)

Unitronics PLCs Hack

- Iranian actors targeting components made in Israel
- Make sure to change default passwords
- Change default communications port



This photo provided by the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa shows the screen of a Unitronics device that was hacked in Aliquippa, Pa., on Nov. 25.

Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa via AP



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Cybersecurity

The service line inventory development and lead service line replacement planning assistance opportunity provides free support to public water systems to complete their service line inventory. [Don't miss this opportunity.](#)

- [Implementing a Cybersecurity Program at Your Water or Wastewater Utility](#)
- [Water and Wastewater Sector - Incident Response Guide \(CISA\)](#)
- [Best Practices for Victim Response and Reporting of Cyber Incidents \(U.S. Department of Justice Cybersecurity Unit\)](#)
- [Baseline Information on Malevolent Acts for Community Water Systems](#)
- [U.S. EPA Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector — Implementing cybersecurity best practices is critical for water and wastewater utilities. The resource link above can bring your utility one step closer to cyber resilience.](#)
- [Top Cyber Actions for Securing Water Systems](#)
- [PRC State-Sponsored Cyber Activity: Actions for Critical Infrastructure Leaders \(CISA\)](#)
- [Defending OT Operations Against Ongoing Pro-Russia Hacktivist Activity \(CISA\)](#)
- [Cyber Incident Reporting Process \(U.S. EPA\)](#)

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Free Cybersecurity Assessment and Technical Assistance

U.S. EPA	
CISA	



Resources



epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/drinking-and-ground-waters/public-water-systems/security-and-emergency-preparedness



epa.gov/waterresilience/epa-cybersecurity-water-sector



cisa.gov/shields-up



cisa.gov/cyber-hygiene-services



Water ISAC (water Infrastructure security network)
waterisac.org



Dragos Free Community Defense Program Registration
dragos.com/community-defense-program/registration/

Take Aways

- Change default passwords
- Segment networks
- Update software with patches
- Complete Ohio EPA's cybersecurity survey



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Local Government Cyber Grants

CyberOhio announced \$7 million in grants for local government

- .gov conversion - up to \$9,500 to convert to .gov email addresses
- cybersecurity software and services



*[cyber.ohio.gov/priorities/
assisting-local-government-entities](https://cyber.ohio.gov/priorities/assisting-local-government-entities)*



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Important Items to Consider

- Ability to run system on emergency power
 - Practicing
- Ability to run facility manually
 - Exercising



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Supply Chain Issues

- U.S. EPA website on Supply Chain Resilience
 - Identify alternate suppliers
 - Stay up-to-date on current and potential issues
 - Notify U.S. EPA



*[epa.gov/waterutilityresponse/
water-and-wastewater-sector-supply-chain-resilience](https://epa.gov/waterutilityresponse/water-and-wastewater-sector-supply-chain-resilience)*



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Paper and Pencil Exams



Last paper and pencil examination was held on May 3, 2023



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Future Exams

- Exams are still being given by our third-party exam provider Water Professionals International (WPI)(formerly ABC)
- Preparation is the same - use the need-to-know criteria and reference materials
- Ohio EPA developing course on exam preparation



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Preparing for Exams

- How to prepare
 - Need to know criteria
 - References
- What not to do
 - Do not use question sets as your only study method
- Training Programs

WPI/ABC Need To Know Criteria

Please note that the title on WPI's Need to Know Criteria may be a different exam level than the Ohio EPA certification you are seeking. When you are applying through WPI's provider, once you select Ohio EPA certification, you will select the Ohio EPA certificate level you are seeking and the appropriate WPI test is selected.

- [Class 1 Water Distribution](#)
- [Class 2 Water Distribution](#)
- [Class A Water Supply](#) (see Drinking Water Class A)
- [Class 1 Water Supply](#)
- [Class 2 Water Supply](#)
- [Class 3 Water Supply](#)
- [Class 1 Wastewater Collection](#)
- [Class 2 Wastewater Collection](#)
- [Class A Wastewater Treatment](#)
- [Class 1 Wastewater Treatment](#)
- [Class 2 Wastewater Treatment](#)
- [Class 3 Wastewater Treatment](#)

WPI/ABC Reference Material

- [Water Supply](#)
- [Water Distribution](#)
- [Wastewater Treatment](#)
- [Wastewater Collection](#)



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WPI Exams

- WPI is in the process of updating the exams:
 - Water and wastewater surveys were sent
- Developing job analyses
- Developing questions
- Building exam data banks



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2024 Renewals

- Renewals due Nov. 30, 2024
- Certificates expire Dec. 31, 2024
- Renewal application available Aug. 1, 2024.



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Operator Certification Rules Review

- JCARR hearing held on Sept. 30, 2024
- Plan to have rules finalized by the end of November
- Clarifications
- Removal of old language
- Allowances for federal holidays
 - 20% exception during weeks with a federal holiday
 - Not under formal enforcement
 - ORC/backup can respond in person within one hour



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Operator Certification Rules Review

- Allowances for off-site meetings related to operations and administration of PWS
 - 10% of staffing requirement
 - Not under formal enforcement
 - ORC/backup can respond in person within an hour
 - Record meeting in logbook
 - No minimum staffing reduction approved
- Allowing OIT for Class III



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Operator Certification Rules Review

- Proposing facility-specific certification – Class III and IV facilities
 - Meet normal eligibility requirements
 - Certification of ability by ORC or certified professional operator in management
 - Appropriate amount of experience
 - Pass appropriate level exam
 - Can act as a backup provided the ORC certifies ability
 - Can be converted to a professional operator certification with operating experience
 - Facility specific certificates do not supersede professional operator certificates



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Operator Certification Rules Review

- Reducing the operating experience requirement for Class II, III, and IV certificates by one year
- Reciprocity
 - Guarantee at least a Class A provided experience requirement met
 - Potential for higher based on experience in the other state



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Protecting public health and the
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Drinking & Ground Waters

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Certified Operators

Certified water and wastewater operators are essential for the protection of public health and the environment. Ohio EPA's Operator Certification program has certified more than 12,000 operators, ensuring public water and wastewater systems are operated by properly trained and qualified individuals.

[Learn how to become a certified water or wastewater operator.](#)

To submit an Ohio EPA Paper and Pencil exam, renewal, third party certification or reciprocity application(s) please visit the [Ohio EPA eBusiness Center webpage](#). For instructions to utilize the eBusiness Center please view the instructions below under the Operator tab.

REQUIRED TRAINING: Starting Aug. 15, 2018, all applicants will need to review the training document below prior to submitting the Ohio EPA exam, third-party exam certification, reciprocity and renewal applications and Operator-in-Training forms. This document will be updated periodically to reflect the current rules, regulations and policies.

RENEWAL GRACE PERIOD: The operator renewal application grace period has been reduced to 6 months. A complete renewal application must be received by June 30 of the year following your expiration date. If a complete renewal application is not received by June 30 of the year following your expiration date, you must re-take the examination to be certified.

[Ohio EPA Professional Operator Certification Training](#) - Updated Jan. 5, 2022

OP CERT HOTLINE

[866-411-6728](tel:866-411-6728)

opcert@epa.ohio.gov



Advisory Council

Provides guidance and input to Ohio's water and wastewater operator certification program.



Announcements



Career Information



Contract Operators

Lists or forms you may need as a contract operator, an owner of a contract operating company or a system in need of an operator.



Exam information

Third Party Exam scheduling, reference material and Need-to-Know criteria, Class IV information, and Class A



Forms and Resources



Operator Certification Enforcement Actions

Enforcement actions have been taken as a result of violations of the operator certification rules.



Operator

Services, lists, or forms you may need as an operator, or to become an operator.

Website Update



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Announcements Page



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Source Water Protection and
Underground Injection
Control (UIC)

February 21, 2024: Adoption of Amended Rule Language - (OAC) Chapter 3745-81



The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, The Division of Drinking and Ground Waters (DDAGW) has adopted the amended rules in [Ohio Administrative Code \(OAC\) chapter 3745-81](#).

The amended rule will be effective as of Saturday, March 2, 2024. (See the [Public Notice of Adoption](#)). The rules are being adopted after a draft comment period ending on May 13th, 2022, a proposal comment period ending on November 30th, 2023, and a public hearing held on January 8th, 2024 virtually in Columbus, Ohio.

Now Available! Lead Service Inventory and Replacement Planning Request for Proposal Advertisement



Drinking Water Grant Opportunities



Rule Announcements



Required Operator Training

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[Ohio EPA Professional Operator Certification Training](#) - Updated Jan. 5, 2022

OP CERT HOTLINE

[866-411-6728](tel:866-411-6728)

opcert@epa.ohio.gov

Required Operator Training

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Operator Rules & Requirements

Required Training

This training is required prior to signing any operator certification application.



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Items of Note

- Reporting minimum staffing times
- Logbook information
- Must still meet minimum staffing time in weeks with holidays
- Contract operator rule
- Cybersecurity basics
- As rules change within the program, highlights will be added



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Career Information

- Updated job boards
- Improved veteran information and outreach
- Provide links to apprenticeship, associate degrees, and certificate programs



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Questions, Comments, or Concerns



Thank You

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