

# OTCO Compliance Workshop

October 11, 2023

Andrew Barienbrock



# THANKFUL

FOR PROFESSIONAL WATER AND  
WASTEWATER OPERATORS

THE UNSUNG HEROES PROTECTING  
THE ENVIRONMENT AND KEEPING  
YOUR WATER CLEAN AND SAFE 24/7!

#NOTALLHEROESWEARCAPES



**Environmental  
Protection  
Agency**

# Operations, Resiliency, and Certification Section

<b>Andrew Barienbrock</b>	<b>Environmental Manager</b>	
Carrie Winger	Environmental Specialist 3	Developing Inspector Training, District Oversight, Reclassifications, Technical Assistance, Emergency Response and Sanitary Survey Auditing
Rebecca Ilic	Environmental Specialist 2	Operator of Record notifications, Technical Assistance, Sanitary Survey Auditing
Jessica Frey	Environmental Specialist 2	Security, Contingency Planning, Emergency Response Planning, Operator Notifications and Enforcement
<b><i>Kevin Swiadek</i></b>	<b><i>Environmental Supervisor</i></b>	<b><i>Operator Certification</i></b>
<i>Vacant</i>	Environmental Specialist 2	Contact Hours, Advisory Council, eBusiness and application processing
Colt Bush	Environmental Specialist 2	Contact Hours, eBusiness, ACHTP Program, and application processing
Vacant	Administrative Professional 2	Operator Certification, Exams

# Security

- Heightened awareness of water and wastewater plant security
- Increased attacks on America's infrastructure
  - USEPA and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) are warning of high risk due to Russian tensions
- Resources:
  - [Implementing a cybersecurity program](#)
  - [Updates on vulnerabilities and reporting attacks - CISA](#)
  - [What to do if you are attacked - Department of Justice](#)



# 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](mailto:gkite@horsleywitten.com), or (508) 833-6600.

To register your utility, please visit:

[www.horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities](http://www.horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities)

## U.S. EPA offers free, confidential, Cybersecurity Assessments and Technical Assistance for interested Water and Wastewater Utilities

### To register your utility, please visit:

[EPA's Water Sector Cybersecurity Evaluation Program](http://www.epa.gov/water/cybersecurity) | [US EPA](http://www.epa.gov)



# Water Utility Preparedness

Please follow the steps outlined below to protect your organization from ransomware attacks.

If you suspect that you are a victim of a ransomware attack, please contact CISA ([central@cisa.dhs.gov](mailto:central@cisa.dhs.gov)) or local law enforcement.

1. Backup your data, system images, and configurations, regularly test them, and keep the backups offline
2. Update and patch systems promptly
3. Test your incident response plan
4. Check Your Security Team's Work
5. Segment your networks

# Cyber Security Resources

- Resources
  - [Ohio EPA Emergency and Security Preparedness](#)
  - [US EPA Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector](#)
  - Response partnerships
    - CISA [Shields Up | CISA](#)
    - Free cyber scanning <https://www.cisa.gov/cyber-hygiene-services>
    - Water ISAC (water Infrastructure security network)
      - [WaterISAC](#)

# Supply Chain Issues

- US EPA website on Supply Chain Resilience

[Water and Wastewater Sector Supply Chain Resilience | US EPA](#)

- Identify alternate suppliers
- Stay up-to-date on current and potential issues
- Notify US EPA



# Contingency Plan Rules

- Changes were effective 4-15-2022
- Minor clarification language (i.e. hard copy vs. electronic copy)
- Added a few required circumstances to address
  - Contamination of treated water
  - Malevolent acts (Cyber, vandalism, etc.)

# Paper and Pencil Exams



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

# 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

## 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](#)



# 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 References Materials
- Ohio EPA developing course on exam preparation

# 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

# 2023 Renewals

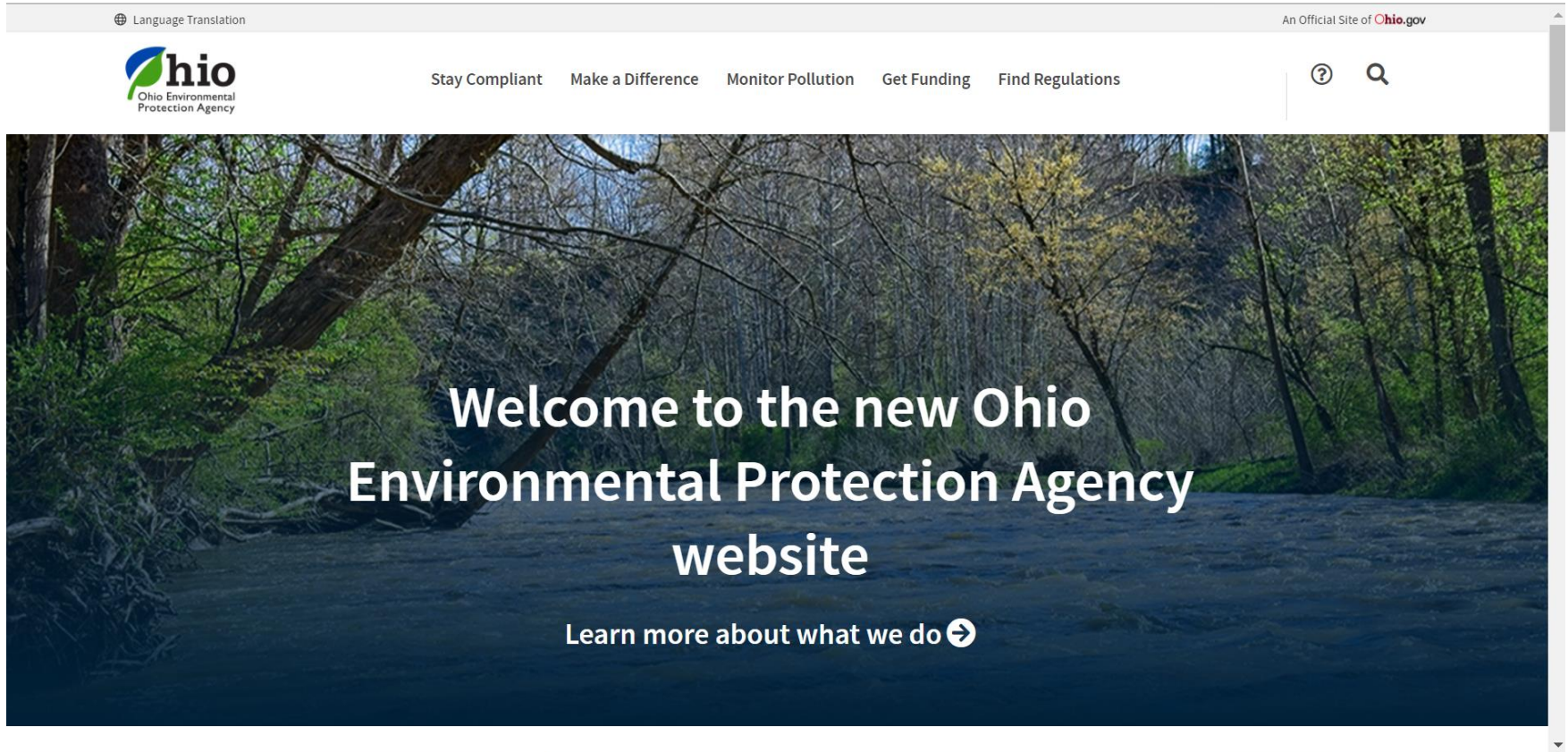
- Renewals are due November 30 , 2023
- Certificates will expire on December 31, 2023
- Email was sent end of July notifying operators they could begin renewing on August 1<sup>st</sup>

# Minimum Staffing Reporting

- Use the reporting app
- You were required to start using the tool for the July 2021 minimum staffing report
- DDAGW is sending NOVs to operators of record who do not submit.



# Website Update





# Website Update



Welcome to Ohio EPA's new website. We continue to make improvements to the site. For help navigating, or questions, please view our introductory webpage.

[Learn More](#)

[Ohio EPA](#) / [Divisions & Offices](#) / [Drinking & Ground Waters](#) / [Certified Operators](#)



## Drinking & Ground Waters

Welcome

Announcements

About DDAGW

Programs

**Certified Operators**

Guides & Manuals

## 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 August 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 30th of the year following your expiration date. If a complete renewal application is not received by June 30th of the year following your expiration date, you must re-take the examination to be certified.

[Operator Certification Required Training](#) - Updated Aug. 17, 2018

Filter the resources below by keyword or topic.



# Website Update



## 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

Ohio EPA has two exam pathways to offer for obtaining certification.



## Forms and Resources



## Operator Certification Enforcement Actions

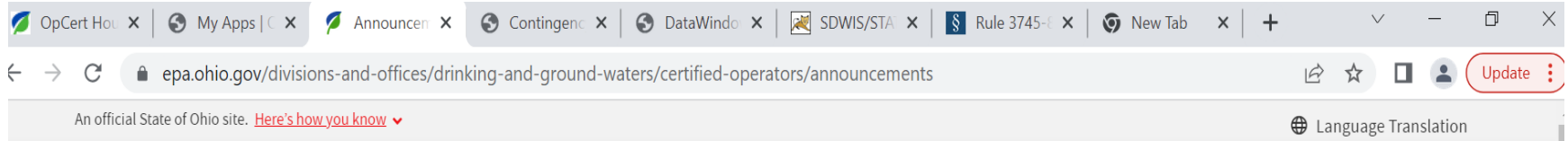
Enforcement actions have been taken as a result of violations of the operator certification rules.



## Operator

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

# Announcements page



Stay Compliant    Make a Difference    Monitor Pollution    Get Funding    Find Regulations

Help    Search

Ohio EPA / Divisions & Offices / Drinking & Ground Waters / Certified Operators / Announcements

## Announcements



Drinking & Ground  
Waters

Ohio EPA has developed a new minimum staffing reporting tool. The tool is available through the ebusiness center and can be used in lieu of reporting minimum staffing on your eDMR or eDWR. Directions for using this tool can be found below:

[Minimum Staffing Reporting Tool](#)

Share this



For more information



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# Required Operator Training



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Engineering and Plan Approval

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[Operator Certification Required Training](#) - Updated Jan. 5, 2022

OP CERT HOTLINE

(866) 411-6728



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# Required Operator Training

## Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Operator Rules & Requirements

### Required Training

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



# Items of Note in the Required Training

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

# Website Information

## Career Information tab

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



# Operator Certification Rules Review

- Did not initially plan major changes
- Clarifications
- Removal of old language
- Considering requiring completion of some type of basic training course work prior to taking the Class 1 or 2 certificates
- Considering OIT for Class 3
- Super stakeholder outreach is complete
  - Hoping to have rules available for IPR soon



# Questions?

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