

OTCO Wastewater Workshop

April 26, 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



Operations, Resiliency, and Certification Section

Andrew Barienbrock	Environmental Manager	
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
Kevin Swiadek	Environmental Supervisor	Operator Certification
Lydia Maschmeier	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

Ohio EPA

- New Ohio EPA Director Anne Vogel
 - David Emerman from Asst Chief DSW to NEDO Chief
 - Jobie Jackson replaces David as Asst Chief in DSW
 - Tiffany Kavalec moved to the Director's Office as Policy Director
 - Chief of DSW currently open and advertised

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](#)
 - [What to do if you are attacked](#)



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

To register your utility, please visit:

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



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) 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 assessment <https://www.cisa.gov/cyber-hygiene-services>
 - Water ISAC (water Infrastructure security network)
 - [WaterISAC](#)

Supply Chain Issues

- US EPA website
- [Water and Wastewater Sector Supply Chain Resilience | US EPA](#)
 - Identify alternate suppliers
 - See current issues
 - Notify US EPA

Contingency Planning

- No requirements for Wastewater Facilities, but Highly encouraged:
 - Planning for most likely events
 - Response
 - Back up power
 - Exercising plans

Paper and Pencil Exams



- Holding 1 more paper and pencil exam

Exam Date	Application Deadline
May 3, 2023	Past

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

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 provided
- Ohio EPA developing course on exam preparation

WPI Exams

- WPI is in the process of updating the exams:
 - Water survey sent
 - Wastewater survey coming
- Developing job analyses
- Developing questions
- Building Exam data banks

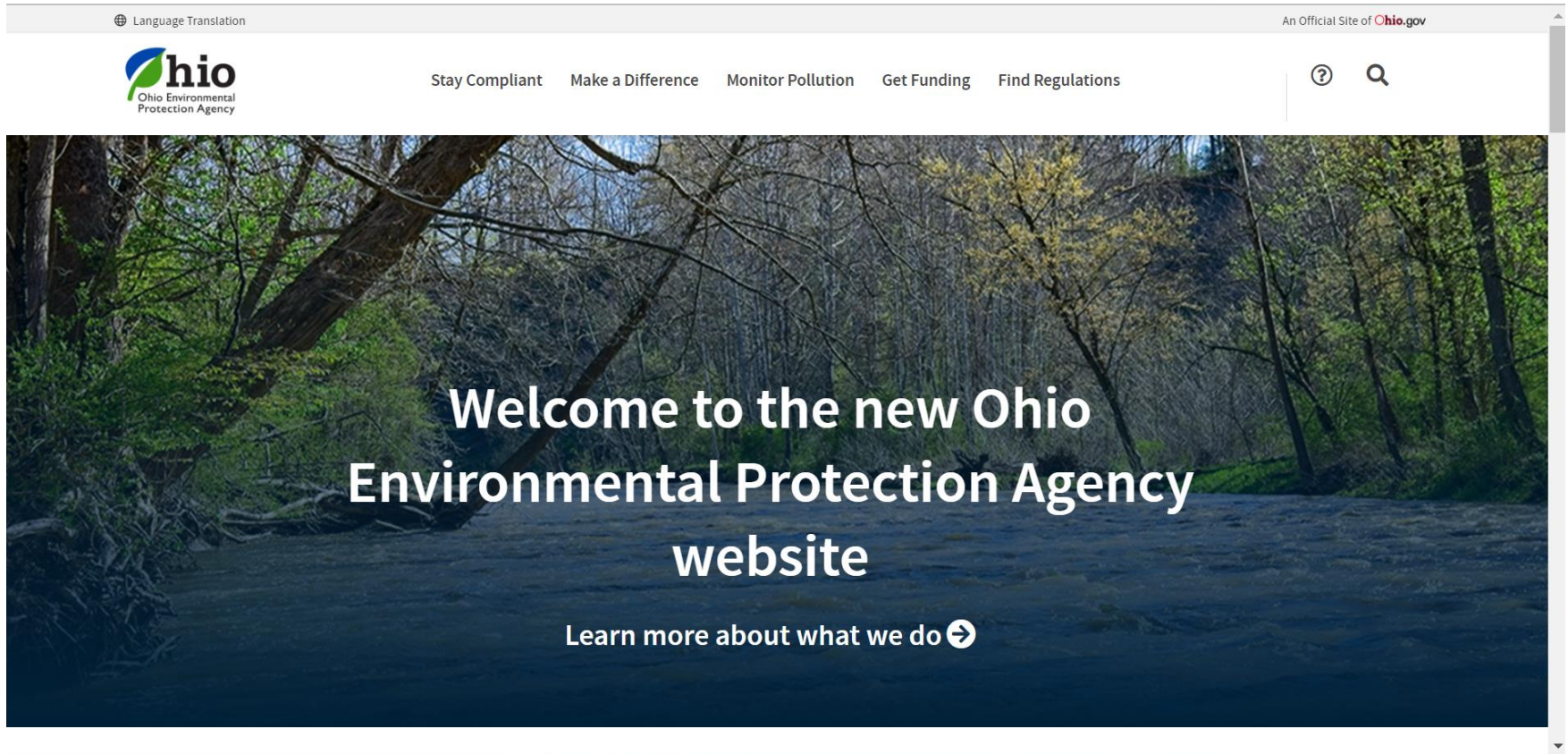
2022 Renewals

- Renewals were due November 30 , 2022
- Certificates will expire on December 31, 2022
- 575 remaining to be renewed
 - Mid December reminder
 - January 31, 2023, Late fee applied
 - July 1, 2023, Invalid certificate
 - Letter in March
 - Email next week

Minimum Staffing Reporting

- The reporting app is available
- You were required to start using the tool for the July 2021 minimum staffing report
- Some districts are sending NOVs to wastewater plants for not reporting

Website Update



Website Update

Language Translation

An Official Site of Ohio.gov



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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.

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Drinking & Ground Waters

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[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

OpCert Hou x | My Apps | C x | Announcem x | Contingenc x | DataWindo x | SDWIS/STA x | Rule 3745- x | New Tab x | +

← → ↻ epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/drinking-and-ground-waters/certified-operators/announcements ☆ □ 👤 Update ⋮

An official State of Ohio site. [Here's how you know](#) ▾

Language Translation



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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



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

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
- Log book information
- Must still meet minimum staffing time in weeks with holidays
- Contract operator rule

Website Update

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
- Outreach meetings

Questions?

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