

Operator Certification Bulletin | Spring 2013

Drinking Water and Wastewater Operator Certification News

For more news or information please visit
www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater or www.owwco.ca

DID YOU KNOW...?

Operator Code of Conduct

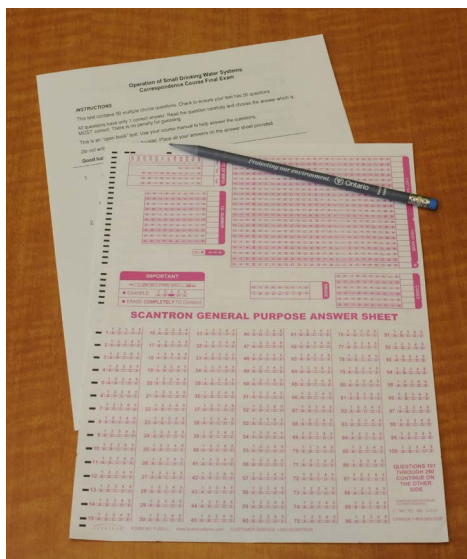
The new Code of Conduct for Water and Wastewater Operator Certification and Exams now needs to be submitted by all applicants before writing a ministry certification exam.

The 'code' outlines what the Ministry of the Environment considers unethical behaviour during the exam and application process. It also includes examples of possible consequences an operator could face if they conduct themselves dishonestly.

Operators now receive a copy of the code with exam registration confirmations. Operators are asked to carefully read it and bring a signed copy to exam sessions. The examination invigilator will collect them before distributing exam packages.

At the start of every exam session, invigilators spend time reviewing the code of conduct and providing additional instructions about the examination procedure that must be followed.

Remember that the only electronic device permitted at examination



sessions is a non-programmable calculator. A zero tolerance approach is being strictly enforced for possessing all other types of electronic devices when writing exams, such as cell phones.

To learn more, download the new Code of Conduct for Water and Wastewater Operator Certification and Exams by following this link on the ministry's website http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@ene/@resources/documents/resource/stdprod_105202.pdf.

In this edition...

Did you know...?

- Operator Code of Conduct
- Examination Invigilators
- Signing Off On Operator Experience
- Training Records...Who Needs To Keep Them?
- WEAO's Annual Operations Challenge Competition
- Ontario Certification Working Group – Topics at their last meeting
- Meet Ken Tamblyn of York Region

What's new?

- Announcing Sue Lo's Appointment as CDWI
- Compliance Program Changes at the Ministry of the Environment for Municipal Wastewater/Storm Water and Private Drinking Water Wells
- The Walkerton Clean Water Centre Offers All Mandatory Courses In Both English And French

What's coming up?

- Is It Time To Write An Exam?
- Upcoming Regional Conferences and Seminars in Ontario

Reminders

- OWWCO's Website: Your One-stop Information Portal
- Tip Sheets To Help Your Renewal Applications
- Keep Your WWOCS Profile Updated
- "The Emerging Professional Operator" Webinar

Examination Invigilators

The role of an invigilator is quite an important one. They help protect the integrity of the operator certification program by ensuring that exam sessions follow standards set by the Ministry of the Environment. They are responsible for securing exams before, during and after they are written. Invigilators follow strict guidelines when administering exam sessions and are required to be extremely diligent in preventing possible examinee misconduct.

Invigilators are impartial ‘supervisors’ at exam sessions. They are trained on strict procedures that need to be followed when invigilating exams. Invigilators are not permitted to answer any specific questions about the exam.

Before the examination session starts, the invigilator registers all examinees, carefully checking their identification, registration letter and their signed Code of Conduct. At all exam sessions, invigilators must read aloud a script explaining the examination

procedure, which ensures that everyone writing water/wastewater examinations in Ontario receive the same instructions. While the exam is in progress, a watchful eye is kept to ensure appropriate conduct. If issues arise, invigilators follow established procedures and guidelines to deal with them. At the end of an examination session, invigilators collect all exam materials and complete an invigilator report that is returned to the Ontario Water Wastewater Certification Office (OWWCO) with exams.

All examinees deserve the same opportunity to be successful when writing an exam, and the invigilator plays a key role in helping to ensure fairness in the examination process.

If you have any questions or comments about examination invigilation, please send them to OWWCO at info@owwco.ca.



Signing Off On Operator Experience

Overall Responsible Operators (OROs) and/or operator managers have a very important role in the process of operator certification upgrades and renewals. Operators wishing to upgrade their drinking water certificates or wastewater licences must meet the regulated requirements as outlined in O. Reg. 128/04 and O. Reg. 129/04. Requirements include additional education and training, as well as specific years of experience as an operator in the type of municipal residential subsystems and facilities corresponding to the certificate or licence for which they are applying.

An important step in upgrading a certificate is getting the operator experience validated by the ORO or a manager who has the authority to sign off on operating experience.

OROs and managers must ensure that the information they are verifying is complete and correct. Signing a document with information that is untrue is considered an offence under both the Safe Drinking Water Act and Ontario Water Resources Act. As such, signing any ministry application form should be taken very seriously. All information on the form can be used for the purposes of enforcement, investigations and for reporting.



Before an ORO or manager signs any document, they need to be confident that the details on the form are true and correct, and that they can stand behind the information being submitted. Extra time and care should be taken every time a form is signed. A little due diligence can prevent delays in processing applications, a potential non-compliance issue and other problems down the road.

Training Records...Who Needs To Keep Them?

Have you ever wondered what to do with operator training records once the three year renewal training cycle has been completed? This question comes up frequently. Training records need to be maintained by the owner and/or operating authority of drinking water subsystems and wastewater facilities. How long they're kept depends on the records and retention schedules set by the individual municipality.

For wastewater operators, however, remember that training is not validated at the time of renewal, and these training records must be made available if they're requested during an inspection.

All training records should be easy to read and easy to find. Well maintained training records can help make the upgrade application process easier.

WEAO's Annual Operations Challenge Competition

Each year, WEAO organizes an Operations Challenge Competition where teams of wastewater operators and skilled trade technicians have the opportunity to put their diverse skills to the test. At the event in Toronto on April 7th, there were five events designed to showcase what it takes to operate and maintain wastewater treatment facilities, their collection systems and laboratories. Participants could also tour a local facility, attend technical sessions and compete in the 'Totally Wasted Game Show'.

Competing teams were subjected to extreme situations to display their craft, like flooding caused by a pump malfunction, followed by a collapsed sewer line, a laboratory process failure and a confined space rescue, just to name a few.

The competition this year was fierce. There were four returning teams: OCWA Jets from Stratford, Sludge Hammers from the Region of Durham, OCWA

Wasaga Beach's Flangetastic 4 and the City of London Incinerators. The City of Toronto's Dung Beetles and Hamilton's H2Oers were the newest additions to the challenge this year.

OCWA Jets repeated their victory, making it three in a row for them. Second place went to the Sludge Hammers and the Flangetastic 4 took home third place.

The OCWA Jets and Sludge Hammers will represent Ontario at the annual Water Environment Federation conference this Fall in Chicago. Ontario teams are known to be very competitive at the international event and we wish them the best of luck. Go teams go!

If your municipality is interested in participating in future competitions, contact WEAO's Operations Challenge Competition Committee Chair, Richard Szigeti at rsziget@toronto.ca.



Sludge Hammers competing in the collections event



OCWA Jets competing in the safety event

Ontario Certification Working Group – Topics at their last meeting

The Operator Certification Working Group (OCWG) represents various and diverse organizations in the water and wastewater industry. At their last quarterly meeting on February 26, 2013, they discussed several key topics, such as:

- Proposed surveys on the designation of Overall Responsible Operator to be conducted by stakeholder associations
- Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) standards of operator certification
- Exams and mandatory training being offered in French
- Topics for the next Mandatory Renewal Course
- Proposed changes to six month extensions for certificate renewals
- Updates on revisions to facility classification guidance
- Disciplinary actions being taken by the ministry for certification and exam application non-compliance incidents

For more information about the OCWG and highlights of previous meetings, visit OWWCO's site at www.owwco.ca and follow the [link](#) under **Resources**.

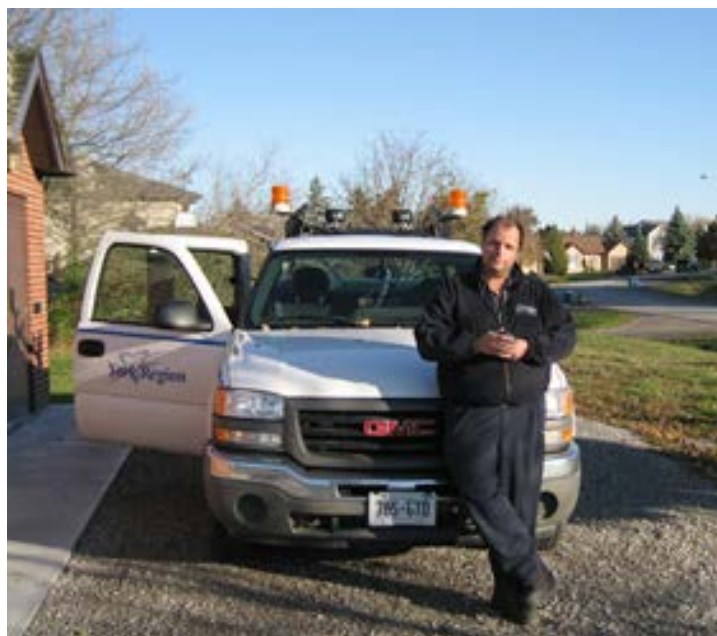
Meet Ken Tamblyn of York Region

Ken's dedication to municipal operations spans an impressive 28 years. While he began his career at the Region of Waterloo, he has been with York Region for the last 26 years.

Ken recalls how it all began. "It all started with a poster in a high school science lab which led me to the three-year water resources program at Sault College. Subhash Verma and John Theil were the two instructors that tweaked my interest in plant operations and I knew that's what I wanted to get into."

As Senior Team Lead, Ken is the Overall Responsible Operator for both water and wastewater systems in three York Region communities. Ken and his crew of six operators are well supported by many other groups within York Region, including Centralized Maintenance, SCADA, Regulatory Compliance, Asset Management, Water Resources, and a well-structured training division. Ken's team has collectively upgraded 26 operating licences in the last five years, which is testament to the Region's commitment to staff training and development. According to Ken, "York Region gives operational staff the tools for success, including training, plant and equipment upgrades, technology, support for regulatory inspections and audits, policies and procedures, and responding to health and safety needs."

Ken feels very fortunate for the opportunities he's had at York Region. He has worked in multiple systems over the years including groundwater, surface water, and sewage treatment and collection. When there was an opportunity to work in different types of plants, Ken took it and gained a wealth of experience doing so. This experience



– combined with a lot of training hours – has allowed Ken to achieve Class 4 Operators licences in all disciplines.

While at York Region, Ken has been involved in several significant capital projects – from predesign to start-up and operations. He's been part of many project teams building new sewage and water plants, and upgrades and expansions on existing facilities that had to be kept operational during multi-year construction schedules. Ken has participated in operational projects related to technology updates, process reviews, business improvements, ISO certification and optimization studies.

During his career, Ken notes how the operator role has evolved over time. For example, he experienced the transition of single licensed staff into multi-skilled

operators. Today, they can operate both complex water and sewage works. Another major step forward was the transition from manual plants with little automation, to full SCADA systems. “This transition has been incredible. I can now operate plants from home, in my truck, or even on a BlackBerry. That’s quite a transformation from the old days.”

When asked what advice he’d give students today, Ken says, “I tell young people trying to get in this field to go

and get that first year of experience any way they can and get those Class One Operator licences. That’ll set them up for a rewarding career. Here I am, 28 years later, still loving the work and grateful to be here at York Region... and by the way, we’re hiring!”

WHAT’S NEW?

Announcing Sue Lo’s Appointment as CDWI

Ontario has appointed a new Chief Drinking Water Inspector, Sue Lo.

A geotechnical engineer, Sue began her public service career at the Ministry of Transportation then moved to the Ministry of Energy as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Renewables and Energy Efficiency Division. There she provided leadership and advice in implementing a portion of the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, and strategic oversight of the Green Energy Investment Agreement.

Now at the Ministry of the Environment as Chief Drinking Water Inspector, Sue also serves as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Drinking Water Management Division.

Ontario’s Chief Drinking Water Inspector leads activities to ensure that regulated drinking water systems across the province meet rigorous, health-based standards. The role is appointed under the Safe Drinking Water Act.



Compliance Program Changes at the Ministry of the Environment for Municipal Wastewater/Storm Water and Private Drinking Water Wells

The Ministry of the Environment’s compliance program plays a critical role in protecting the environment and the health of Ontarians. The ministry has a strong focus on oversight, inspections and enforcement, and is committed to making sure that it continues to provide a high level of protection while continually improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its compliance program.

On April 1, 2013, the ministry transferred its compliance programs for municipal wastewater, storm water and private drinking water wells from its Operations Division to the Drinking Water Management Division.

By making this change, the ministry is working to provide municipalities with a more consistent, one-window approach for water-related compliance activities.

The ministry is contacting municipal wastewater facility personnel to discuss the program transfer in more detail, and is there to provide ongoing support through the transition phase.

If you have questions about this change at the Ministry of the Environment, send them to AskMOEWastewaterCompliance@ontario.ca.

The Walkerton Clean Water Centre Offers All Mandatory Courses In Both English And French

The Walkerton Clean Water Centre now offers the Entry-Level Drinking Water Operator Course for Operators in Training (OITs) in French. This course must be completed within 16 months from the date an OIT certificate in drinking water treatment and/or distribution was issued. It provides new operators with a basic understanding of water characteristics and pathogens, treatment and distribution processes, and the regulations that govern water quality. This course is intended to complement the on-the-job training that OITs receive from their employers.

The following mandatory courses are also available in French as correspondence courses:

- Operation of Small Drinking Water Systems course (mandatory for small systems operators); and
- Mandatory Certificate Renewal course (required every three years for certified operators).

Please visit wcwc.ca/registration to register for training in your area, call **866-515-0550** or email training@wcwc.ca.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Is It Time To Write An Exam?

Find out when and where future exams are scheduled on OWWCO's website at www.owwco.ca.

Remember to send your application form, fee and proof of grade 12 (if applicable) approximately one month in advance of the exam date, as noted on the online schedule.

Exam applications must be sent by fax or mail. OWWCO no longer accepts email applications due to Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard compliance requirements. If you are paying by cheque or money order, please ensure it is made payable to the 'Minister of Finance', or it will be returned. To avoid processing delays, applications must be fully completed with accompanying documentation and payment.

Send your application by mail or fax to:



Ontario Water Wastewater Certification Office
302 The East Mall, Suite 410
Etobicoke ON M9B 6C7
Fax: (416) 231-2107

Application forms and information about registering for exams are available on the Ministry of the Environment's Drinking Water Ontario site at www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/dwo/en/responsibilities/STDPROD_096029.html.

Upcoming Regional Conferences and Seminars in Ontario

Event	Presented By	Date	Location
2013 Fall Distribution Workshop www.owwa.ca/event/2013-fall-distribution-workshop	OWWA	Sep. 19	Vaughan
Climate Change Seminar www.weao.org/index.php?option=com_mc&view=mc&mcid=8	WEAO	Oct. 3	Vaughan
Northwestern Ontario Water and Wastewater Conference http://nwowwc.com/main/	NWOWWC	Oct. 24 - 25	Thunder Bay

OWWA: Ontario Water Works Association | WEAO: Water Environment Association of Ontario | NWOWWC: Northwestern Ontario Water and Wastewater Conference

REMINDERS

OWWCO's Website: Your One-stop Information Portal



Do you need to renew or upgrade your licence or certificate? Are you looking for forms or guidance documents? Want to know when exams are scheduled? Want to know how to become a certified drinking water or wastewater operator-in-training, operator or water quality analyst? Visit OWWCO's website at www.owwco.ca – your one-stop information portal.

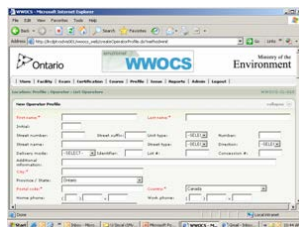
If you want to receive certification news, events and information about new developments from OWWCO, be sure to subscribe at <http://s214598728.onlinehome.us/subscribe.htm>.

Tip Sheets To Help Your Renewal Applications

You can avoid processing delays and disappointments by ensuring that your renewal applications for wastewater licences or drinking water certificates are properly completed and submitted to OWWCO. Visit OWWCO's renewal page at www.owwco.ca/renewal.htm and check out the new tip sheets on submitting your renewal applications to help you get it right the first time.

Remember to always refer to the official Ministry of the Environment's form instructions and guidance materials when completing application forms. These too are available on OWWCO's website through the link above.

Keep Your WWOCS Profile Updated



Remember to keep your email address up to date in the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification System (WWOCS) to receive notices about future Operator Certification Bulletins.

If you don't have access to WWOCS, fill out a request form and send it to OWWCO by mail or fax. Request forms and WWOCS user guides for operators and trainers are available on OWWCO's website at www.owwco.ca.

"The Emerging Professional Operator" Webinar

On May 1, 2013 the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) presented a webinar entitled "The Emerging Professional Operator", hosted by the American Water Works Association. ABC provided a discussion of emerging industry initiatives that propel water/

wastewater operations firmly into the professional realm. To view and hear the webinar, go to: www.awwa.org/conferences-education/distance-learning/webinars/w130501-the-emerging-professional-operator.aspx.