



New Office Staff
Welcome
Heather Wallace!

Page 2



Operator of the Year
Congratulations
Mike Firlotte!

Page 3



System Profile
Gwayasdums
Village

Page 4



Operator Challenge
Whistler 2010
Results

Page 8

NOVEMBER 2010 • NUMBER 120

BRITISH COLUMBIA OPERATORS Digest



New Operators and Operator Upgrades!

Check out the newest and latest upgrades on Operator status. Go to the EOCP website and click on the Operator **Highlights Tab** and then Click on **New Operators** for an up to date list.

EOCP Training Registry Is Up and Running

The EOCP Training Registry (TR) has been launched across British Columbia and Yukon. The Training Registry greatly expands the opportunities for Operators to get and/or give training. A number of information sessions have been held in various locations across the province from Victoria to Kelowna to Prince George to Fort St John and many more will be arranged. If you missed one of the presentations or open houses or have any questions about the process, just go online to the EOCP website at www.eocp.org and follow the links to the Training Registry.

continues of page 5



Getting the word out about the Registry

EOCP Raises Operator Dues

The certification program has been running a deficit for several years now and if it is allowed to continue, all reserves will be exhausted. The \$10 increase in dues two years ago has significantly reduced the deficit but has not completely eliminated it. Costs continue to rise but with a similar increase effective January 1, 2011 we are confident that the deficit will be eliminated and we will be able to start rebuilding our reserves and we will still have one of the lowest dues for comparable professional/technical certification. (On-site sewage practitioners and environmental technicians pay \$275/yr). The increase in dues will enable to EOCP to continue to provide the service that all Operators are

accustomed to and allow us to streamline the program and provide other Operator services. We have reviewed all aspects of the program and believe that this small increase will cover the shortfall across virtually all of the program activities. The one activity that we find is taking an inordinate amount of time for staff is the evaluation of reciprocity application and therefore we have implemented a larger increase in this category. The annual dues effective January 1, 2011 for Level I-IV Operators will be going from the present \$60 to \$70 (Small Systems Operators annual dues will remain at \$60) and the Reciprocity Evaluation Application fee will be increased from the present \$100 to \$150.

Environmental Operators Certification Program

The BC Operators Digest is the official newsletter of the Environmental Operators Certification Program. Submissions for publication in the Digest are welcome. Please email the editor Brian Thorburn at bthorburn@eocp.org. Changes of address, annual dues, exam applications, as well as general inquiries about the program should be addressed to: eocp@eocp.org

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Stephanie Hall Office Assistant

Heather Wallace Office Assistant

The Environmental Operators Certification Program is a charter member of the Association of Boards of Certification and is a registered society with more than 3,100 active and up to date members.

2010 Board of Directors

Mike Gosselin – President

Pat Miller – Vice President

Brian Thorburn – Treasurer

Chris Brown – Secretary

Steve Benoit

Shawn Sanders

Tim Lambert

Darryl Bjorgaard

Bob L. Smith

2010 EOCP Certification Board Election Results

The 2010 EOCP election results are in. Although turnout was relatively low at only 7%, there were still over 200 Operators casting their vote to make their voice heard. The EOCP will be exploring ways to increase voter turnout in the future and are looking for input for improving this dismal number.

The following directors have been elected:

OPERATORS: **Pat Miller**
Darryl Bjorgaard
Chris Brown

EMPLOYER
REPRESENTATIVE: **Bob L. Smith**

EDUCATIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE: **Steve Benoit**

At the first meeting of the EOCP Board following the recent elections the new Board elected the following officers:

PRESIDENT: **Mike Gosselin**
VICE PRESIDENT: **Pat Miller**
TREASURER: **Brian Thorburn**
SECRETARY: **Chris Brown**

New Office Staff

The EOCP Board and staff are pleased to welcome



Heather Wallace as our newest full time staff member. Heather accepted the position of Office Assistant as of September 13, 2010. Heather will be actively participating in the facility classification process, and has acquired a good knowledge of the CEU requirements. We are

confident Heather will be a great match for this position and will be a strong asset to the EOCP.

Digest Advertising Opportunities

Business card-sized ads are available for \$75 per issue or \$250 for four issues, GST included. For ads of other sizes, please contact the EOCP office.

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Operator of the Year

(The Vic Terry Award)

Mike Firlotte

The Vic Terry award for EOCP Operator of the year was presented this year during the Whistler Conference to **Mike Firlotte** from the City of Kamloops.

Mike started his career in water quality in 1998 with the start of the Okanagan College Water Quality Program, since graduation he has worked in many different capacities in the water and wastewater industry. 6 years ago Mike was hired as an operator for the City of Kamloops, Water Quality Centre, after his first year he moved into a supervisory role at this facility. In 2009 Mike moved into his current role as Utilities Services Supervisor, in this role Mike now supervises with his staff of 18, all water booster stations, all sewer lift stations, water meters, fire hydrants, SCADA systems, cross connection control



Vic Terry Award Recipient Mike Firlotte

and 24 hour emergency calls. In his spare time, Mike teaches water quality programs with several training providers and is committed to teaching the importance of safe and clean drinking water to everyone he meets. Mike lives in Kamloops with his wife Courtney and his two dogs.

EOCP Annual General Meeting

The EOCP AGM was held in Kelowna in August and we took the opportunity to hold it in conjunction with an Information session on the Training Registry. The EOCP promised last year to move the AGM around the province and this was the first time it has been held outside the lower mainland. We are looking at various venues to hold our AGM over the coming years and hope to spread the AGM around the province to enable Operators who might not normally be able to attend because of the distances and time involved to take part. If you have any suggestions for locations for future meeting sites, please let us know.

EOCP FINANCIALS

	2009	2008
Revenue		
Fees*	\$ 416,696	\$ 348,552
Government Grant**	271,865	42,823
Other Income	11,044	17,743
Total	\$ 615,614	\$ 379,037
Operating Expenses		
All	\$ 502,095	\$ 473,935
Net Income***	\$ 113,519	- \$ 94,898
Assets		
Cash	416,696	348,552
Other	8,755	7,637
Investments	9,650	7,911
Total	\$ 436,101	\$ 364,100

* Fees include: Annual dues, Exam fees, Facility Classification fees, and others

** Government Grants include: Training Registry and Program Information handling upgrades

*** Government and EOCP fiscal years do not coincide, therefore large 2008 deficit covered by large 2009 surplus

Gwayasdums Village



Water Treatment Facility

SYSTEM PROFILE

The Gwayasdums Village on Gilford Island operates a water treatment plant and water distribution system. The village is only accessible by float plant or boat. The water treatment plant is certified as a Level 3 Treatment Plant while the distribution system is certified as a Level 1 Distribution System. The higher certification level of the treatment plant is due to the complexity of the water treatment plant.

The Kwickwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation had previously been on a Do Not Consume Order for years prior to the upgrading of the water system. The previous wells that supplied water to the village had experienced salt water intrusion. After numerous

studies, an upgrade to the water system occurred.

The new water treatment plant consists of 2 Reverse Osmosis Plants working in parallel. Their flow rate through the RO units is 5 GPM or almost 19 lpm. The RO units are able to handle the brackish water that the wells supply. A new well

was constructed that improved the raw water quality somewhat. As well, a new generator was required to ensure the power supply to the plant would be un-interrupted.

The plant supplies water to 15 individuals during the low season and up to 40 individuals during the high



RO Units and chemicals



View from the Village of Gwayasdums

season. They are constructing new houses now on the island with 26 new homes to be built and 6 currently underway now.

The upgrade to the water system included the installation of water meters on all water services. Consumption

has been reduced by 66% since the commissioning of the water treatment plant through the locating and repairing of leaks.

*Thanks to **Joe Jewell**, INAC Circuit Rider and **Dave Johnson**, Operator.*

Operator Profile

Dave Johnson

Dave Johnson has been an EOCP certified Operator since September 2002. He holds certification in Small Water Systems. In addition, Dave is a certified First Responder (Emergency Medical Responder) and a journeymen millwright since 1988. Previously, Dave was in the navy Reservoir for 18 years as a Cadet Instructor and reached the rank of Sub-Lieutenant. He loves sailing and just being on the water.

Dave enjoys working at the water treatment and power plant on Gilford Island (Gwayusdums) and is always up to learning more and new challenges. He is married and has two children, two step children, and is a proud grandfather as well.



Dave at his treatment plant.

EOCP Training Registry Is Up and Running

continued from page 1

Training Registry Road show on Vancouver Island.



The EOCP TR will allow Operators to go online and look for Recognized Instructors and/or Approved Courses in their area. For example, if an Operator wants to take a pump course in Kelowna, they would go to the TR Home Page, look under Get Training and select Courses. When the next screen opens they can view all course in the TR or they can select Courses offered in the Okanagan. They could narrow their search by including "pump" course and Okanagan in their search. They might find that one that an Operator has registered is available in the area. They could then contact the Course Provider and set up a course for his crew or he could find out the next time that the course is being offered.

Any Operator who has been working, hands-on in the water and/or wastewater sector for more than 3 years is also eligible to become a Recognized Instructor. If they have been working at say a water treatment plant and know coagulation quite well, they can become a Recognized Instructor and create their own Course. They simply need to fill out a straightforward application on-line, submit two Letters of Reference (generated by the TR system) signed by colleagues to become a Recognized Instructor. They can then fill out a Course outline on-line and once it is approved instruct the course any time they choose.

The Training Registry is a win-win for all Operators in the province of BC and the Yukon. Find out more about the program and you can be teaching and sharing your expertise with other Operators in your field. You can earn CEUs by developing and presenting a new Course and you will be providing CEU accredited training to your fellow Operators by following the simple process. Visit the EOCP website at www.eocp.org for more information or email the Training Registry at trainingregistry@eocp.org.

Protecting Yourself from Biohazard Exposure

When you think of 'Biological Agents or Biohazards,' do you think of 'weapons of mass destruction' or how those biohazards might affect you during your day to day activities? For those of us who work at a Wastewater Treatment or Collection Facility, we run the risk everyday of being exposed to 'Biohazards.'

In British Columbia, the health and safety of every worker is overseen by the Workers' Compensation Board of BC (www.worksafebc.org). We all know (or should know); there is a requirement to wear PPE (personal protective equipment) at work to protect ourselves. How many of us realize that we need a written plan to deal all the aspects of a potential exposure to these biohazards that we run into everyday and are the very reasons that we have a job in the first place.

What's all this that we need protection from you ask? It's the collection and treatment of domestic and industrial wastewater. We know that wastewater contains many bacteria and virus that help us to take this toxic substance with the addition of oxygen, perhaps some chemicals, sunlight and filtration, and make the water safe and recycle the Biosolids (wasted sludge) into compost.

Unfortunately there may also be a whole lot of organisms in the wastewater that do not contribute to the treatment process but could make any of us very sick.

Even with all our standard PPE, we still run still risk of exposure during every part of the wastewater process. So we need to have a plan in place to help reduce or eliminate exposure. Officially, you might want to call this a 'biological exposure control plan.' – Yes, Charlie Brown – you need a plan to succeed!

WorkSafeBC OH&S Regulation 6.35 – Risk Identification "the employer must maintain a list of all job classifications and must identify all tasks and procedures in which there is a potential for occupational exposure to a bloodborne pathogen, or to other biohazardous material specified by the board.

The following are some of the steps we followed in developing our *Biological Exposure Control Plan* that you might want to use:

1. Identified the requirements –

Are you or your fellow workers exposed to bio-hazards? If yes, you need a bio-hazard exposure control plan (visit www.worksafebc.org or contact your WorkSafeBC Hygienist get help specific to your situation). If not, enjoy the rest of your day!

2. Develop a 'Exposure Control Plan'

- a. State the Purpose and who is responsible for the plan. (OH&S Committee, Management, you?)
- b. Identify the risk(s). (What are you exposed to, how often and estimate the risks)
- c. Where are you exposed? (Sampling, process splashes; cleaning lab equipment, pump maintenance, etc.)
- d. Define what you are exposed to

that causes you to need a plan (Wastewater can contain biological agents such as Salmonella, Hepatitis, Poliovirus, E-Coli, etc.)

- e. What can you do about it? (Stop doing what exposes you, put shields in place, buy more PPE, staff vaccinations, etc. These are sometimes called "engineering controls"
- f. What is the scope of the plan (Does it cover only people working at the plant, outside contractors, senior management, politicians, etc?)
- g. What are the procedures to protect yourself and others? (Gloves, face shields, lab coats, don't wear your work clothes home; wash your hands before and after, etc.)
- h. Roles and responsibilities should cover everyone involved. (both management

and operators) Part of the plan should also outline what happens if a spill/exposure happens and what training is required and how often.

3. Where can I go for other resources –

Every good plan highlights other resources that are available where you can go to for further information. Here is a short list of what we used.

- a. WorkSafeBC BC's web site www.worksafebc.com and look for "Controlling Exposure, Protecting Workers from Infectious Disease."
- b. A copy of the Sun Peaks Utilities' Biological Exposure Control Plan is available by contacting info@sunpeaksutilities.com. (It's our plan and it works for us. While it's ok to plagiarize, don't copy word for word.)

In Conclusion

- Don't forget to involve everyone when you develop the Biohazards Exposure Control Plan (management, operators, OH&S Committee and of course, WorkSafeBC)
- Try to anticipate various scenarios (don't you just love playing "what if...")
- Implement the 'KISS' principle when developing the plan, otherwise you'll end up with a 4 inch document instead of a usable 7 page procedure.
- Make sure everyone knows what to do! (Practise the plan and fix what doesn't work or it isn't practical!

P.S. Don't forget to wash your hands! Lots! – Pat



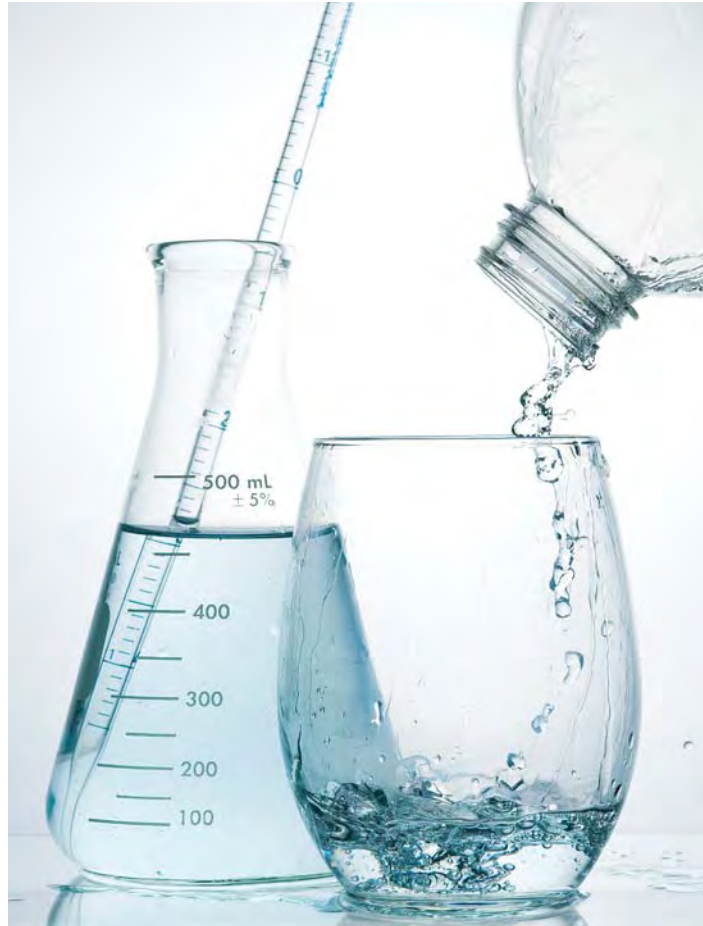
Roughly 66% of all confined space deaths are from people trying to perform a rescue

Emergency Response Planning – Are YOU ready?

Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) have been around for numerous years now but how often are they used. When was the last time you opened your ERP? If your water utility has just found out that a boil water advisory is required, what are you going to do? What about your wastewater collection system? What are you going to do if a major collection line has broken and raw sewage is running down the road downtown? These two items should be part of emergency response plan.

Are all your contacts in your ERP up to date with correct phone numbers and contact information. If you don't review your plan on a regular basis you might find out some contacts aren't that accurate at all. Joe from the government retired 5 years ago and that vacuum truck that you are planning on using on the sewage spill has been out of business for two years. Some utilities review their ERP quarterly and others annually. Whatever works for your utility and that you are comfortable should be implemented.

What are you going to include in your ERP? A good start for say for a boil water advisory is who you are



going to call. On your list should be hospitals, health care facilities, schools, etc. but how are you going to get the word out. Some utilities have sandwich board signs printed up and in storage ready to go for such an emergency. There is no overkill for emergency response planning especially when it comes to communication. Large signs should be on display throughout the utility or city and at major roadways alerting everyone of the notice. Radio, tv, internet and any other communications avenue should be prepared and ready to go live. Preparation is the key for emergency response plans.

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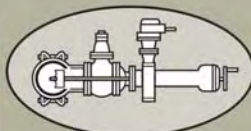
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Operator Challenge Whistler 2010

The BCWWA Operator Challenge was another success at the annual BCWWA conference. The Top Ops competition, put on by the EOCP attracted many Operators willing to share the knowledge and experience. The winning teams from the Top Ops competition were:

1ST PLACE:

CRD

- Jeff Giradet
- Steve Whipps
- Mike Weaver
- Jason Dales

2ND PLACE:

INAC

- Keith West
- Jeffrey Coombs
- Gordon Anthony

3RD PLACE:

Penticton

- Greg Mealing
- Chris Tucker
- Brian Dean



Operators buzzing in the answer during Top Ops

Operators... start thinking about next year's competition. Enter as a team or put your name forward at the event as a single and we will find you a team.



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Operator Question

What is the difference between BCWWA and EOCP? Aren't they the same organization?

The EOCP and BCWWA are two very different and distinct organizations but both work to promote the advancement of Operators.

For many years the two organizations had many active volunteers in common and the distinction between the two organizations was not clear to many others, working with both organizations.

The EOCP is the certifying body that provides certification exams and certifies all Water and Wastewater Operators within the province of British Columbia and Yukon. The EOCP does not provide training courses but does approve courses in the granting of continuing education units. (CEU's).

BCWWA provides training courses, workshops, an Annual Conference, and other opportunities for Operators to increase their knowledge and be better able to do their jobs. These opportunities will also assist them when they write their EOCP Operator examinations and will provide the continuing education necessary to renew their certification. If an Operator takes a BCWWA (or any other training organization) course and wishes to write an EOCP certification exam you **MUST** apply separately to the EOCP to write your desired exam. Approval can take up to 2 weeks so please apply as early as possible.

My Favorite Tool



Operators, have you made alterations to any tools or processes that you use? Have you thought, I can make a tool better for this job than is currently available? Get your gadget or tool published in the EOCP journal and win a prize. Or you can do what some Operators in BC have already done; they made a tool and were contacted about manufacturing it.

Sym-Pul Valve Cover Lifter

The Sym-Pul valve cover lifter was designed by **Chris Kerr** and **Parrish Miller** of the Regional District of Kitimat Stikine. As Operators typically use two screwdrivers to pop valve covers during valve exercises and flushing, they were sick and tired of being hit by a flying screwdriver or by breaking and bending screwdrivers. As well, the constant bending over and turning your back on traffic was a safety concern too. They thought there must be a better way so Chris drew up a mechanism on paper using a pen and Parrish built the original tool. They submitted this to the AWWA Gimmicks and Gadgets Program and made the finals of the competition. Eventually, a company read about the tool in a Worksafe BC publication and contacted the pair about manufacturing it.



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EOCP Bursary for Post Secondary Studies

Operators do you know of students enrolled in a water or wastewater program at a college or university in British Columbia such as Okanagan College or Thompson Rivers University? The Environmental Operators Certification Program offers a bursary for students to go towards their studies. Contact the awards department at your college or university for more details.

Email Addresses



Does the EOCP have your current email address? The significant costs involved in communicating by snail mail are just one of the costs we are trying very hard to reduce. Virtually everyone has an email address now and we are trying to make this our primary means of communication. Please ensure when you renew your EOCP certification (which more and more Operators are doing on-line now) to check your email address. If you have recently changed your email address or are not receiving the many messages we send out this way, please email the EOCP office at eocp@eocp.org and include your certification number and address in the email. If you do not have an email address please send us a letter or fax and we will endeavour to communicate with you in the most effective means possible.



Backhoe taking one too many scoops!

Operators, have a picture that other's might like to see? Email the editor at bthorburn@eocp.org with your picture!

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- ✓ 6 Active Backflow Assembly Testing Stations
- ✓ 13,628 Litre (3600 gallon) 3 compartment reservoir
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- ✓ Dozens of various manufacturer's backflow preventers from ½" to 3"



Lift Station

- ✓ Lift Station Simulator
- ✓ High hazard training in a low risk environment



Open Training Bay

- ✓ Life size live ground water well simulator
- ✓ Operational 3 phase VFD pump control panel
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Outdoor Water Distribution Pipe Gallery

- ✓ Live Hydrants and standpipes
- ✓ Waste water collection manhole
- ✓ Various buried distribution control valves
- ✓ Repair chambers / Shoring samples (spring 2010)
- ✓ 200 meters of various types of buried distribution pipe

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Theoretical Training With A Hands On Approach

2010 Association of Board of Certification (ABC)

The EOCP is a charter member (for almost 40 years) of The Association of Boards of Certification (ABC), the organization that virtually all certification jurisdictions in Canada and the US belong to, to share information and provide support for all our programs. 2009 and 2010 have been a very busy time for ABC with governance and staff changes and 2011 will probably be just as busy.

Examinations and the Testing Service provide by ABC is a key component of ABC's services and invaluable to EOCP and so many jurisdictions. The examinations over sixty (60) jurisdictions use are based on Job Task Analyses (JTA) carried out on the work you do as Operators. These JTAs are revised on a regular basis and ABC is always looking for knowledgeable Operators to participate. A number of Job Task Analyses will be occurring in the near future to better define the Need To Know Criteria (NTK) for each of the certification disciplines. A call will go out very soon for volunteers to participate in the process for a number of categories and we encourage you to step forward and do your part to improve the examinations for everyone.

Validation and Examination (V&E) committees in each discipline review the results of the JTA and work to create updated examinations on a continuing basis. We are fortunate

to have four individuals from BC actively involved in the V&E process including: John Reynolds, Bill Hyslop, Trevor Hoff, and Brian Thorburn. The committees meet annually for a two day workshop that includes building up the exam questions database and approving and validating new Operator exam questions or removing obsolete or misleading questions.

EOCP Exam Schedule

The EOCP has been developing a certification exam schedule for 2010 and 2011. We are still arranging additional sessions when the need arises and appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are thinking about writing a certification exam, contact the office and see when the next exam session is in your area. Make sure to apply to write the exam at least two weeks in advance.



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