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NOVEMBER 2014 • NUMBER 128

BRITISH COLUMBIA  
OPERATORS

# Digest



## 2014 Operator of the Year Award

**T**his is the third Annual Operator of the Year award. The award was created to recognize Operators who promote, improve and advance certification, raise the profile of Operators and increase awareness of the industry.

The 2014 EOCOP Operator of the Year Award is being presented to **John Kalinczuk**, Water Resource Manager/Chief Operator with the City of Dawson Creek. John currently holds WT IV, WD IV, WWT II, and WWC II.

John was nominated by a peer who wrote that he "consistently goes the extra mile to not only succeed in his role, but to help those under his supervision fulfill their goals. He continues to play an advocacy role for the health of the surrounding watershed through public tours, education and awareness campaigns, as well as presentations to City Council. Not only is John constantly looking to advance his knowledge through additional certifications, I have also known many personnel under his direct supervision who valued his leadership and supportive management technique to help them fulfill their goals. This often included him encouraging those employees to seek further



**John Kalinczuk**

certifications or gain experience in different roles throughout the water system."

John was presented with his Operator of the Year award in Dawson Creek at a city council meeting. [Click this link](#) to read the article by the Alaska Highway News.

We congratulate John for demonstrating his passion and commitment, and also for his continued support for EOCOP.

### Reminder:

*The 2015 dues renewal forms have been sent.*

*You can find form on our website at*

<http://www.eocp.ca/>

*Or you can pay online at*

<http://www.search.eocp.ca/>

*Thank you to those of you who have already paid.*

# 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 them to the EOCP office at [eocp@eocp.ca](mailto:eocp@eocp.ca). Changes of address, annual dues, Continuing Education Requirements, exam applications, as well as general inquiries about the program should be addressed to:

## ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATORS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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## EOCP OFFICE STAFF

**Ashifa Dhanani** Executive Director

**Kim Eames** Office Manager

**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 4,500 active members.

The EOCP office will be closed from **December 20, 2014 to January 5, 2015**. EOCP staff and Board members would like to wish you and your families a very happy holiday season.



## 2014 Election Results for the EOCP Board of Directors

Three Board members were up for election, and agreed to run for their positions. **Bob Smith** is Employer Representative; **Brian Thorburn** is Education Representative; and **Darryl Bjorgaard** is Operator Representative. There were no outside nominations, so the Directors retained their positions through acclamation. They will remain on the Board for a three year term. In the photo are... back row from left to right: **Mike Gosselin** (President), **Pat Miller** (Vice President), **Darryl Bjorgaard** (Director), **Chris Brown** (Secretary). Front row from left to right: **Bob Smith** (Director), **Shawn Sanders** (Director), **Brian Thorburn** (Treasurer), **Tim Lambert** (Director) and **Jeff Phillips** (Director).

## Electronic EOCP Newsletter

The EOCP is trying to do our part to reduce our carbon footprint, by sending out the digest electronically. If you are reading this digest in hard copy, please contact the EOCP office at [eocp@eocp.ca](mailto:eocp@eocp.ca) to ensure we have your correct email address and contact information. It is our goal to go 100% electronic with the digest. We are currently at 92%, and need 356 email addresses to attain our goal. Please help us make that happen!!



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# 2014 EOCP Annual General Meeting

The 2014 EOCP AGM was held September 23 2014. It was a first for the EOCP, in that we held an electronic version using GoTo Meetings. This format enabled Operators from throughout the Province of BC and Yukon to attend the meeting.

48 certified Operators participated in the AGM. The AGM is an opportunity for you to find out what is happening with the EOCP, to provide your input, and to ask questions.

President Mike Gosselin gave an overview of the past year, and Executive Director, Ashifa Dhanani spoke on the items in the Treasurer's report. The statement of revenue and expenditures can be seen on our website.



*The winner of the \$250 gift card drawn for participating in the AGM, was Brent Romyn from Sun Peaks Utilities. Congratulations Brent!*

The 2014 Board election results were announced, with Board members Bob Smith, Brian Thorburn and Darryl Bjorgaard, retaining their positions

through acclamation.

Operator John Kalinczuk was announced as the 2014 Operator of the Year. President Mike Gosselin will be going to Dawson Creek in November to present the award to John at a city council meeting.

Executive Director Ashifa Dhanani announced that EOCP will start beta testing web based exams in the fall. The goal is easier access to exams, with results available on screen as soon as the exam ends. EOCP wants to be responsive to when Operators want to take exams, and decrease the length of time it takes to get results.

There was a question and answer period before the meeting was adjourned.

You can view the minutes of the AGM, and see the 2013 annual report, and power point presentation on the EOCP website or [click this link](#).

## EDITORIAL

### Best Practices for Certification Programs



It's an exciting time for Operators and for certification programs. Canadian certification programs have been working on the Canadian Best Practices for Certification Programs, which puts some standards and guidelines for all certification programs in Canada. It was finished in the last few years. It outlines the different parts of a certification program, and puts in the best practices for them to follow. It's like setting the bar for certification programs to reach for. Many programs exceed the standards in Canada. Like our Canadian Best Practices for Certification Programs, the USA has developed the Model Standards for Certification Programs that outlines how certification programs in the US should operate. This is a great tool for certification programs, as it shows all the necessary steps and procedures for the certification programs, which ultimately affect the Operators in Canada.

The Environmental Operators Certification Program along with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment have been working together on the Classification Project. This is groundbreaking information in regards to many aspects of certification. Numerous meetings have taken

place throughout BC and Yukon, with different stakeholders giving their input as to which types of changes or improvements can be made in regards to Responsible Charge, Risk Management, Facility Classification, and Operator Recruitment and Training.

The initial report was presented at the BCWWA conference, with the EOCP asking for Operator input to get all parties involved. Many key discussions have occurred since then with changes due to come out soon. These changes include alignment of the classification of Water Distribution and Water Treatment Systems with ABC, improvements to the Direct Responsible Charge requirement for plants and systems to operate, along with requirements for Operators to have a set amount of DRC experience to allow them to acquire higher levels of certification. A means or tool to allow Operators performing responsible charge to get more recognition with developed operations plans for plants and systems will allow some more flexibility with accumulation of DRC time.

It has been noted that there has not ever been any requirement in Wastewater Collection and Water Distribution for DRC in order for an Operator to be eligible to take their Level III or IV examinations. This should not be seen as a slight to Operators working in this field, and in the future, requirements will change to bring a more balanced playing field to all four core certifications.

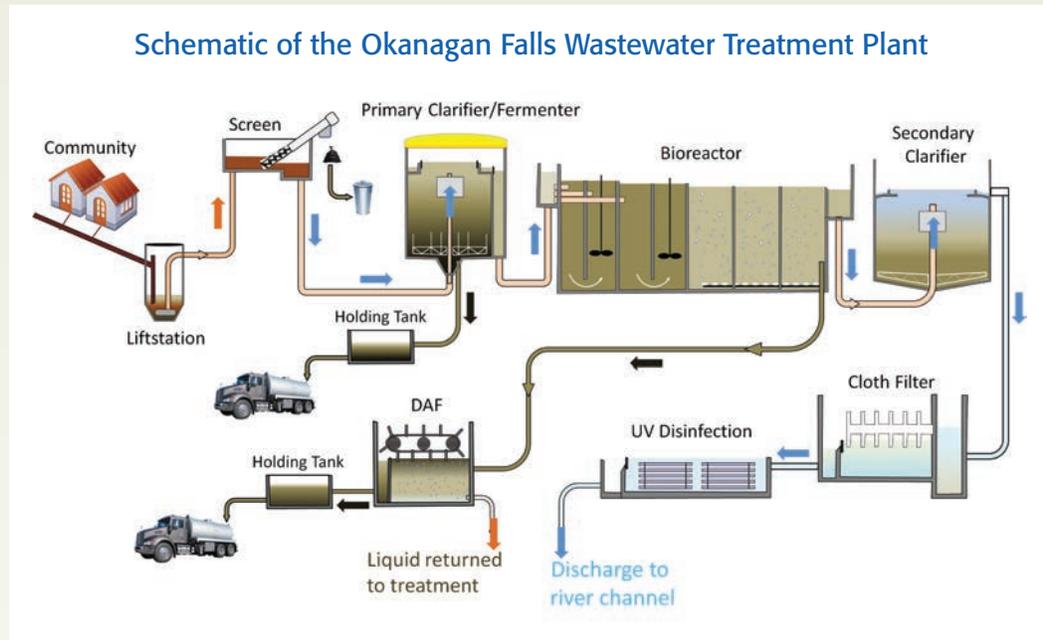
These are just a few of the examples that the key stakeholders in the industry have been discussing with more changes taking place in the near future. Look forward to continued announcements and improvements with EOCP!

In March of 2013, the new Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) wastewater treatment facility began operation at a location 2 km downstream of the old facility. It is located south of the community of Okanagan Falls, at 300 Rail Road, beside the Okanagan River Channel.

The Okanagan Falls sewer system and facility is owned and operated by the RDOS and serves approximately 750 properties, including single-family, multi-family, commercial, recreational, and institutional. There is 1 full time Operator, and 1 part time Operator at the plant, along with 1 part time lab technician.

All the sewage that arrives at the old facility now gets pumped into a force main by a new lift station that was installed at the old facility during the upgrades and travels to the new facility. The new facility consists of screening, primary clarifier/fermenter, bioreactors, secondary clarifiers, filtration units, ultraviolet disinfection, and discharge outlets to the river channel. The new facility produces highly treated effluent that is discharged directly into the Okanagan River adjacent to the treatment plant site.

The new treatment plant produces two



types of thickened sludge, Thickened Waste Activated Sludge (TWAS) and Fermented Primary Sludge (FPS) from the process. Currently both types of sludge are not dewatered onsite but instead hauled to Penticton's Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant for further processing.

**The following information provides a very brief overview of each main component of the wastewater treatment plant.**

**Lift Station:** A new lift station at the old WWTP site will convey all the sewage by way of a force main to the new WWTP. The force main is approximately 2.2 km long and 250 mm in diameter.

**Headworks:** The headworks room is where the wastewater first enters the treatment plant. In the headworks room, a mechanical screen removes the solids and larger debris from the wastewater that are 6 mm or larger. The screening unit in the headworks has a washer and compactor to squeeze the wastewater out before being bagged for disposal in the garbage.

**Primary Clarifier/ Fermenter:** This circular tank acts as both a clarifier and a fermenter. Solids will settle out to the bottom of the tank by gravity. A scraper mechanism on the bottom moves the solids out very slowly. The solids remain in the tank for an extended period of time and thus undergo fermentation and produce short chain volatile fatty acids (VFAs) for the biological



*DAF and Effluent Filters as seen from the control room. Note how the DAF (on the right) is not only easily accessible but also safe and convenient to work on and monitor. The same applies to the Effluent Filters being inside and above ground making them also easy to work on and monitor with no concerns about engulfment or confined spaces. Also in this picture note one hose coming out of the top of each filter that siphon the filters' stagnant bypass pipes to keep them from contaminating the effluent. Also in this picture, leaning against the closer "SE" pipe is one of the filters' wedge shaped panels.*

# Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant

phosphorus removal process in the bioreactor. It was designed for the primary clarifier/fermenter mechanism to separate and thicken incoming screened raw sewage solids by gravity separation. Thickened fermented sludge is pumped to a holding tank for future disposal.

**Bioreactor:** Nutrient removal at the treatment plant occurs here in the pre-anoxic, anaerobic, anoxic and aerobic zones. Mixers in the anaerated zones and air diffusers in the aerobic zone keep the solids constantly moving and circulating and thereby ensuring that the bacteria and the organic materials come together. The bacteria use the organic material and remove the phosphorus and nitrogen nutrients.

**Secondary Clarifier:** The mixed liquor that leaves the bioreactor is made of the bacteria and the wastewater being treated. It flows into the center well of the secondary clarifier where gentle mixing promotes clumping of the solids. These solids then settle out onto the bottom of the clarifier. A rotating sludge scraper collects the settled solids (sludge) and directs it into the return activated sludge (RAS) pipe. Clarified effluent overflows the weir along the top edge of the clarifier. This effluent

then travels to the disc filters for further treatment.

**Filters:** Effluent from the secondary clarifiers flows into the cloth filter panels. Solids catch on the inside of the filter panels, and as the solids build up on the inside of the filter it slows down the flow of water through the disc. This causes the water level inside the discs to rise, which triggers the disc to rotate and to begin a backwash cycle.

**Ultraviolet Disinfection (UV):** Coliforms serve as indicator organisms of contamination of water sources from feces from warm-blooded animals and humans. UV disinfects by altering the DNA of the bacterial cells exposed to it. It has been found that UV radiation with a wavelength of approximately 254 nm is most efficient for disinfection purposes.

**Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF):** The DAF thickening equipment takes the waste activated sludge (WAS) from the bioreactor. The DAF system has polymer added to make the solids clump together. Pressurized air is added into the bottom of the tank and small bubbles attach to the solid clumps making them float. The sludge can reach a concentration of about 10% solids which are then removed into a holding tank.

**Biofilter:** Fans draw odorous air from various points within the plant and then discharge it into a perforated pipe system beneath the biofilter media. The air is then filtered and treated as it moves upward through the biofilter and released into the atmosphere. The biofilter media is also irrigated to provide a moist environment for bacteria. Any water produced, irrigation water and rainwater, is collected in the biofilter drains and is piped back into the beginning of the treatment plant. The media is composed mainly of bark mulch, wood chips, and compost.

**Effluent Reuse:** Treated effluent is used for process, water maintenance functions and landscape irrigation. The heating and cooling



*Secondary Clarifier with walls of circular bioreactor.*



*Last Aerobic Zone with Alum Addition (Grey Drip Pipe) and Surface WAS (wasting) Box. Surface wasting has proven very helpful in resolving foaming and removing floating solids, leaves, etc. that find their way into the Bioreactor.*

system uses the treated effluent in various ways to provide up to 95% of the heating/cooling requirements for the building. Treated effluent is also used in the toilets and many other places around the treatment plant.

*Thank you to Steve Anderson from the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen for contributing the plant profile and photos.*



*The Secondary Clarifiers within the circular Bioreactors not only saved concrete costs, but also help conserve heat, with the Combined Treatment Units having to be 70% above ground. In addition, it is much easier for the operators to compare foaming, supernatant and visual flows within the Clarifiers and Bioreactors with them in combined treatment units.*

# Local Water Operator Achieves Prestigious Designation

NEW ORLEANS, LA., September 28, 2014 – **Brian Thorburn** was recognized for earning the Water Distribution Class I Professional Operator (PO) certification and designation. This designation is the industry's first professional certification for water and wastewater operators. Thorburn and five fellow POs took the stage at a special pinning reception and ceremony to be honoured for their accomplishments.

The attendance by ABC's founding members the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF) leadership demonstrates how industry leaders have embraced this new means of recognizing the expertise of water and wastewater operators.

The Certification Commission for Environmental Professionals (C2EP) offers the Professional Operator (PO) certification and designation for water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection, and wastewater treatment operators. The program was designed by industry leaders to meet the water industry's need for standardized certification and professional recognition.

Uniform recognition of standardized certification fosters the growth of a skilled and mobile workforce, helps ensure public and environmental safety, and increases opportunities and earning potential for operators.

"The PO certification offers a way for organizations such as EPCOR Water Utilities to ensure their operators have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be true assets to their communities," said John Solvie with C2EP. "Brian has shown great dedication to the industry and we are honoured to welcome him into our program."

Thorburn is Senior Operator at EPCOR Water Utilities in French Creek, British Columbia, Canada. He serves as ABC's 2014 President, sits on the Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) Board, and is a member of AWWA's Water Treatment Plant Operations Committee and Top Ops Committee.

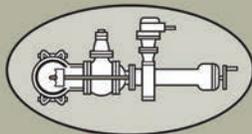
"Like professional designations in other fields, the PO signifies that an individual has met and continues to uphold rigorous certification requirements," said Thorburn. "I am proud to be among the first operators in the nation to receive this prestigious certification and designation."

Please visit [www.ProfessionalOperator.org](http://www.ProfessionalOperator.org) for additional information.

Certification Commission for Environmental Professionals (C2EP) of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) functions as an independent entity to develop and administer certification in water treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection and wastewater treatment operations. C2EP awards certified operators the Professional Operator (PO) designation, the industry's first professional designation for operators.

The Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) was established in 1972 to provide services and resources to advance the quality and integrity of certification programs for the professional workforce operating drinking water and wastewater systems.

ABC serves as a technical resource to its members through its industry-leading testing services, professional development offerings, and development of uniform standards and best practices in environmental certification.



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# Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) Conference

AANDC held their annual conference in Vancouver from October 8 – 10, 2014. It was an interactive trade show that had exhibitors providing Operator training at their display booths, as well as a number of speakers doing presentations on a variety of topics. The conference also featured a pump tear down competition, and Top Ops contest provided by EOCP.

The EOCP would like to thank the Operators that participated in the Top Ops event, Shawn Sanders for moderating the contest, Marie James for keeping score, and Satwinder Paul, Bruce Jorgensen & Kim Eames for judging the contest.



## *Lifetime Operators*

In 2014, six Operators became life time members in the EOCP, after writing their first certification exams in 1984. These dedicated professionals have been active Operators for 30 years.

The EOCP would like to recognize and thank these Operators for their years of service and participation in the program.

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Lawrence Allen | James White    |
| Claude Hallé   | Gordon Austrom |
| Ken McDonnell  | David Hoffman  |

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**T**HE YUKON is growing and more and more water facilities are being upgraded to comply with current standards. Trained water and wastewater operators are essential for water management, a cornerstone of maintaining the quality, quantity and health of Yukon water.

Since 2009, the Yukon Water and Wastewater Operator Program (YWWOP) at Yukon College has offered courses for employed water and wastewater operators, as well as courses relevant to health professionals, supervisors and homeowners involved or interested in water quality, enrolling more than 355 students since its beginning. The College offers courses to communities in the Yukon, northern BC and in the other territories.

YWWOP allows operators to come to the College to get the proper training and provides an opportunity to share knowledge between

operators. Exam preparation courses are offered in the following areas: Bulk Water Delivery; Basic Small Water Systems; and all the Level 1 & 2, Water Treatment, Distribution, Wastewater Treatment and Collections. YWWOP also offers short courses for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and public education courses. Yukon operators are certified through the Environmental Operator Certification Program (EOCP) and the Yukon College YWWOP courses are accredited through EOCP.

YWWOP also partners with the Yukon Research Center at Yukon College, which is committed to developing collaborative research and innovations and delivering outreach that meets the needs of northerners. Last year Yukon operators participated in research on drinking water for small exploration camps.

Yukon College recently received \$150,000 over two years from the Government of Yukon to deliver and expand the current program. The College is looking at offering blended on-line courses as well as expanding the course offerings.



For more information about YWWOP, please contact the YWWOP Coordinator and Instructor, Catherine Mallet at (867) 668-8798 or by e-mail at [cmallet@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:cmallet@yukoncollege.yk.ca). You can also visit the website for upcoming course lists at [this link](#).



## Top Ops Winners at WEFTC

Congratulations to the Kelowna Operations Team for the fantastic performance at the BCWWA Operator Challenge in Whistler in May 2014 and most recently for representing BC and gaining international experience by competing at WEFTC Annual Conference in New Orleans in October 2014.



Left to right; Mike Humes, Marc Casler, Kevin Bakay, Henry Kohout

# First Ever Web Based Certification Exam Session in BC

On October 20, 2014, three Operators wrote the very first web based exam at the Okanagan College testing centre in Kelowna. EOCP has been beta testing the web based exams throughout the province, and Yukon since that date. The goal for 2015 is to provide most, if not all of our certification exams electronically.

The benefits to web based testing include:

- Immediate processing of exam results – you will receive your mark on-screen when you have completed and submitted all of your responses.
- You will also receive an e-mail with the breakdown of your exam results by section within 24 hours.
- Increased flexibility to schedule your exam based on your preference for date and location.

- Decreased travel time and increased availability for exam locations – less travel expenses and fewer days off for exam writing.
- One question is displayed at a time - making it easier for you to focus.
- No bubble-sheet mistakes – you don't have to focus on matching the question from the exam booklet with the right line on the bubble sheet.

You can try out the sample exam online for an idea of what the web based testing screen will look like by clicking on [this link](#).



Josh Visscher, Greg Crickett, and Malcolm Holtom.

## Bursary Awarded!

EOCP Board member Shawn Sanders with EOCP Bursary recipient Carly Levinsky at the Okanagan College Awards Reception on Thursday, November 20, 2014.



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# Water Weekend at Science World



The BCWWA organized some activities alongside Science World to help raise public awareness about the high quality of our tap water, and about the value of our water. The activities took place during “Water Weekend” at Science World on October 4-5, 2014.

Some of the events organized were a tap water versus bottle water blind taste test, with tap water getting the most votes, a water bottle give away, and interactive water demonstrations to illustrate each part of the water cycle.

EOCP office staff participated in the Water Weekend event with BCWWA, along with BC Groundwater Association, Clearbrook Waterworks District and Water For People.

It was a fantastic weekend, with great interest from children and parents that visited Science World.



## *In Memory of Lee Robinson*

**Lee Robinson** passed away at the age of 68, on November 5th in Victoria BC with family by his side. Lee was a loving husband, dad, family member, friend, and long term employee with the City of Salmon Arm. Lee and his wife (Lu) spent most of their lives in Salmon Arm and the Enderby area where they raised their three children. Lee was heavily involved in the community, from the ball parks to the hockey rink.

Lee’s career with the District of Salmon Arm started in 1975, where he worked in utilities as a pipe layer. In 1979, he moved to the Water Pollution Control Center, and worked at the facility until he retired in 2009. Lee was the senior operator in charge from 1985 until 2009. He became a certified WWT I Operator in 1981 (EOCP #336), and wrote and passed the WWT II exam in 1991.

During Lee’s time at the Water Pollution Control Center, Lee played a dynamic role in the operations of the facility and contributed to the many upgrades that occurred at the plant. He also played a huge roll in successfully validating the co-op student program for the Water Pollution Control Center. Lee was a mentor for many, and a co-worker who everyone enjoyed working with. He always had an infectious smile, and positive outlook no matter what task needed to be completed. One of his favourite sayings was “It was never a problem if it could be fixed.” He was always there for anyone who needed that extra help whether at work or home.

Lee is going to be missed by everyone who was part of his life.

## *Did You Know?*

*...That so far in 2014, 1,122 certification exams have been written in 36 locations throughout BC and Yukon.*

*EOCP Operators have been busy!*

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A112.14.3  
A112.14.4



## Water & Wastewater Education

TRU's Water & Wastewater Education offers a diploma, a certificate and continuing education courses to prepare new students and current water and wastewater operators to operate and maintain water treatment and distribution systems; wastewater treatment and collection systems; reuse and disposal systems; and water quality monitoring.

- Certificate in Water & Wastewater Utilities
- Diploma in Water Treatment Technology
- 66 courses for water industry operators (three continuing education units each)



Water & Wastewater Laboratory

For more information about TRU's Water and Wastewater programs and courses, which are accredited by Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) for continuing education units (CEUs), please visit

**[www.tru.ca/trades](http://www.tru.ca/trades)** or

Contact Satwinder Paul by email at **[spaul@tru.ca](mailto:spaul@tru.ca)** or by phone at 250.371.5955.

*Congratulations!*



Congratulations to Anna Angew from Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant in West Vancouver, on passing your Wastewater Treatment Level IV exam. Well done!!

## 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.

### FACILITY CLASSIFICATION TO NOVEMBER 7, 2014

| Classification | IV | III | II  | I   | Total       |
|----------------|----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| WD             | 33 | 52  | 172 | 161 | 418         |
| WT             | 18 | 33  | 72  | 11  | 134         |
| WWC            | 16 | 19  | 68  | 95  | 198         |
| WWT            | 24 | 32  | 102 | 100 | 258         |
| IWWT           | 2  | 1   | 4   | 0   | 7           |
| SWS            |    |     |     |     | 841         |
| SWWS           |    |     |     |     | 202         |
| <b>Total</b>   |    |     |     |     | <b>2058</b> |

### OPERATOR CERTIFICATION TO NOVEMBER 7, 2014

| Classification | IV  | III | II    | MUII | I     | MUI | OIT | Total        |
|----------------|-----|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-----|--------------|
| WD             | 63  | 182 | 772   | 5    | 799   | 11  | 61  | 1,893        |
| WT             | 35  | 55  | 150   | 2    | 194   | 5   | 56  | 497          |
| WWC            | 8   | 62  | 439   | 4    | 633   | 8   | 41  | 1,195        |
| WWT            | 98  | 129 | 244   | 4    | 276   | 10  | 65  | 826          |
| IWWT           |     | 3   | 14    |      | 18    |     |     | 35           |
| <b>Totals</b>  | 204 | 431 | 1,619 | 15   | 1,920 | 34  | 223 | 4,446        |
| BWD            |     |     |       |      |       |     |     | 46           |
| SWS            |     |     |       |      |       |     |     | 751          |
| SWWS           |     |     |       |      |       |     |     | 245          |
| <b>Total</b>   |     |     |       |      |       |     |     | <b>5,488</b> |

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