

OPERATOR DIGEST

FALL 2025 | NUMBER 166



Quarterly Magazine of the
Environmental Operators
Certification Program – BC/Yukon



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OPERATOR DIGEST

The Operator Digest is the official magazine 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

Changes of address, annual dues, Continuing Education requirements, exam applications, as well as general enquiries about the program should be addressed to:

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The Environmental Operators Certification Program is a charter member of Water Professionals International and is a registered society with more than 4,500 active members.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



As we reflect on the success of the EOCP 2025 Conference, I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who joined us. It was an inspiring week filled with impactful learning opportunities, thoughtful discussions, and meaningful connections. Whether you reconnected with long-time colleagues or formed new industry partnerships, I hope you left feeling energized, informed, and proud of the vital work you do in protecting public health and the environment. I feel truly fortunate to be part of this incredible industry, and I appreciate how warmly I was welcomed — it was a pleasure meeting so many of you in person.

The conference was not only a hub for professional development, but also a celebration of the EOCP community — your commitment to excellence and continuous learning is what drives our sector forward. A special Thank You goes out to our generous sponsors; your support makes this gathering possible and continues to strengthen our shared mission.

As the leaves begin to turn and we are entering the final quarter of the year, we are also approaching the end of the current two-year CEU reporting period on December 31, 2025. If you have attended any CEU-accredited courses, workshops, or conferences that have not yet been submitted, now is the time to update your records. Submitting early helps avoid the year-end rush and ensures your certification remains in good standing. Logging into your profile on the CRM will provide you with the most accurate information on your progress and status.

Please also be aware that annual membership invoices will be sent out in mid-November, with a due date in mid-January 2026. Keep an eye on your mail or connect with your employer if invoices are sent directly to your workplace.

I encourage you to participate in our “Coffee with Heather” sessions — a 30-minute webinar, hosted by our distinguished Heather Reynolds. These sessions provide guidance on

navigating the CRM system and answering EOCP-related questions. While they do not qualify for CEUs, they offer valuable insights and practical support to help you succeed.

Looking ahead, EOCP is advancing key strategic initiatives that will strengthen the sector and support operators and employers into the future. We are excited to be finalizing our 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, which will be formally introduced to the membership in the next issue of the Operator Digest. This plan sets the vision for the years ahead and demonstrates EOCP’s commitment to innovation, collaboration, and industry leadership.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to professionalism and excellence. We look forward to building on the momentum of this year and working alongside each of you as we enter a new chapter of growth and opportunity.

Katja Roberts
CEO, EOCP



OPERATOR PROFILE

Ray Avanthay, CWP, CWWP



my journal and note any must-dos for the day. I find it best to tackle administrative duties before the crew arrives. These tasks may include invoicing, obtaining quotes, following up on flagged emails, reviewing the day's task, or working on month-end reporting. Once the crew arrives, we review the duties and responsibilities for the day and assign tasks. We provide updates and follow up on ongoing projects and areas that require attention. Our crew handles both the water and wastewater systems, with Operators taking turns working in each field. When meetings don't fill the day, I visit our sites and work alongside staff to gain firsthand insight. These field visits often spark ideas for improvements and lead to actionable plans. After lunch, our team regroups to discuss any issues or concerns identified during daily rounds. We also use a group text thread to report concerns, helping us to stay on top of issues and ensure nothing is missed. At the end of the day, I follow up on tasks, verify timecards, complete work orders, and update the SCADA log.

What do you most enjoy about your day?

This is a tough question. I genuinely enjoy working alongside the crew, often jumping in on some of the toughest, dirtiest jobs. These moments tend to be the most memorable—and surprisingly fun—as we reflect on the challenges together. One standout project was a recent replacement of over 900 diffusers in our aerated lagoons. We went from completing just two sets a day to twenty-seven by the final day, thanks to the team's ingenuity and collaboration. Watching them streamline the process and overcome barriers was incredibly rewarding. Our crew thrives on problem-solving, and fostering that culture of continuous improvement is something I truly value.

What are some of the challenges you face?

Aging infrastructure, coupled with increased regulatory requirements, presents many challenges for our industry. Sourcing and stocking critical parts in the North, as well as finding local contractors in our field of expertise who are willing and able to help, can be challenging. We also compete for services with the oil and gas industry, which drives up the cost of business up during the boom season in our area. We maintain many different sites, and keeping up requires focus, communication, and follow-up. It's a challenge, but our crew is

How did you become an Operator?

When I was laid off from the local pulp and paper mill where I had been working since high school, I decided to enroll in college and pursue a Business Administration degree. After college, I started working for the small, two-person Public Works department near my hometown. We did everything - snow removal, grass cutting, landscaping, chipping trees, and maintaining the parks, ball diamonds, and municipal buildings. We also monitored the lagoons, as well as the distribution and collection systems. The Town needed a certified Operator after Walkerton, Ontario's E. coli outbreak changed how water purveyors were monitored. That incident was an eye-opener to many small municipalities, cities, and provinces. I studied and passed my Level 1 Water Treatment and Distribution Exams in September of 2005. I loved the challenge.

How long have you been an Operator?

I have been a certified Operator since 2005. I have worked in the field as an Operator and in municipal management for much of that time, with short stints in the nuclear energy industry and the mining industries, where I worked with process controls in maintenance and repair.

What are your core functions?

I am the Utilities Treatment Supervisor with the City of Fort St. John. My role involves many core functions and requires versatility. My team is equipped to handle a wide range of responsibilities. In my role, I collaborate with managers, directors, contractors, and engineers on both short- and long-term planning to ensure our water and wastewater systems meet future community needs. I oversee process optimization, budgets, and preventative maintenance programs, while monitoring the City's water treatment, wastewater treatment, water distribution, and wastewater collection systems, along with associated buildings and processes. I lead a team of six to seven employees, scheduling, delegating, and working alongside them, while providing training and mentorship to support a wide range of experience. I also develop, maintain, and refine, employee orientation and training manuals. Currently, I am working to commission and optimize phase two of our wastewater reclamation facility.

What is your typical day?

I typically come in early to review my notes and scan through the SCADA system. I go through



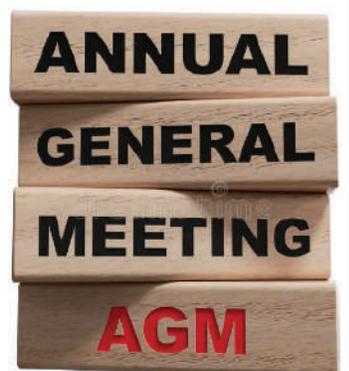
Public Works Association of BC 2025 Virtual Annual General Meeting Notice

Wednesday, December 3, 2025 • 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Come and find out what PWABC does and have been doing to support Public Works in BC.

If you want to get more involved, consider running for a PWABC board position and submit your application to Membership@pwabc.ca

To register and to get the virtual login information, please e-mail ExecutiveDirector@pwabc.bc



nimble, adaptable, and has been able to meet any challenge we've faced so far. Securing a long-term water supply to keep up with growth in our area requires strong planning and commitment from management and Council. We are fortunate to have support from both! My predecessors and the current leadership team have developed a robust well-rehabilitation plan to maintain our current supply until the new system is up and running.

What advice do you have on how to have a successful career as an Operator?

Advice... where do I start? I think it starts with our mindset. Be a good teammate and coworker. Don't be afraid to ask questions and learn from those who came before you. Tackle the small jobs with as much care and attention as the complicated ones. Trust and respect are earned. When you make decisions in our field, do so with care and attention, and include your coworkers. When your team is included the buy-in is higher.

We are public servants. When you adopt a mindset of serving your community and teammates, it puts things into perspective. Don't feel like you're "above" a certain job. Take it on and do it to the best of your ability. People respect and value that! Learn as much as you can on the job and use the resources and training available. As Operators, we have an opportunity to keep learning and increasing our knowledge and certifications. Don't wait for others to show you the way. Take ownership of your goals and make the most of them. If you're lucky enough to work for someone who offers financial support, use it to further your knowledge and career.

When you finish a job, always set the next person up for success. Those small actions and attention to detail go a long way in developing long-term habits, both in our industry and in life, that gain the respect of your coworkers.

What else can you tell us about working as an Environmental Operator?

Working as an Environmental Operator is a privilege that carries a lot of responsibility. As Operators, we must uphold high standards in everything we do. We are entrusted with protecting our communities, and that responsibility starts with our water supply - into our water treatment plant to the distribution and collection system and ending with the final treated effluent discharged into receiving waters.

Working in all areas of the field has provided me with better overall knowledge, training, and perspective, which I'm very fortunate to have experienced.

This industry is incredibly rewarding. We don't often get noticed, but that means we are doing our job well.

Whom do you recognize as a mentor?

I owe a lot of who I am as an Operator to the crew I worked with in Selkirk, Manitoba. Ron Grove was an Operator who knew the chemistry of water and wastewater and mentored me over the three plus years we worked together before he retired. He was easygoing, never afraid to tackle any job, and always shared his knowledge with the crew.

I remember we would watch The Price is Right and Judge Judy at every coffee break to keep him happy.

Ed Partyka is an amazing Operator with a strong maintenance and mechanical background, and a great friend. He mentored me on the maintenance side of things, and we had a lot of fun learning the tough, dirty, and difficult jobs on the wastewater side.

Dylan Funk and Forbes Macfadden were new Operators who dove right into the industry and learned alongside me, as we were hired around the same time. We are still close friends to this day. We had a motto: "Don't just do it, do it better" - a play on the Nike commercial from back then that I still try and follow to this day.

What do you do when you aren't working?

My family comes first, and my wife and I keep busy with our three teenagers and all their activities.

I manage my oldest son's U18AA NEBC Trackers hockey team. I live stream and provide play-by-play for the games so the parents and families back home can follow the team. The team travels from Fort St. John to Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Camrose Alberta and as far as Kelowna and Vancouver. I am active and love all sports. I play hockey in the winter on an Oldtimers team and compete in cycling, running, and triathlons in the summer months. I'm a fan of the Winnipeg Jets and love watching games with my family. I also enjoy working on projects around the house and often help friends and family with theirs.



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MODERNIZING A LEGACY: THE IONA ISLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Article and Photos Shared by Metro Vancouver

Located just north of Vancouver International Airport (YVR), and occupying approximately 31 hectares, the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has served as a vital piece of the region's wastewater infrastructure since 1963. This facility plays a critical role in managing the wastewater of over 875,000 residents in Vancouver, parts of Burnaby and Richmond, the University Endowment Lands, and UBC. It also treats more than 40% of the region's wastewater.

With its long history and central role in protecting the health of people and ecosystems, Iona Island is now at the center of one of the largest and most ambitious infrastructure upgrades in the region's history.

A Look Back: From Primary Treatment to Future Transformation

Commissioned in 1963, the Iona Island WWTP was originally constructed as a primary treatment facility, capable of removing large solids and organic materials from wastewater before it is discharged into the Strait of Georgia. Over the decades, it has been expanded and improved to accommodate a growing population. In order to treat the incoming wastewater more effectively, the plant was upgraded to include Chemically Enhanced Primary Treatment (CEPT) in 2010. This process adds coagulant and polymer to the primary treatment system which allows for greater settleability of suspended solids. Another important upgrade was the Solids Handling Facility upgrade commissioned in 2017. This facility helps to remove significant amounts of organic and inorganic materials from the sludge, prior to feeding it to the digesters. This additional step in the process has significantly improved digester

performance and reduced equipment maintenance associated with heavy inorganics. On the downstream end of the digestion process, the traditional lagoon dewatering process was upgraded to a centrifuge dewatering process in 2023. The dewatered biosolids are used in land reclamation and agricultural projects.

Today, the plant is preparing for a generational leap forward. In response to federal regulations (2012) and aligned with a growing public commitment to environmental stewardship, Metro Vancouver is undertaking the Iona Island WWTP Project (Iona Project) to upgrade the plant to provide secondary treatment effluent quality.

Improving Treatment

The Iona Project will provide secondary treatment effluent quality to meet the regulatory performance (quality) requirements. A new secondary treatment facility will be constructed downstream from the existing primary plant. The

secondary treatment technology, membrane bioreactor (MBR), allows the facility to be constructed in modular sections with adaptability for population growth within the region. The technology selected for secondary treatment can provide effluent quality similar to tertiary filtration. Additional modules can be added in the future.

Delivering secondary treatment in modules will allow Metro Vancouver to do additional analysis, as building is done, to determine if further treatment modules are needed. As population size increases, Metro Vancouver could install additional secondary treatment modules to enable the facility to continue to meet the secondary treatment standards in the future. New construction of the secondary treatment facility would be seismically resilient.

MBR technology produces very high-quality effluent, comparable to tertiary-filtered effluent. The project approach would build out the minimum capacity of MBR secondary treatment to meet the effluent

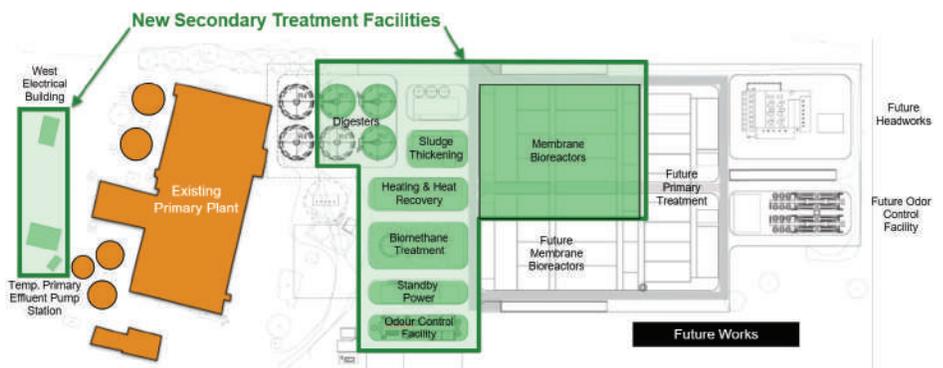
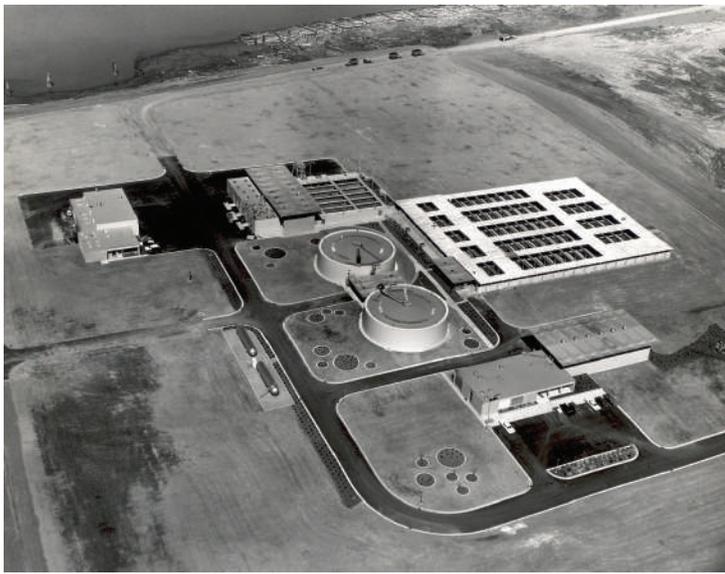


Figure 1: Site plan for the alternative approach, showing what would be delivered (in green) and components that would be future works



Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant - circa 1964

secondary quality regulatory requirements set out by the provincial and federal regulations, while also addressing affordability and market capacity limits.

In the future, when the remaining MBR secondary treatment trains are built out, the entire secondary effluent flow will likely reach tertiary-filtered effluent quality, aligned with the Project Definition Report commitments. We will be testing performance of the MBR, and effluent quality, via pilot testing over the next two years using a pilot plant and analysis.

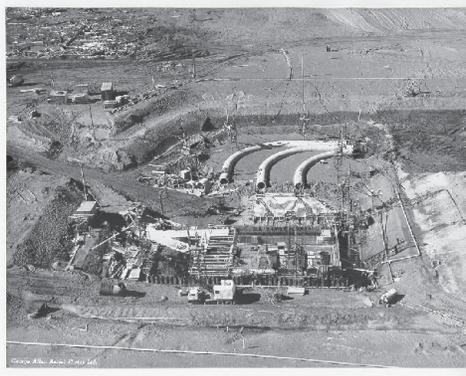
Environmental Benefits

The existing Iona Island WWTP outfall extends 7.2 km offshore into the Strait of Georgia via two diffusers located at depths ranging from 72 to 106 m. The implementation of secondary treatment at Iona Island WWTP will remove an additional 53 tonnes per day of total suspended solids that would otherwise be discharged to the Strait of Georgia.

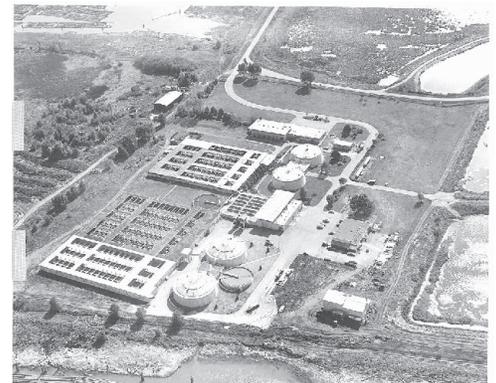
The Fraser River has high naturally occurring background levels of sediment and solids, which are not considered harmful to the receiving environment. While the additional removal of total suspended solids achieved by the secondary treatment system is minor in comparison to the input from the Fraser River to the Strait of Georgia, final effluent from Iona Island WWTP does include a range of other contaminants that are known to be stressors to aquatic life.



Construction of Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant - 1959



Construction of Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant - 1959



Aerial of Iona Wastewater Treatment Plant - 1983

Day to Day Operations

Due to Vancouver's combined sewer system, Iona Island WWTP treats the largest amount of flow in the region, with a maximum daily authorized rate of discharge for the plant of 1,530 million liters. Operation of the plant is carried out by dedicated certified operators who manage the process 24/7. These professionals work around the clock to monitor system performance, respond to alarms, collect samples, and deal with emergencies to maintain regulatory compliance. In addition to treating wastewater from the collections system, the Iona Island WWTP also has a domestic trucked liquid waste, and the only non-domestic trucked liquid waste receiving station for Metro Vancouver.

Like many aging facilities, the Iona Island WWTP faces a range of challenges: aging infrastructure, increasing treatment demand, stricter environmental regulations, available land for expansion, and climate risks such as sea level rise.

Metro Vancouver's response has been proactive and forward-looking. The upgrade project addresses these challenges through:

- Installation of new treatment processes while rehabilitating existing infrastructure
- Seismic and climate-adaptive design for new infrastructure
- Community engagement with local stakeholders and x̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam Indian Band), to consider interests and opportunities in participation

By treating these challenges as opportunities for innovation, the project aims to deliver long-term benefits far beyond compliance.

A Focus on Sustainability and Community

Sustainability is a core principle in the Iona Island WWTP upgrade. The new design integrates energy recovery, with the potential to generate renewable natural gas from biosolids. The plant will also include green infrastructure elements that support water re-use, stormwater management, and ecological connectivity.

Community engagement remains a cornerstone of the project, with Metro Vancouver providing regular updates through public meetings, project websites, and open communication with community partners.

As the region continues to grow and evolve, Iona Island will remain a symbol of environmental responsibility and regional cooperation — modernizing a legacy, one stage at a time.

WHO'S ON THE MOVE

Jillian Abney, CWP, CWWP – Deputy Director of Operational Services, Town of Osoyoos

What is your new position?

My new role is Deputy Director of Operational Services for the Town of Osoyoos. I came from the District of West Vancouver where I was Supervisor of Water and Wastewater Treatment.

What was your first job?

My first job was selling mini donuts on the beach in Penticton. My first job in the industry was with the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) as a co-op student, where I was able to spend most of my time at the Chapman Creek water treatment plant.

What was your path to becoming an Operator?

I went to school at Okanagan College in the Water Engineering Technology program, and after my first co-op position at the SCRD, I was absolutely hooked.

How did you pivot from your last position to your current one?

I saw this as a great opportunity to take on a new challenge, learn new things, and still use the knowledge and experience I've built from my previous role. I'm excited to apply what I know while continuing to grow in this new position.

What advice would you give to someone who is currently an Operator or considering becoming one?

Ask questions, and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Every operator has something to teach you, what you do with that knowledge is up to you!

What are some of your goals in your new position?

I'm excited to keep learning new things, meet other operators and industry contacts, and be part of building Osoyoos' first water treatment plant. It's a great opportunity to contribute to something new.

What do you do in your spare time?

In my spare time I love hiking and running with my husband and our dog. Now that I am back in the Okanagan, I look forward to spending as much time as possible with my family.



Jillian Abney at the Hoover Dam

2025 EOCP BOARD ELECTION: ELECTION RESULTS

By: Kim Eames

The 2025 EOCP Board election saw the largest number of candidates ever to run in a single election — an encouraging sign of strong interest in contributing to the future of the EOCP.

Nine candidates competed for two vacant Operator positions. **Tina Henderson** was elected to the Board for her first term with 133 votes, and incumbent **Chris Ford** was re-elected for a second term with 95 votes. Our sincere thanks go to David Best (93), Darryl Bjorgaard (55), Jeffrey Parker (48), Ryan Federau (42), Jeffrey Singbeill (39), Nicholas Duran (32), and Randy Colombo (26) for their commitment and participation in the election process.

John Bergese was elected by acclamation to the consultant position that is filled by a person who advises or has advised in the operation or design of facilities that treat water, waste, or wastewater.



*Tina Henderson
Board Treasurer*



*John Bergese,
Board Secretary*



*Chris Ford,
Director*

The new directors were announced at the Annual General Meeting held on September 22, 2025, both online and in person at the EOCP2025 Education Sessions and Tradeshow in Richmond.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Board convened to appoint directors to their respective positions. The composition of the new Board is as follows:

Tara Macrae, Board Chair
Darcy Dion, Chair-Elect
Tina Henderson, Treasurer

John Bergese, Secretary
Natasha Cvenkel, Past Chair
Rob Fleming, Director

Chris Ford, Director
Ben Kineshanko, Director
Ewan MacDonald, Director

Barnett Stewart, Director

EOCP also have representatives from different ministries attend meetings as non-voting members. We hope to have a representative from Yukon Government joining soon.

Brian Bedford, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs (HMA)
Acienne Ospan, Ministry of Health (MoH)

Natalya Melnychuk, PhD. Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRUS)



*Natasha Cvenkel,
Past Board Chair*

Natasha Cvenkel is moving into the Past Chair role after completing her three-year term from 2022–2025. In this position, she will continue to provide guidance and support to the current Board of Directors. During her time as Board Chair, Natasha's strong leadership, insight, and deep understanding of the EOCP have been invaluable. Her experience and collaborative approach will play an important role in helping the new Board transition smoothly and continue advancing the organization's goals.

We also extend our sincere thanks to **Mike Firlotte**, who has concluded his service on the Board after deciding not to seek re-election. Mike contributed two separate three-year terms, from 2017–2020 and 2022–2025, during which he held several key positions, including Treasurer, Chair-Elect, and Board Chair. He also provided thoughtful input in 2021 as Past Chair. Mike's enthusiasm, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the EOCP and its mission have left a lasting mark. His collegial spirit and steady leadership have been deeply valued by everyone on the Board, and he will be greatly missed.



Mike Firlotte

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Tanya Steele with Delegates after Keynote Address



Chris Ford from the City of Kelowna receiving the Corporate Recognition Award from Darcy Dion



EOCP2025

ANNUAL TRADESHOW AND EDUCATION SESSIONS OVERVIEW

STRENGTHENING OPERATORS: INNOVATING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

By: Kim Eames

EOCP2025, EOCP's seventh annual Tradeshow and Education Sessions was a resounding success, bringing together 317 delegates in a brand-new venue for a dynamic mix of learning, networking, and celebration. Highlights included an engaging plant tour, a record breaking Annual General Meeting (AGM), a bustling tradeshow, a lively Chair's Reception, an inspiring Awards Luncheon, a thought-provoking keynote address, and a full lineup of informative education sessions. Additionally, a post-conference survey brought positive reviews by delegates.

Our thanks to Wayne Hung and Lani Somasunderam from Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant for leading a tour for 23 delegates. A plant profile of Iona Island is included in this issue.

The AGM include the largest number of attendees in EOCP's history, including sixty-five certified Operators. The meeting featured an overview of the 2024 financials presented by Aterna Advisors, who were also approved to conduct the audit for 2025.



EOCP Awards

The Online Help Centre for BC Small Water Systems

Find technical advice and self-help tools to help you deliver safe drinking water. Covers topics on treatment, regulations, operations, maintenance, water quality monitoring, emergency response planning and much more.

smallwatersystemsbc.ca



John Bergese, Chris Ford, and Tina Henderson, were announced as the new Directors to the Board. Chris was re-elected for a second term while John and Tina are beginning their first three-year terms.

The tradeshow provided valuable opportunities for delegates to connect directly with vendors. The Chair's Reception, sponsored by BCIT, took place during the tradeshow and offered a fun, relaxed environment for delegates and exhibitors to network, learn about new products and services, and enjoy delicious snacks.

Tuesday's education sessions kicked off with Tanya Steele's dynamic keynote address on life saving hazard assessments. She energized the crowd and had everyone on their feet with a safety themed sing-along.

Wednesday morning included "Breakfast with the Board" where Directors shared what inspired them to serve, and why it's important for new voices to join the board.

The Awards Luncheon, sponsored by Water Professionals International (WPI), was emceed by EOCP Director Darcy Dion and recognized outstanding achievements in the industry. Following the EOCP awards, Paul Bishop, President & CEO of WPI, presented Professional Operator (PO) pins to EOCP Operators who received their PO designation through WPI. Congratulations to Mike Firlotte, Chris Kerman, Darcy Dion, and Nicholas Duran!



Ray Avanthay - Operator of the Year

EOCP AWARD WINNERS

Bert Caine Award: Mike Firlotte
Operator of the Year: Raymond Avanthay
Corporate Recognition: City of Kelowna
Innovation Award: City of Richmond

\$2,500 EOCP Student Scholarship Award

Winners:
 Beth O'Reilly, BCIT
 Tom Willbrink, Okanagan College (OUC)
 Jacob McCabe, Thompson Rivers University (TRU)

We are pleased to announce that the EOCP 2026 Annual Tradeshow and Education Sessions will once again be held at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel in Richmond. EOCP will be celebrating sixty years



Bert Caine Award Recipient, Mike Firlotte with James Austin



City of Richmond Innovation Award - (L) Shawn McQuistin, Tammy Neufeld, Carly Smith, Darcy Dion (EOCP), Murray Barstow (R)

of certification excellence in 2026, and we look forward to delivering another exceptional program. We eagerly anticipate working with our sponsors, exhibitors, and speakers to make this milestone event a success. Save the dates: September 14 - 26, 2026!

POST CONFERENCE SURVEY RESULTS

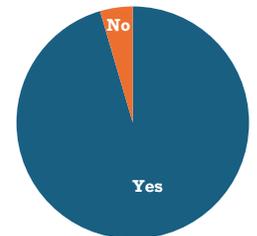
OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THE EVENT?



WERE THE SESSION TOPICS RELEVANT TO YOUR WORK?



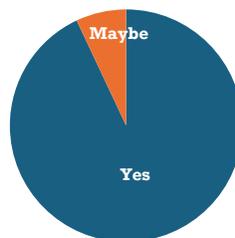
IF EOCP WERE TO PUT ON A ONE-DAY REGIONAL EVENT IN YOUR AREA, WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING?



OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THE QUALITY/CONTENT OF THE SESSIONS?



WOULD YOU ATTEND THIS EVENT AGAIN?





Questions for the Keynote Speaker



Paul Bishop, WPI - Awards Luncheon Sponsor



Tanya Steele - Keynote Speaker



Bart Nellisen and Zane Spencer during Industry Trends in SCADA



Delegates and Exhibitors at the Tradeshow



Delegates and Exhibitors at the Tradeshow



Networking before a Presentation



Devon Franklin, Manager, Corporate Training and Industry Services at BCIT - Chair's Reception Sponsor



Delegates on a Break



Delegates Enjoying a Presentation



EOCB Board, Staff and Volunteers



Dave Brewer presents Are You Ready for Something Completely Different



Darcy Dion Demonstrating Hydrant Maintenance



IONA ISLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT TOUR

By: Heather Reynolds & Kim Eames



The EOCP2025 tour crew



Wayne Hung leading the crew on the tour

EOCP was pleased to offer EOCP2025 delegates a tour of the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant — our first plant tour since 2018. Interest was high, and all available spots were quickly filled, with 23 participants joining the experience.

Attendees were guided by Wayne Hung, Supervisor of Operations, and Lani Somasunderam, Plant Superintendent, who provided an informative walkthrough of the facility. The tour covered the plant’s history, treatment processes, and daily operations, with the group remaining highly engaged throughout.

Iona Island holds a special place in EOCP’s history. It is Facility Number 1—the very first classification number ever assigned in our system. In EOCP’s early years, many operators from the then-GVRD served on our Board, and our earliest meetings were held at Iona Island. Over the decades, the plant has been featured numerous times in the Operator Digest, chronicling its evolution and upgrades.

During EOCP2025, we were proud to reconnect with this iconic facility and catch up on its latest innovations. Iona Island continues to modernize, and it remains a cornerstone of our journey and a symbol of our roots.

Thank you to Metro Vancouver and the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant for making this tour possible, and to our tour sponsor, Jameson Water Services, for their generous support.



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WITH GRATITUDE: EOCP 2025 VOLUNTEERS



By: Kim Eames

A sincere thank you to our volunteers who served as moderators and room monitors at the EOCP 2025 Annual Tradeshow and Education Sessions. Your dedication and teamwork were key to keeping sessions running smoothly and ensuring attendees had a seamless experience. As Coretta Scott King said, *"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."*

Your generosity in giving your time and expertise made a real difference, and we truly appreciate all that you contributed to the success of the event.

This year's volunteer moderators and room monitors were:

Barnett Stewart
Chris Ford
Danya Nemyo
Dean Scovill
Ewan McDonald
George Harvey
Heather Lemmon
John Bergese
Matthew Glanfield
Natasha Cvenkel
Rob Fleming
Satwinder Paul
Tara Macrae
Tina Henderson
Will Emo



Room Monitors Tina Henderson, John Bergese, and Danya Nemyo

*thank you =
= volunteers!*



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THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND MEDIA PARTNER! EOCP2025

We extend our sincere appreciation to our sponsors for their generous support, which played a key role in the success of EOCP2025. During the event on September 22nd and 23rd, attendees connected with sponsors at their booths to explore innovative products, services, and initiatives that support operators across the industry.

We also extend special thanks to our Media Partner, Environmental Science & Engineering magazine, whose partnership helped amplify important updates and industry insights to an even wider audience.

Your support made it possible to bring together operators, educators, and industry leaders to learn, connect, and grow. Thank you for being part of EOCP2025!



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- And more

For more information on our employee health benefit options through the EOCP, please reach out to Maury Lum (maury.lum@hubinternational.com, (236) 838-6817).



MATH FOR OPERATORS: COAGULATE AND GET THE FLOC OUTTA HERE

By Graeme Faris

In this installment of Math for Operators we will look at the mathematics of operating a dual media rapid sand filter. Our review will include the relevant formulae from the EOCP handout.

Rapid sand filters were first developed in the 1890s. With the addition of coagulation, flocculation and sedimentation to the process, George Warren Fuller¹ is credited with designing and building the first modern dual media rapid sand filter at Little Falls, New Jersey in 1920.

Dual media sand filters are now used in water treatment in several locations in BC including: Kitimat, Port Hardy, and the Comox Valley and Metro Regional Districts to name but a few.

Certification exams feature multiple choice questions so let's start with one of those:

The anthracite media used in modern dual media rapid sand filters is sourced from only two places in the world. They are:

- China and Poland
- Canada and Australia
- Wales and the United States of America
- Türkiye and South Africa

The EOCP/WEP formula handout provided to exam candidates provides three formulae related to operating dual media sand filters:

- Hydraulic loading rate,
- Filter backwash rate and,
- Filter backwash rise rate

Using data from the Comox Valley Water Treatment plant, we will look at the maths behind these formulae.

The Comox Valley Water Treatment Plant uses five (5) dual media filters each of which are 11.2 meters long by 4.9 meters wide and capable of processing 5 to 18 megalitres (ML) per day. The filter beds have a static media depth of 2.0 m consisting of 1.7 m of anthracite and 0.3 m of sand and operate with 2.8 to 2.9 m of water above the filter media.

A typical 21-minute filter backwash will use 535 cubic meters of process water at an average flow rate of 1,528 cubic metres per hour. During a backwash the media bed will expand to a depth of 2.4 metres. Backwash water is recycled to the head end of the process.

- Calculate the hydraulic loading rate if the flow through a filter is 11.5 ML/day. The formula is:

$$\text{Hydraulic loading rate} = \frac{\text{Flow applied, } m^3/\text{day}}{\text{Filter surface area, } m^2} = \frac{m^3/\text{day}}{m^2} = m^3/m^2/\text{day}$$

Step 1: Calculate filter surface area

$$\text{Area} = \text{length} \times \text{width} = 11.2m \times 4.9m = 54.88m^2$$

Step 2: Insert known values and solve

$$\text{Hydraulic loading rate} = \frac{\text{Flow applied, } m^3/\text{day}}{\text{Filter surface area, } m^2} = \frac{11,500m^3/\text{day}}{54.88 m^2} = 209.55 m^3/m^2/\text{day}$$

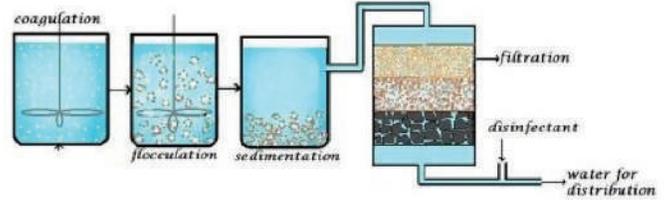
- Calculate the filter backwash rate. The formula is:

$$\text{Filter backwash rate} = \frac{\text{Flow, } L/\text{sec}}{\text{Filter area, } m^2} = \frac{L/\text{sec}}{m^2} = L/\text{sec}/m^2$$

Step 1: Calculate backwash flow in L/sec

$$\frac{1,528m^3}{hr} \times \frac{1 hr}{60min} \times \frac{1 min}{60 sec} \times \frac{1,000L}{m^3} = 424.4 L/\text{sec}$$

¹The American Water Works Association presents the George Warren Fuller Award annually to one of its members in recognition of their sound engineering and leadership skills and distinguished service to the water supply field. One of the first recipients of this award in British Columbia was Bert Caine, a founding member of what is now the EOCP.



Step 2: Insert known values and solve

$$\text{Filter backwash rate} = \frac{\text{Flow, L/sec}}{\text{Filter area, m}^2} = \frac{424.6 \text{ L/sec}}{54.88 \text{ m}^2} = 7.73 \text{ L/sec/m}^2$$

3. Calculate the filter backwash rise rate.

The backwash rise rate is the rate at which water moves upward through the filter during a backwash cycle. We can use the volume formula to determine how the water level (depth = rise) will change in the filter with the addition of backwash water. The formula is:

$$\text{Filter backwash rise rate} = \frac{\text{Water rise, cm}}{\text{Time, minutes}} = \frac{\text{cm}}{\text{minutes}} = \text{cm/min}$$

Step 1: Calculate backwash flow in m³/minute

$$\frac{1,528 \text{ m}^3}{\text{hr}} \times \frac{1 \text{ hr}}{60 \text{ min}} = 25.46 \text{ m}^3/\text{min}$$

Step 2: Calculate the depth (rise) of the backwash water added

$$\text{If Volume} = \text{Area} \times \text{Depth, then Depth} = \frac{\text{Volume}}{\text{Area}}$$

$$\text{Filter backwash rise rate} = \frac{25.46 \text{ m}^3/\text{min}}{54.88 \text{ m}^2} = 0.464 \text{ m/min} = 46.4 \text{ cm/min}$$

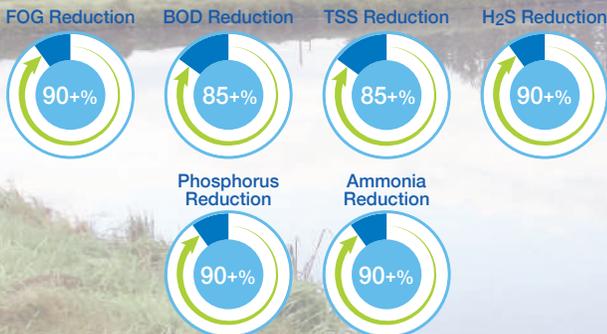
Finally, in answer to our multiple-choice question, anthracite filter media is sourced from Wales and Pennsylvania in the United States of America. And a big shout-out to Tyler Robertson (WT IV) at the Comox Valley Regional Water Treatment Plant for the real-world operating data.



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A LASTING COMMITMENT: RECOGNIZING EOCP OPERATORS FOR 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

By: Kim Eames

The EOCP celebrates Operators who have demonstrated three decades of professional excellence and commitment. For 30 years, they have upheld the highest standards of the water and wastewater industry, protecting public health and the environment through their skill, knowledge, and dedication.

This milestone reflects not only their personal achievements but also their lasting impact on their communities across BC and Yukon. We are deeply grateful for their steadfast commitment and are honoured to recognize the following eleven Operators for 30 years of service, with the EOCP Lifetime Membership.

Bob Mandryk	Henry Kohout	Scott Hayton	Tresa Daoust
Brian Carter	Jeffrey Galley	Shawn Hughes	William Phillips
Christopher Carew	Michael Oliver	Timothy Olson	



Operators are the heart of our industry—thank you for your dedication, professionalism, and the difference you continue to make every day.

ARE YOUR CEUS UP TO DATE?

By: Heather Reynolds

With just two months remaining in the 2024–2025 reporting period, now is the time to ensure your Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are current and your EOCP certification remains in good standing.



CEU Requirements by Certification:

- Level I–IV: 2.4 CEUs total
(At least 0.6 CEUs must be core for your certificate(s))
- SWS / SWWS / BWD / BWS: 1.2 CEUs total
(At least 0.3 CEUs must be core for your certificate(s))

Quick Reminders:

- Core CEUs = utility-specific
- Related CEUs = general or safety-focused across the industry
- Courses cannot be repeated within the same two-year period
- CEUs must be earned through training — not exams or self-study

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WATER CANADA TOP 50 PROJECTS

BC HIGHLIGHTS

The following feature is adapted from the **Top 50 Projects report originally published in the May 2025 issue of Water Canada. We encourage our readers to explore the full article to learn more about the innovative and impactful projects taking place across Canada.**

The Top 50 Projects is an annual report researched and written by the editorial team at Water Canada. We are grateful to Charlie Evans, Associate Editor at Water Canada, for granting permission to share and adapt this content for our regional audience.

In this edition of the EOCP Operator Digest, we are pleased to highlight the projects located in British Columbia, with expanded descriptions and local context. Of note is the fact that of the 50 projects, 14 are in BC.

#1. Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects (\$10 billion) Location: Richmond, B.C. THE EXISTING Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant provides primary treatment for communities in Vancouver, the UBC Endowment Lands, and parts of Burnaby and Richmond. As the facility reaches the end of its service life, Metro Vancouver has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to positively contribute to the health and well-being of people, as well as the ecological health and biodiversity of the Fraser River Estuary and the Salish Sea. The plant upgrade will provide tertiary-level treatment and meet the latest seismic standards, account for future sea level rise, and incorporate cutting-edge technologies for resource and energy recovery, greenhouse gas reductions, odour reduction and energy efficiency. Metro Vancouver is working to ensure the new facility contributes positively to the community and is working closely with stakeholders and 14 local

First Nations, particularly the Musqueama suite of 20 ecological projects to enhance Indian Band. The upgrade project also includes freshwater wetland habitat for birds and wildlife.

#3. North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant Program (\$3.86 billion) Location: District of North Vancouver, B.C. THE NEW North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant will serve over 300,000 residents and businesses in the Districts of North and West Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver, and Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and selilwetał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). It will replace the existing Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant on the North Shore, one of the last plants on the west coast of Canada and the United States to provide only primary level wastewater treatment. Building a new wastewater treatment plant that provides a higher level of treatment is essential to comply with mandatory federal regulations. It will also ensure the treated wastewater released into the marine environment of the Burrard Inlet is much cleaner.

#6. Northwest Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant (\$2.3 billion) Location: Township of Langley, B.C. THE NORTHWEST Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant, which currently serves 30,000 people, is being expanded to serve over 280,000 people in the Township of Langley, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and North Surrey. The plant expansion is one of several projects taking place to improve the sustainability and resilience of wastewater treatment in the region. To divert the flows to the Northwest Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant, a new pump station has been built north of the Fraser River in Maple Ridge. Two new sewer pipes have been constructed under the Fraser River to connect the pump station in Maple Ridge to the upgraded treatment plant in Langley. A new storage tank, located with the pump station, will temporarily store wastewater to significantly reduce overflows during storms.

#7. Annacis Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion (\$2 billion) Location: Delta, B.C. THERE ARE over 20 projects planned as part of the onsite improvements of the Annacis Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. Key improvement projects include new trickling filters, secondary clarifiers, and a co-generation facility to make better use of green energy captured on site. Detailed design of the remaining Phase 2 Final Works is underway with construction anticipated to commence in 2026. A new digester and biosolids dryer have been added to the expansion program.

#8. Coquitlam Water Main Project (\$1.66 billion) Location: Cities of Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam, BC METRO VANCOUVER is constructing a new water main in the City of Coquitlam to optimize the capacity of the existing Coquitlam water supply system and to meet the growing demand for drinking water in the region with the eventual expansion of the source supply under the Coquitlam Lake Water Supply Project. The Coquitlam Water Main is approximately 12 kilometres long, and ranges in diameter from 2.2 to 3.2 metres. The water main is being constructed in four sections. Construction of the first pre-build section is underway. This water main is one of a number of drinking water infrastructure projects Metro Vancouver is constructing in the City of Coquitlam over the next two decades.

#13. Stanley Park Water Supply Tunnel (\$495 million) Location: City of Vancouver, B.C. METRO VANCOUVER is planning to construct a new water supply tunnel deep under Stanley Park. The new tunnel will replace an existing water main that was built in the 1930s, has experienced leaks, and is near the end of its service life. This project is part of Metro Vancouver's regional plan to upgrade the existing drinking water system to meet the needs of the growing region. The project involves the construction of a new water supply tunnel, designed to provide increased capacity to meet future water demand as well as to meet current seismic standards. The new tunnel will be 1.4 km long, approximately 4.5 m in diameter and include a 2.65 m diameter steel water main, and will connect to two new underground valve chambers. The project has been designed to minimize construction footprint, minimize impacts to the park, and reduce construction impacts to park users and residents.

#14. Annacis Water Supply Tunnel (\$488 million) Location: Cities of New Westminster/ and Surrey, B.C. METRO VANCOUVER is constructing a new water supply tunnel deep under the Fraser River. The Annacis Water Supply Tunnel between the City of New Westminster and the City of Surrey is one of the five new marine crossings in the region built to withstand a major earthquake. When complete, it will help ensure the continued delivery of clean, safe drinking water to the communities south of the Fraser River well into the future. Construction is underway and is expected to be completed in 2028. The project involves building an entry shaft in Surrey and an exit shaft in New Westminster and using a tunnel boring machine to excavate the 2.3-kilometre-long tunnel. Once completed, a 2.6 metre diameter steel water main will be installed inside the shaft and tunnel, which will be connected to



Annacis Island Wastewater Treatment Plant

the regional water distribution system. Following construction, both shaft sites will be restored with green space.

#15. Second Narrows Water Supply Tunnel

(\$468.6 million) Location: District of North Vancouver and City of Burnaby, B.C. METRO VANCOUVER is constructing a new water supply tunnel deep under Burrard Inlet, east of the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge. This project is one of five new regional water supply tunnels that are being designed to meet current seismic standards to ensure the reliable delivery of drinking water in the region in the event of a major earthquake. When complete, the tunnel will also increase the capacity of the existing system to meet the long-term needs of the growing population.

#28. French Creek Pollution Control Centre Expansion and Odour Control Upgrades

(\$110 million) Location: Nanaimo, B.C. FRENCH CREEK Pollution Control Centre (FCPCC) treats wastewater from about 29,000 people and businesses. It serves the communities of: Qualicum Beach, Parksville, French Creek, Pacific Shores, Surfside, and Barclay Crescent. FCPCC also treats trucked waste from homes with septic systems and holding tanks. The facility currently provides Secondary Treatment, which is the provincial and federal requirement. The RDN is developing an expansion and odour upgrade to:

- i) increase plant capacity by about 30 per cent and meet the service area demands to 2040,
- ii) improve operational efficiency and replace aging infrastructure in the existing plant,
- iii) incorporate extensive odour control upgrades for the existing plant,
- iv) include odour controls for the expansion, and;
- v) contribute to carbon neutrality by using solar panels and recovering heat from treated effluent.

#32. Abbotsford Drinking Water Resilience Project

(\$84.4 million) Location: Abbotsford, B.C. THE CITY of Abbotsford is building a new well and water-treatment system to ensure a

reliable, resilient water service for more than 165,000 people in response to growing climate-related threats. The project includes installation of approximately 12 new wells, the construction of a water-treatment plant and a pump station to tie into the existing regional system to bring the new water source to the community.

#38. Nanaimo Midtown Water Main

(\$55 million) Location: Nanaimo, B.C. IN THE early 1980s, a major watermain was installed in Nanaimo using high pressure concrete pipe (Hyprescon) that was expected to have a lifespan of approximately 80 years, yet it failed prematurely, and it failed catastrophically. When the Hyprescon pipe failed on April 3, 2020, 22 million litres of water was lost. This resulted in three reservoirs being completely drained while leaving a hospital as well as thousands of people without water. It took a few hours to isolate the main, but a temporary repair was completed, and the hospital and residents had water service restored two days later. A systematic review of the pipe revealed other signs of future leaks and structural failures, and the consequences of additional failures would be severe. To manage the risk, several measures were taken: An emergency water supply shutdown procedure for the Hyprescon pipe section was implemented; The 2021-2025 Capital Plan was reprioritized, and the Midtown Water Supply Project was introduced; Other major water supply capital projects were deferred in an effort to make way for the Midtown Water Supply Project and balance the water supply budget within the City's Financial Plan. The initial upgrades to replace the Hyprescon pipe were estimated to cost \$23.5 million, however, due to a volatile construction market during COVID, and the addition of a secondary supply for redundancy, the cost is expected to be closer to \$55 million.

#40. Capilano Water Supply Infrastructure

(\$50 million) Location: Vancouver, B.C. METRO VANCOUVER is upgrading drinking water infrastructure in the Metro Vancouver Water Supply Area near Capilano River

Regional Park to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality drinking water to a growing region. Upgrades include a backup power system and improvements to the Capilano Water Supply Area security gatehouse. Additionally, the North Shore Rescue Society will be building a new command post and storage building. These projects were scheduled to begin construction in fall 2022 and be completed by late 2025.

#43. Mission Hill Water Treatment Plant Filtration Upgrade

(\$40 million) Location: Vernon, B.C. KALAMALKA LAKE, the water source treated by the Mission Hill WTP, has previously been susceptible to water quality issues caused by turbidity events and seasonal algae, which are expected to increase with climate change. The project consists of a new water filtration system, a new building for labs and control rooms, and upgrades to waste stream handling, related piping and equipment, and control systems, which will lead to enhanced operations, reduced water quality risks, and improved redundancy in the system. AECOM will deliver detailed design and recommended site upgrades for the addition of filtration at the existing MHWTP to help improve water quality, increase access to clean drinking water, and bolster the resiliency of the plant for the Greater Vernon community year-round.

#47. Williams Lake Water Treatment Plant

(\$24.3 million) Location: Williams Lake, B.C. THE WILLIAMS LAKE Water Treatment Plant in British Columbia is undergoing significant upgrades to improve water quality and safety. In October 2023, the federal and provincial governments, along with the City of Williams Lake, announced an investment of over \$24.3 million for the construction of a new facility aimed at reducing manganese levels in the drinking water. Additionally, in November 2024, the city council approved the use of chloramines as a secondary disinfection method to avoid the formation of harmful by-products from chlorine, ensuring safer drinking water.



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STATISTICS

July 1st - September 30th, 2025



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Certification Program

EXAM STATISTICS



281 exams taken

97 exam sessions

FACILITIES



143 facilities added or upgraded

CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS (CEUs)

864 Operators submitted CEUs

1,352 CEUs earned

DEFINITIONS

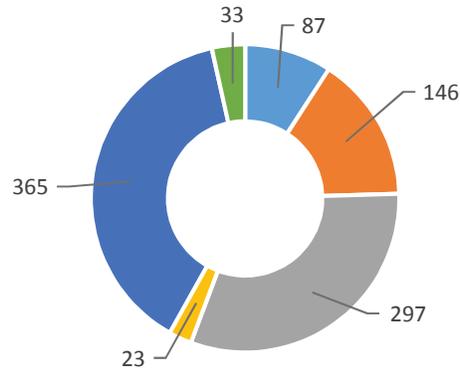
WT	Water Treatment
WD	Water Distribution
WWC	Wastewater Collection
WWT	Wastewater Treatment
OIT	Operator In Training
BWD	Bulk Water Delivery
BWS	Building Water System
SWS	Small Water System
SWWS	Small Wastewater System
SCS	Stormwater Collection System
MU	Multi Utility

OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS

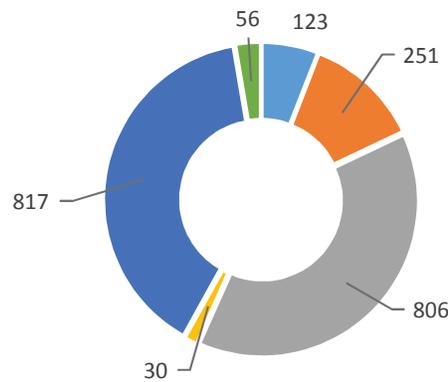
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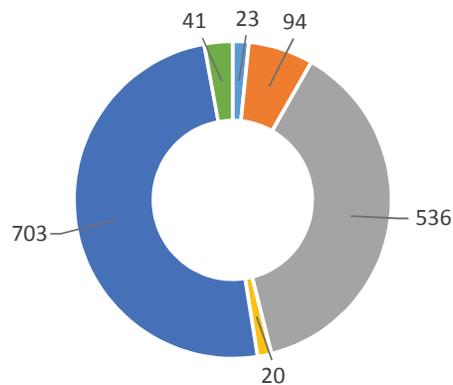
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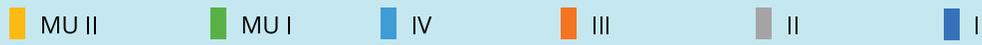
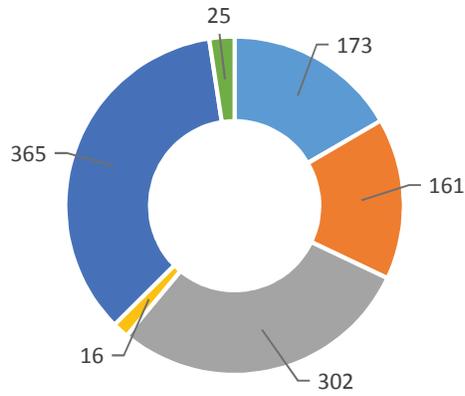
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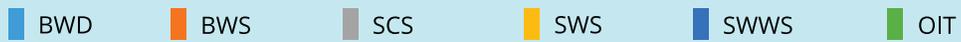
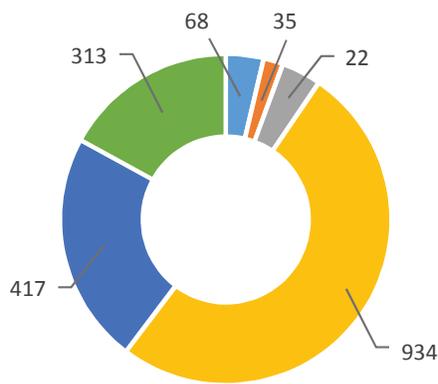
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WWT OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS

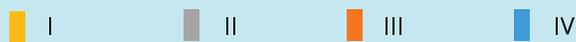
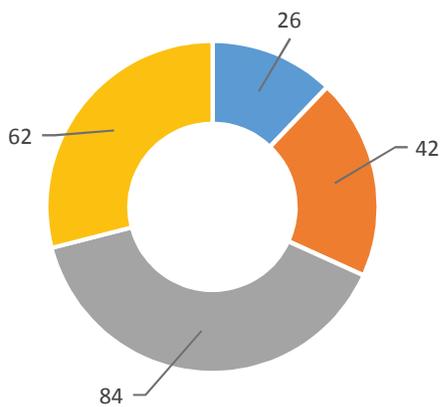


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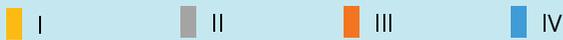
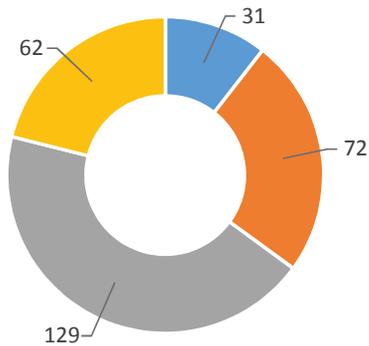


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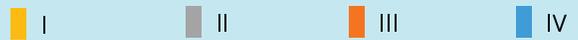
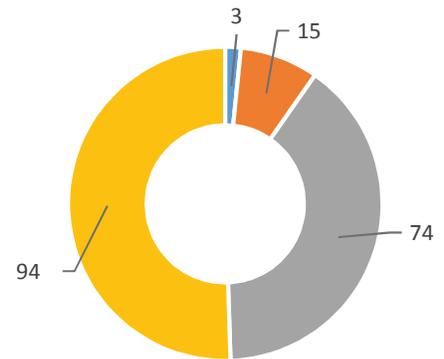
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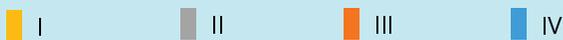
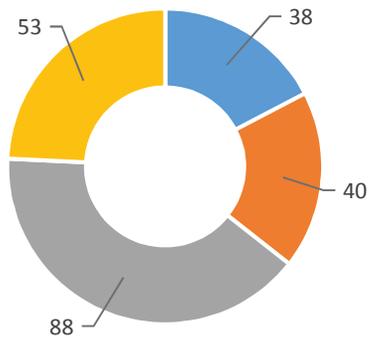
WD FACILITY CLASSIFICATIONS



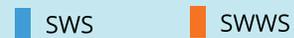
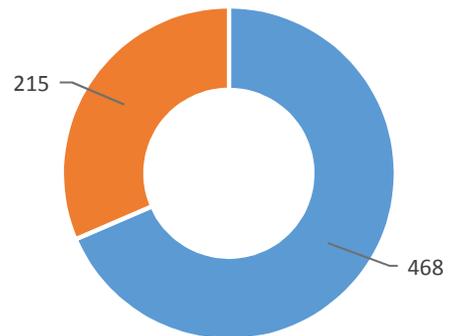
WWC FACILITY CLASSIFICATIONS



WWT FACILITY CLASSIFICATIONS



SMALL SYSTEMS CLASSIFICATIONS



Check your Operator status by logging into your profile at <https://crm.eocp.ca>

Choose **ACCOUNT** to see if your 2025 dues have been paid and **LEARNING STATUS / CEU** to see if your CEUs are up to date.

If your profile shows as  **Not Certified** this means you haven't paid your 2025 dues and/or submitted CEUs.

CEUs can be added to your profile by choosing **Action > Add Course Taken** under the learning column. Alternatively, you can forward your course completion certificates to eocp@eocp.ca

If your profile shows as  **Certified** your 2025 dues are paid, and you've met the CEU requirements for the 2022-2023 reporting period.

There are two months left in the current CEU reporting period. It ends **December 31, 2025**. If you haven't already met your CEU requirements for the 2024 - 2025 reporting period, please look for training opportunities from your preferred training providers or look for options in the EOCP CRM at:

<https://crm.eocp.ca/ManageCourses>



EOCP2026

14TH TO 16TH SEPTEMBER 2026

TRADESHOW AND EDUCATION SESSIONS

Celebrating 60 years of certification excellence
Designed for Operators by Operators



Join us at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, on September 14th to 16th for the 2026 EOCP Tradeshow and Education Sessions.

Testimonials from 2025 Attendees:

“Another great EOCP conference in the books!”

“Another fantastic turnout at this year’s Environmental Operators Certification Program EOCP2025 conference in Richmond!”

“The Monopoly challenge was a well executed and engaging activity. I sincerely appreciated the opportunity to connect with so many professionals a truly wonderful experience. See you all again at the 2026 event!”

“I liked the new venue, and the food was great as always.”



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