OPERATOR DIGEST

SUMMER 2026 | NUMBER 169

EOCP

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



SPECIAL EDITION

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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

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Publications Mail Agreement
No. 41498030

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

EOCP

As we move through another busy quarter, I continue to be inspired by the dedication of our Board, staff, volunteers, and members. Across the organization, exciting initiatives are taking shape that continue to strengthen EOCP and enhance the value we provide to our membership.

One of our most significant projects completed this past quarter was to make a final decision on a new software platform. We are excited to announce our new partnership with Compliance365. This software investment marks an important step in modernizing our systems and improving how we serve our members. While much of the work will take place behind the scenes over the coming months, we are excited to be working toward an official launch in 2027. This new platform will enhance the member experience by streamlining processes, improving accessibility, and supporting the continued growth of EOCP.

This quarter, the Board of Directors travelled to Fernie for one of its regularly scheduled Board meetings. To make the most of the opportunity, we also hosted a regional networking event, bringing together operators, industry partners, and Board members to connect, exchange ideas, and strengthen relationships within the region. These gatherings are an important part of EOCP's commitment to supporting operators throughout British Columbia and creating opportunities for collaboration across our industry.

While in Fernie, we also had the opportunity to tour Elk Valley Resources' Line Creek Active Water Treatment Facility and see firsthand the expertise of the operators who keep these essential systems running every day. It was an informative and valuable experience, and we look forward to showcasing the tour and the facility in our fall issue of the Digest.

The Board is also continuing its review of EOCP's governance structure to ensure our policies and practices reflect current governance best practices and remain aligned with the updated BC Societies Act. Strong governance provides the foundation for a resilient organization, and this work will help ensure EOCP is well positioned to serve our members for years to come.

Looking ahead, preparations for the EOCP2026 Tradeshow and Education Sessions are in full swing. This event promises to be especially memorable as we celebrate EOCP's 60th Anniversary. We look forward to bringing together operators, industry partners, exhibitors, sponsors, and speakers for an outstanding educational and networking experience while recognizing six decades of supporting excellence in water and wastewater operations.



Thank you for your continued commitment to EOCP and to the communities you serve every day. Your professionalism and dedication are the foundation of safe, reliable water and wastewater services across British Columbia and Yukon. I look forward to connecting with many of you during the EOCP 60 th Evening Industry Networking Event on Sept 15, 2026, celebrating this exciting milestone together with great music, fantastic food and an amazing community.

See you soon,

Katja

OPERATOR PROFILE

Todd Betts, CWP



How did you become an Operator?

One summer while restoring my old car, a 1971-SS Chevelle, a gentleman by the name of Jim Egan stopped in the back lane. He was the Superintendent of the Water Department for the City of Delta and watched what I was doing. He said, "You look handy with the wrenches...why don't you come to work on Monday at Engineering Operations". I showed up and spent a year working for the Water Department gaining plenty of experience on hydrant servicing, flushing, installing services, fire lines, and worked on the water construction crews as well.

When a full-time position opened in the City of New Westminster Water Department in 1990, I started with them and soon, upon gaining more experience, I obtained my Water Operator Level 1 certification. A year later I obtained a Water Operator Level 2 along with Cross Connection Control certification. At the same time, I was also taking various valve mechanic courses and water meter courses. By the year 2000, I moved into the Trades 2 PRV and Meter Mechanic position until present day in 2025.

How long have you been an Operator?

I have been an operator for 35 years now.

What are your core functions and typical day?

Checking all assets on our Scada system, water meter repairs and replacements, high consumption investigations, customer service, looking after commercial and industrial meters, looking after zone meter stations, pressure reducing valve stations, repairing, rebuilding and replacing PRVs, trouble shooting etc. Also looking after our new water meter residential pilot project. I also work with key stakeholders throughout the city such as: hospital, fire department, city engineering/planning and Metro Vancouver.

What do you most enjoy about the work?

I enjoy working outside rain or shine in the fresh air, having fun with crew members and trouble shooting. Everyday seems to throw a curve ball and I enjoy brainstorming new ideas, being quick on my feet, coming up with on-the-spot solutions, wearing many hats and also filling in as Superintendent for the Water and Sewer Department.

Can you speak of any highlight or challenge in the past year?

Last year I received a call in the middle of the night when there was a major Metro Vancouver 900 mm water main break. We had the Royal Columbian Hospital and three PRV stations offline for different zones. We worked with the hospital water maintenance staff throughout the night, meanwhile supplying the hospital from a different connection. We were working closely with Metro Vancouver as well and feeding the neighbouring areas from different zones to keep the system running. With so many moving parts all at once, it was a real juggling act for a couple of weeks until all of the repairs were completed, and we were feeding all areas from their regular zones again.

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

Become a huge sponge for knowledge and how all the pieces of the puzzle fit together with your distribution system. I find doing something as simple as unidirectional flushing sure helps in learning your system. Learn all of your pressure zones, major connections, valves and knowledge of pressures. Be proactive with your systems maintenance and major assets like PRV stations, etc. Understand how to use your Scada system as another tool. Be aware of your inventory and ensure you have everything on hand for routine and emergency situations.

What do you do when you aren't working?

Outside of work I enjoy travelling to the Caribbean, working out in the gym, hanging out at the farm back east on holidays, fishing, hunting and lazy days canoeing and tubing on the Miramichi River.

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

It is a rewarding career, keeping the citizens in fresh, safe, clean drinking water.

Whom would you recognize as a mentor?

Just to mention a few names of people who had a major influence on me and my path in the water world!! Bob Jack, Jon McDonald, Dave Berton, Navin Chand, Jim Yargeau, and the woman on the front lines of everything, Nancy Jickels.



PLANT PROFILE

TOWN OF GOLDEN SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

EOCP FACILITY NO. 2

By Chris Cochran, AScT, Town of Golden, Director of Public Works

The Town of Golden is located within the traditional unceded territory of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc peoples, and it is the chosen home of Métis heritage and other diverse Indigenous peoples. Golden is situated near the Alberta border in the East Kootenays; located at the confluence of the Columbia and Kicking Horse Rivers and the intersection of the Trans Canada and Highway 95 transportation corridors, Golden is also located in close proximity to six national parks.

The Town of Golden Sewage Treatment Plant occupies approximately 4.6 hectares of land and services about 4300 residents. The plant is located south of the Golden Municipal Airport, adjacent to the Columbia River on the historical site of the Golden Sawmill Company.

A Look Back: History of the Golden Sewage Treatment Plant

The Town of Golden sewage treatment plant is registered with the Environmental Operator Certification Program (EOCP) Organization as EOCP Facility Number 2 and was first classified on September 16, 1975.

According to the 1975 classification document from the files kept by EOCP, the plant consisted of preliminary treatment processes, including screening and comminution; secondary treatment using aerated lagoons; and a polishing pond with chlorine disinfection prior to discharge to the environment



Sequence Batch Reactors (foreground) UV and Control Buildings (background)

By 2005, the facility was upgraded to a Sequence Batch Reactor (SBR) secondary treatment facility including the following major components:

- Construction of two SBR tanks with decanters and associated blower facilities,
- A new process water supply well,
- Construction of a centrifuge dewatering building,
- Elimination of CL2 disinfection, replaced by a UV disinfection facility incorporating a Parshall flume,
- Backup diesel generator,
- Control upgrades including full SCADA monitoring/control system,
- Installation of an outfall lift pump for river discharge,
- Construction of a new river outfall.

With these upgrades completed, the facility was rated to treat a maximum daily flow rate of 4,251 m3/d of incoming effluent.



Aerated Lagoon Cell 2

From 2016 to 2018 the following upgrades and renewals were completed:

- Complete lining of the aeration and digester lagoons,
- Replacement and upgrading of the aeration works in all lagoons,
- Installation of a third blower to support increased air delivery to lagoons.

From 2023 to 2025 the following upgrades and renewals were completed:



STP Lagoons Blower and Dewatering Buildings and Process Water Well

- SBR aeration equipment replacement,
- Double blank upgrades to SBR supply piping,
- Replacement of two lagoons blowers,
- Addition of second river outfall lift pump,
- SCADA computer renewals,
- Polishing pond isolation valve installation,
- Construction of dewatered sludge storage containment area.

Plant Staffing

Golden's sewage treatment plant is currently classified as a Class 2 facility and operated by the following EOCP certified operators with the support of additional staff as required:

Alan Taylor – WWT3
Ryan Robison – WWT2

A Look Ahead: Possible Future of the Golden Sewage Treatment Plant

As constructed, and on occasion, the plant is subject to short-term hydraulic and biological overloading either in springtime due to groundwater inflow and infiltration (I&I) effects on the collection system, or during peak tourism seasons with community population influx.

For flows in excess of 4,251 m3/d, effluent is directed to available emergency stormwater detention ponds where it can be released as primary treated effluent following the peak I&I period. For biological overloading, the result is odour generation that staff must

manage to the best of their ability through seasonal operational changes associated with lagoon operations.

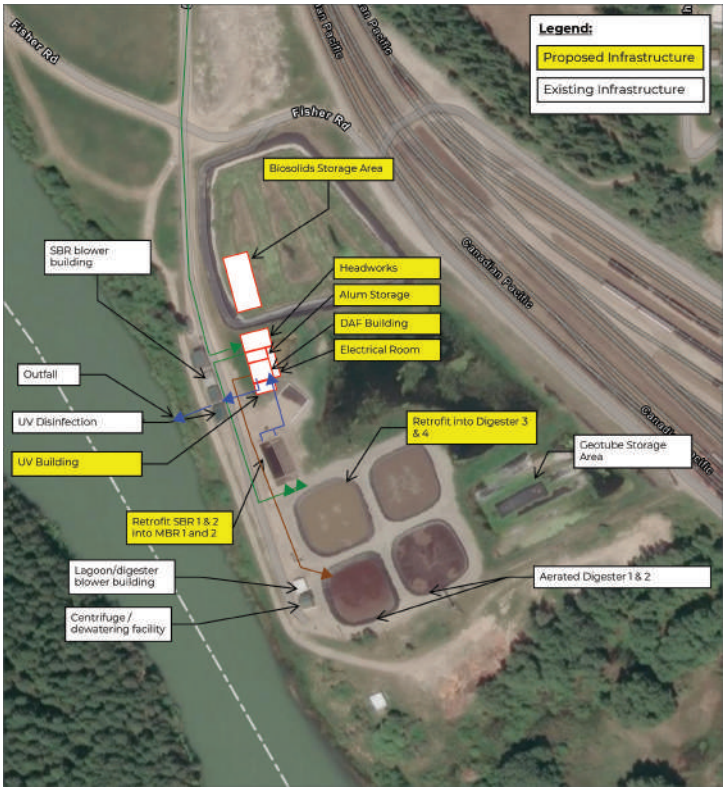
Because of these occasional operational issues, and with a look ahead at potential growth in the community over the next 25 year plus time horizon, Golden commissioned an Upgrades Feasibility Study to explore options for increasing plant capacity. This initial study has determined that the preferred option for Golden's plant may be to convert the SBR basins to a Moving Bed Biofilm Reactor (MBBR) secondary treatment technology sized for the future design maximum daily flow capacity of about 10,600 m3/d.

When the community does move ahead to increase plant capacity to this degree, additional component upgrades will likely include:

- Installation of a headworks facility,
- Addition of an alum dosing facility for phosphorous removal,
- Addition of dissolved air floatation (DAF) units,
- Digester expansion through aeration lagoon conversion,
- Increased dewatering capacity and improved facilities for biosolids management,
- Expansion of the UV system to meet increased flow and redundancy requirements,
- Outfall pump upsizing.

A conceptual plan illustrating the works is shown below.

A Class D estimate for these anticipated future improvements to the sewage treatment plant is about $30 million dollars, which for a community the size of Golden is significant, ultimately requiring considerable funding support from higher levels of government to construct.



Future Expansion Concept
Source: Urban Systems STP Upgrades Feasibility Study Report Figure 4.6

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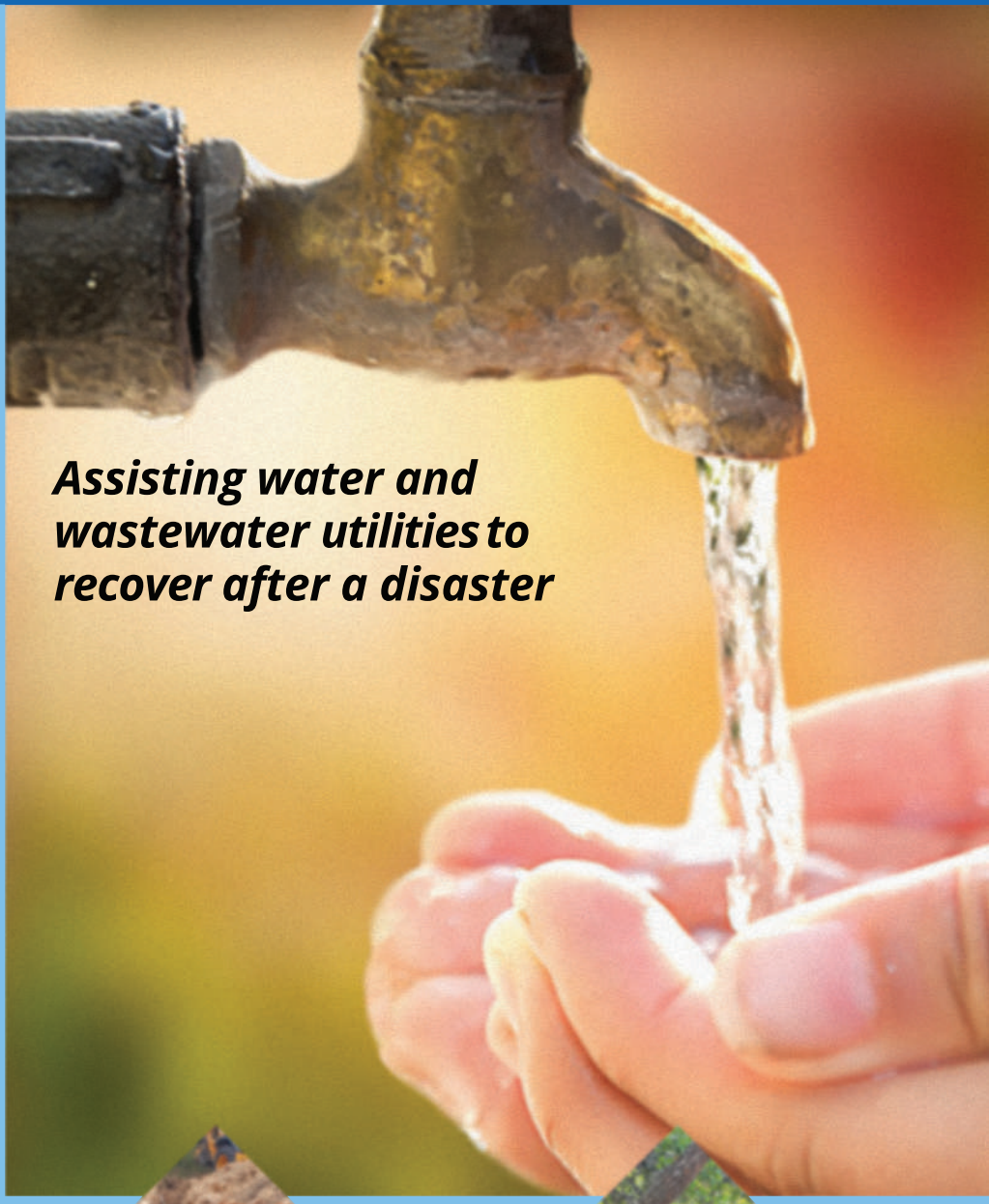
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Assisting water and wastewater utilities to recover after a disaster





EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR WATER SYSTEM OPERATORS

By Sylvia Wong, B.Sc, B.Tech, CPHI(C)

As a water system operator, you play a significant frontline role in safeguarding the health of your water users, especially during an emergency. When emergencies strike, whether from infrastructure failure, contamination, or natural disasters, having a robust and well thought out emergency response and contingency plan (ERCP) is essential to protecting public health and reducing long-term impacts.



A damaged booster station from wildfire in the Shuswap.

What is an Emergency Response and Contingency Plan (ERCP)?

An ERCP is a written document, developed by the water supplier, providing guidance and procedures for dealing with anticipated problems before the onset of a drinking water emergency. An effective ERCP removes guesswork when stress is high and allows everyone dealing with the emergency to be on the same page. It gives you a clear roadmap when time and information are limited. It is also a legislative requirement under the Drinking Water Protection Act (DWPA) and Drinking Water Protection Regulation (DWPR).

Know Your System Risks and Vulnerabilities

The first step in developing an ERCP is to complete a risk assessment to identify the hazards and vulnerabilities associated with the water system from source-to-tap. Keep it realistic and site-specific. A small water system will have different priorities than a large municipal system. The goal is not to predict every scenario, but to be ready for the most probable ones.

Build an Effective, Practical, Feasible Plan

An effective ERCP is simple, clear, and easy to follow with step-by-step procedures for common emergencies. Knowing what to do, who to contact, and how to communicate during an emergency helps to prevent unnecessary complications that can prolong outages, create added expenses and lead to illnesses.

Communication: Fast, Clear and Consistent

During an emergency, communication can make or break your response. You need to be able to alert your water users quickly. The ERCP should have an up-to-date contact list and a communication plan to efficiently relay public notifications and pertinent information. This will ensure messages are communicated quickly and clearly in a consistent manner to avoid confusion by staff and water users.

Train Like It's Real

A plan sitting on a shelf collecting dust will not help in a real event either. Training builds confidence and exposes gaps before they become real problems. Practice tabletop exercises and regularly test equipment such as backup generators. Being prepared makes for a confident and effective operator.

Plan for Continuity – Contingency, Not Just Response

Contingency planning is just as important in keeping the water system running. Consider how you will keep the system in service when key staff are unavailable. Cross-training staff can ensure that multiple staff are well versed in dealing with emergencies.

Review, Learn and Improve

Review and update your ERCP annually or after any major incident. Incorporate lessons learned and feedback from staff. Even small adjustments, such as updating contacts, can improve the response time and effectiveness of your ERCP.

Learn how to develop your ERCP by taking the free instructor-led or self-directed courses via BC Small Water Systems Online Help Center: https://smallwatersystemsbc.ca/



BUILDING KNOWLEDGE IN THE KOOTENAYS: EOCP'S FERNIE REGIONAL WORKSHOP

By Kim Eames

On May 28, 2026, EOCP hosted its second Regional Operator Workshop and Networking Event in Fernie, BC, welcoming 30 attendees. The event was made possible in part through the generous support of Elk Valley Resources, which sponsored the refreshment break.

The half-day workshop was designed to provide practical, locally relevant learning opportunities for operators in Fernie and the surrounding communities.



Katja Roberts presenting at the May 28th Fernie Regional Event

The presentation lineup included:

- Right Classification, Right Support, Stronger Communities – Katja Roberts & Kim Eames, EOCP
- Emergency Response Planning and Interior Health Update – Jennifer Beverley, Interior Health
- Supporting Drinking Water Security – Nathalie Morrison and Ted Zimmerman, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
- First Nations Health Authority Update – Stephanie Tooke, First Nations Health Authority
- Hydrant and Valve Maintenance – Darcy Dion, McWane Inc.

The presentations generated thoughtful discussion among attendees, encouraging the exchange of ideas and practical experiences from across the region. Participants enjoyed a live hydrant teardown and maintenance demonstration, gaining a firsthand look at proper maintenance practices. EOCP is grateful to the presenters for generously sharing their expertise and volunteering their time to support operators in the region. Their contributions were instrumental in the success of the workshop and are greatly appreciated.

EOCP looks forward to expanding these regional learning opportunities in the coming years. Plans are already underway to partner with industry organizations in 2027 to deliver additional regional events, including one anticipated in northeastern British Columbia.



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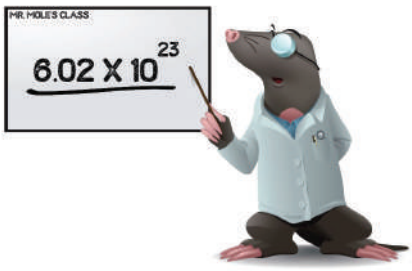
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MATH FOR OPERATORS:
DID AVOGADRO REALLY COUNT THEM ALL?

By Graeme Faris, CWWP

$6.02214076 \times 10^{23}$ is a really big number! In 1811 the Italian chemist Amadeo Avogadro proposed that the volume of a gas (at a given pressure and temperature) was proportional to the number of atoms or molecules regardless of the nature of the gas. 54 years would go by before the Austrian scientist Josef Loschmidt calculated the number, and another 46 years would pass before the French atomic physicist Jean Perrin gave it a name — Avogadro's number.



In this issue of Math for Operators, we will put on our lab coats and explore moles, molarity, normality, equivalent weights and milliequivalents. We will use citric acid ($C_6H_8O_7$), a weak organic acid used in the descaling of nanofiltration and reverse osmosis membranes, in our examples.

Mole[1] – a mole (mol) is the base SI unit for the amount of a substance. A mole of a substance contains $6.02214076 \times 10^{23}$ elementary particles (e.g. atoms, molecules, ions). A mole of water and a mole of lead contain the same number of elementary particles despite having vastly different masses.

Molar mass – the mass in grams of 1 mole of a substance. It is equal the atomic weight of the substance in the periodic table of elements. For example, 1 mole of Lead (Pb) weighs 207.2 grams, while a mole of water (H_2O) weighs 18.015 grams (2×1.008g for H + 15.999g for O). Also known as gram molecular weight, formula weight and gram formula weight.

What is the molar mass of 1 mole of citric acid ($C_6H_8O_7$) ?

$C_6H_8O_7$	
Carbon, C	**12.011 g/mol**
Oxygen, O	**15.999 g/mol**
Hydrogen, H	**1.008 g/mol**

Molar mass or gram molecular weight = the sum of the molecular weights of all of the elements which form the molecule

6 C 8 H 7 O

72.066 + 8.064 + 111.993 =192.123 g/mol

Molarity (M) – is a term used to define a very specific type of concentration of a solution. It is defined as the number of moles of solute per litre of solution. For example, if you had 192.123 grams of citric acid (1 mole) dissolved in 1 litre of water you would have a 1 molar solution

$$Molarity, M = \frac{Moles\ of\ solute}{Litres\ of\ solution} = \frac{1\ mole\ C_6H_8O_7}{1\ litre\ of\ H_2O} = 1M$$

What is the Molarity of a solution in which 25 grams of citric acid are dissolved in 400 mL of water?

Step 1: Calculate the number of moles in 25 grams of sample, then insert known values and solve

$$Moles\ of\ C_6H_8O_7 = \frac{Total\ weight, g}{Molecular\ weight, g} = \frac{25\ g\ C_6H_8O_7}{192.123\ g/mole\ C_6H_8O_7} = 0.13\ mole$$

$$Molarity, M = \frac{Moles\ of\ solute}{Litres\ of\ solution} = \frac{0.13\ mole}{0.4\ litre\ of\ H_2O} = 0.325M$$

How many moles of citric acid are contained in a 32 gram sample?

$$Number\ of\ moles = \frac{Total\ weight, g}{Molecular\ weight, g} = \frac{32\ g}{192.123\ g} = 0.167$$

A mole is a mole is a mole − but the Normality of a chemical can change depending upon the type of chemical reaction that is taking place. The EOCP/WEP formula sheet contains three formulae based on Normality, so let's add one more for clarity and tackle this shape shifter.

[1] Mole Day is an unofficial holiday celebrated among chemistry geeks on October 23 between 6:02 a.m. and 6:02 p.m., making the date 6:02 10/23. A loose approximation of Avogadro's number.

Normality (N) – is a measure of solution concentration expressed as the number of gram equivalents per litre of solution whereas molarity looks at the number of molecules. A gram equivalent is the mass of the substance required to react with one mole of a specific chemical entity such as a proton (H+), hydroxide ion (OH-) or electron.

$$Normality = \frac{number\ of\ equivalent\ weights\ of\ solute}{litres\ of\ solution}$$

$$Number\ of\ equivalent\ weights - \frac{total\ weight}{equivalent\ weight}$$

$$Milliequivalent = mL \times Normality$$

Equivalent weight is calculated by dividing the molar mass by the number of positive or negative charges available in the reaction (the *n* factor).

$$Equivalent\ weight, g/eq = \frac{Molar\ mass,}{n\ factor}$$

Citric acid ($C_6H_8O_7$) is a triprotic acid meaning it can donate three hydrogen ions (H+) in a chemical reaction. It has a molar mass of 192.123 g/mol in the anhydrous form.

What is the equivalent weight of 1 mole of citric acid? (Molar mass = 192.123 g/mol, *n* factor = 3)

$$Equivalent\ weight, g/eq = \frac{Molar\ mass,}{n\ factor} = \frac{192.123\ g/mol}{3} = 64.04\ g/eq$$

What is the Normality of 50 grams of citric acid dissolved in 600 millilitres of water?

Step 1: calculate the number of equivalent weights

$$Number\ of\ equivalent\ weights = \frac{total\ weight}{equivalent\ weight} = \frac{50\ g}{64.04\ g/eq} = 0.78\ equivalents$$

Step 2: Insert known values and solve

$$Normality, N = \frac{number\ of\ equivalent\ weights\ of\ solute}{litres\ of\ solution} = \frac{0.78}{0.60\ L} = 1.3\ N$$

How many milliequivalents are contained in 25 mL of a 1.3 N citric acid solution?

$$Milliequivalent = mL \times Normality = 25\ mL \times 1.3N = 32.5$$

Here are a couple of bonus formulas that might make life in the lab a little easier.

To prepare a litre of solution of a desired Molarity

$$Grams\ required = Molarity \times Volume, L \times Molar\ mass, g/mol$$

To convert between Normality and Molarity

$$Normality = n\ factor \times Molarity \quad or \quad N = n \times M$$

Group Insurance Benefits Through EOCP

Did you know that through the EOCP there are tailored options for employee group insurance and benefits whether as an individual operator or for your employee group?

In partnership with HUB International, specific programs are available to provide valuable coverage for employees, operators, and family members.

Coverage can include but is not limited to:

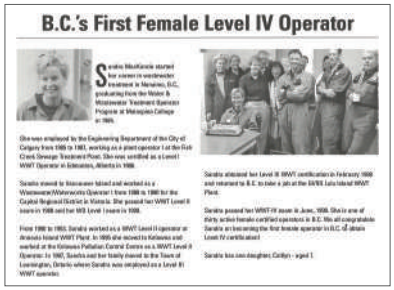
- Life insurance
- Extended healthcare (e.g., prescription medication, physiotherapist, chiropractor, prescription eyewear, travel, etc.)
- And more
- Dental care
- Critical Illness insurance

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).

EOCP 1986–2006

GROWTH, RECOGNITION, AND REACH

Expanding services, strengthening credibility, and supporting a growing community of certified professionals.


B.C.'s First Female Level IV Operator

Feature Extract from the Nov 1999 Digest about Sandra Mackenzie passing her WWT IV.

1999

OPERATOR

Sandra MacKenzie (Operator 818) became the first female operator to achieve Level IV certification at a time when fewer than 1% of certified operators were women, marking a significant milestone for the profession.

2000

OPERATOR

An industrial certification exam **(IWWT)** approved for use, incorporating approximately 70% material from the Municipal Wastewater Exam and 30% focused on non-biological processes.

1999


B.C. Operators Can Go Anywhere

Highlight from the Oct 1998 Digest showing Chairman Joe McGowan, Bill Hyslop and the details of the 1998 Canadian Reciprocity Agreement

1998

OPERATOR

The agreement on reciprocal certification for water and wastewater operators was established through collaboration among Canadian certification agencies at an ABC conference workshop, laying the foundation for a forward-thinking Pan-Canadian framework.

1998

OPERATOR

The EOCP Board passed a motion to pursue mandatory certification for water operators with the Ministry of Health.

1996

PROGRAM

In 1996, the EOCP Board approved the acceptance of Visa and MasterCard for program payments, transitioning from a cash or cheque-only system.

1996

PROGRAM

Ontario signs on to the existing Recirocity Agreement

1996

1995


Display of the New Logo Operator Pins available to members up to 30 year (Lifetime) members in 1995

OPERATOR

First Lifetime Membership Awarded to Robert Wilson (Op No. 17)
Robert "Bob" Wilson served as Chairman of the Board until 1981 and retired in April 1988. His lifetime membership was the first granted with Board approval; this later changed to an automatic lifetime membership after 30 years (1993 AGM).

1987


OPERATOR HONOURED

John Tailford, Chairman of the Board in 1987, presenting a plaque for Lifetime Membership to Bob Wilson

1987

PROGRAM

Dave Samis became the Program Secretary operating from the GVRD Head Office, marking the program's move to Burnaby. In the same year, **Bert Caine** stepped down from the Certification Board, signalling the end of an era and the **beginning of a new chapter** for the Certification Board.

1989

PROGRAM

The certification board transitioned to a user-pay model for its voluntary program. Guided by a strong commitment to protecting public health and the environment, operators and board members of the late 1980s and early 1990s ensured the continuity of the certification system, establishing a framework that continues to support the program today.

1989

PROGRAM

The **inaugural Bert Caine Award** presented to **Bert Caine** upon his retirement in recognition of his work with the Program.

1989


BERT CAINE AWARD

Section from the Nov 1989 Digest, showing Chairman John Tailford presenting to Bert Caine

1989

PROGRAM

BCWWA and the BCWWOCP jointly proposed **mandatory certification and classification** to the Province of British Columbia.

2000

PROGRAM

Exams for **SWS, SWWS-L (Lagoon),** and **SWWS-M (Mechanical)** were developed and approved by the Board.

2000

PROGRAM

The **Walkerton Crisis** marks a pivotal turning point, reshaping water legislation and regulatory standards for operators and facilities across Canada and reinforcing the critical importance of certification, oversight, and the protection of public health.

2000



May 18th, 2000 - water tower from Walkerton Ontario, the centre of the Water Crisis

2003

PROGRAM

Kim Eames joins EOCP to meet the growing program demands stemming from the upcoming changes to the BC Drinking Water Protection Act, including a surge in operator exams, expanded Small Systems certification requirements, and additional facility classifications.

To mark EOCP's 60th anniversary, this three-part timeline reflects on the people, milestones, and decisions that have shaped the Program over six decades. From its early beginnings to its role today as a trusted leader in operator certification, EOCP's history is one of collaboration, adaptability, and commitment to public and environmental health. Part 2 explores the period from 1986 to 2006, a time marked by expansion, increasing recognition, and a broader scope of influence. As the Program matured, EOCP strengthened its standards, expanded certification offerings, and deepened relationships with operators, employers, and regulators. These two decades reflect a growing trust in EOCP's role and its commitment to supporting a skilled, knowledgeable, and professional workforce across the industry.



Kim Eames, Director of Operations - 23 years with EOCP (and counting!).

2003

FACILITY

BC Drinking Water Protection Regulation upgraded to included Certification for Water Operators

2003

2004

OPERATOR

The EOCP Board introduces a mandatory CEU requirement in response to the Walkerton Report to strengthen operator competency. The initial CEU period (September 1, 2004–December 31, 2007) allowed a 3.5-year transition for operators and employers to meet certification standards.

2005

PROGRAM

The Board established the role of **Executive Director** to expand the administrative functions and capabilities of the Program Office, hiring Bill Hyslop as the first EOCP Executive Director. He served in this role until his retirement in 2012

2005

New Executive Director

A familiar face around the EOCP Board Office has a new title and job as the EOCP Executive Director – Dr. Bill Hyslop. The continued growth of the Program with the resulting work load was judged to exceed the physical and technical abilities of the current EOCP staff. In May, Bill resigned as a Board Director and was hired as the new EOCP Executive Director.

Bill has been a Director of the EOCP for 27 years, and was currently the longest serving director of the organization. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Victoria in Environmental Chemistry, has managed professional staff in three laboratories, was one of the co-founders and the president of NovaTec Consultants Inc., a group of scientists and engineers involved with specialty water and wastewater assignments that were beyond the usual scope of most engineering firms. He was responsible for the company's business plan, personnel issues, and business development.

Snippet from the January 2005 Digest announcing Bill in the new Executive Director position

OPERATOR

The **BWD certification exam** was introduced in partnership with the **Government of Yukon** to support the unique water delivery needs of northern communities, broadening the program's reach and impact.

PROGRAM

EOCP Celebrates 40 Years!!

2006

PROGRAM

A New EOCP logo is selected by contest with the membership to coincide with the society name change.

1995

1995

New Name and Logo

The Program's name change to the ***Environmental Operators Certification Program***, became official on November 1, 1995. Also, the Board decided on the new logo above which will be seen on our letterhead, pins, mugs and caps. The four bars on the right represent the four areas of certification, and the bar shadings signifying the treatment of the water or wastewater. The winner of the logo contest is **Richie Bird**, from Powell River. Richie receives $40.00 for his idea of the program initials superimposed over a map of BC. Thanks to all the operators who sent in their drawings.

Passage from Feb 1996 Digest about the new logo and the contest winner



Capture of the 1995 Certificate of Name Change under the BC Societies Act.

1995

1995

PROGRAM

The name changed to **Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP)**.

1995

PROGRAM

EOCP goes ONLINE: EOCP established its online presence with the launch of www.eocp.org, making program information and the Digest available online.

1993

FACILITY

Municipal Sewage Regulation – Mandatory Certification of Operators and Classification of WWT Facilities is written into the BC Regulation linking the Program into regulatory requirements for permitting with the BC Ministry of Environment.

1992

1992

PROGRAM

The **BC Water and Wastewater Operators Certification Program Society** was officially incorporated under the BC Societies Act, completing a process initiated by the Board six years earlier.



Capture of the 1992 Certificate of Incorporation to the BC Societies Act

1992

NUMBER ONE THOUSAND

The one thousandth operator certified in this province is Stephen M. Barone who lives in Brackendale and works for the District of Squamish. He wrote his Water Distribution System Operator level I exam last May during the Operators School at U.B.C.

* * *

RECORD NUMBERS

Operators writing certification exams at the UBC Operators School where record numbers wrote, are pictured on the right. More on the operators schools inside on page 3



Highlight from Nov 1990 Operator Digest showing the May 1990 UBC School and the Operators writing their Exams.

1990

1990

OPERATOR

Operator Number 1000 was allocated to Stephen M. Barone after he passed his WD I exam at the 1990 UBC Operators School.

1991

OPERATOR

Membership votes at the 1991 AGM to utilize the ABC Exam Service for BC Level I to IV Exams

1991

PROGRAM

A motion approved by membership establishes a **full-time** Program Secretary role to manage documentation, exam results, and facility classification records.

1992

PROGRAM

The First official employee for the Program, **Barbara Streigler**, hired as the Executive Secretary for the BCWW Operator Certification Program Society. She served in this role until her retirement in 2009.



Photo of the 1992 EOCP Board:
Front Row (left to right): Eric Jackson, Joe McGowan (Chair), Barbara Streigler.
Back Row (left to right): Al Lane, Leo Albrecht, Dave McLean, Bernie Taekama, Unknown, Bill Hyslop.

STANDING BESIDE THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP WATER MOVING

By Mike Hewitt CWP, CWWP



OWB volunteers and Sandhikharka staff inspect a protected spring source used for community water.

EOCP's contribution did more than support travel. It backed the idea that operators have something valuable to give beyond their own system boundaries.

Safe water work starts with people willing to open their system to hard questions.

That is what happened in Nepal.

Operators Without Borders (OWB), working with Partnership for Sustainable Development Nepal (PSDN), joined five participating water utilities in Lumbini Province for a field assessment focused on practical water utility improvement. Lamahi, Phalkapur, Pragatinagar, Gadhawa, and Sandhikharka each welcomed OWB volunteers into their offices, field sites, records, meetings, and daily operating realities.

That openness mattered.

A water utility cannot improve from a distance. Progress starts when operators explain what happens during monsoon, board members describe tariff pressure, utility staff show where records are thin, and local leaders connect technical decisions to public trust. Participating utilities did that with honesty, patience, and generosity.

The Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) helped make that field work possible by funding airfare for one OWB volunteer. EOCP's support placed operator experience beside local operators, executive boards, municipal leaders, PSDN, and community partners already carrying responsibility for water service. OWB thanks EOCP for backing that work.

From 29 May to 13 June, OWB volunteers Valerie Jenkinson, Rhonda Harris, and Mike Hewitt worked with Lamahi, Phalkapur, Pragatinagar, Gadhawa, and Sandhikharka. The team met utility executive boards, operators, municipal leaders, sector representatives, and community partners. Together, they reviewed source water, treatment, storage, distribution, sampling, laboratory pathways, governance, tariffs, operator routines, and service reliability.

The assignment did not start from blame. It started from respect.



At a well site, OWB and Phalkapur Water Utility staff discuss well operations, disinfection, maintenance, and cost recovery.

Participating utilities already knew much about their systems. Operators knew which sources changed after rain. Staff knew which valves mattered. Board members knew which financial decisions would be difficult. Municipal leaders understood that water safety, affordability, land, sanitation, and public trust do not sit in separate boxes.

OWB's role was to help turn that local knowledge into controls that can be tested, recorded, reviewed, funded, and repeated.

Water systems rarely fail because one person does not care. They struggle when responsibility outruns tools, records, funding, or time.

A source changes during monsoon. Turbidity rises. Chlorine demand shifts. A meter loses trust. A pipe break gets repaired, but downstream sampling does not happen. A tariff stays low for years, and repairs, testing, reagents, meters, and operator training lose ground. Each issue looks manageable alone. Together, they shape whether protected water reaches users.

That is why evidence became a shared theme.

A clear tap is not proof. A full tank is not proof. A chlorine smell is not proof. Proof looks more ordinary: measured residuals, pH results, turbidity readings, sample maps, custody forms, logbooks, meter records, leak logs, tariff notes, and board dashboards that turn operating data into decisions.

The participating utilities did not resist that conversation. They helped build it.

Lamahi offered a strong platform for shared learning. Its metering, formal tariff structure, staff capacity, and governance base made it a practical demonstration candidate for other utilities to watch and adapt.

That does not mean Lamahi had nothing to improve. It means Lamahi had enough structure to help prove a repeatable model: measured chlorination, dosing review tied to flow, leak response records, meter checks, operator checklists, and monthly dashboards showing water quality, production, repairs, complaints, chemical stock, meter status, and cost pressure.

Lamahi's value went beyond its own service area. By opening its facilities, plans, field practices, and operating discussions, Lamahi helped create a common starting point for shared utility improvement.

Phalkapur brought a different lesson. Smaller systems carry public-health responsibility without always having enough equipment, revenue, testing access, or staff depth to prove control every day. Phalkapur's team discussed operations, maintenance, service delivery, sustainability, and growth with directness.

That honesty gave the assessment value.

Tank cleaning with bleaching powder can support maintenance. It does not replace controlled disinfection before water enters storage or distribution. Phalkapur's next step is practical: controlled chlorination, residual testing, pH and turbidity logs, source and tank inspections, standard procedures, backup operator training, and tariff planning tied to safe-water costs.

That discussion was not just technical. It was about how a board explains service cost to users in a way people can understand.

Pragatinagar showed how infrastructure and operating discipline must work together. The utility has deep tube wells, slow sand treatment, chlorination, and a broad distribution footprint. Those assets matter. They gain more value when operators can pair them with approved procedures, verified meters, feed-rate calculations, pump-meter checks, monthly water balances, and non-revenue water tracking.

Pragatinagar staff shared local operating realities before field inspections began. That set the tone. The work was not about outsiders pointing at problems. It was about utility staff and OWB volunteers comparing infrastructure, practice, records, and risk in one conversation.

A dosing method held in one person's memory is fragile. A meter no one trusts weakens water-balance work. A leak pattern that stays unwritten keeps returning. Pragatinagar's participation helped turn those realities into practical next steps.

Gadhawa widened the conversation. Its leaders brought water service, sanitation, public communication, and municipal coordination into the same room.

That matters because drinking water and septage risk meet underground. Water entering distribution needs continuous disinfection and field verification. Septage needs a controlled pathway so disposal practices do not shift risk into fields, drains, groundwater, and public trust.

Gadhawa's utility and local leadership did what good public-service institutions do: they looked beyond a single asset and asked what protection requires across a wider system. The next steps include continuous disinfection, tariff sufficiency review, septage volume estimates, hauler engagement, candidate site screening, odour and groundwater review, public rules, and clear go/no-go decisions before any lagoon or pond pilot proceeds.



Field checks help connect distribution operations to water-quality control. Chlorine smell can suggest disinfection, but measured residual proves whether protection reached the far end of the system.

That is not a quick fix. It is a more responsible one.

Sandhikharka gave the team the clearest source-water discussion. Its mixed-source system includes shallow wells, springs, and stream sources. Seasonal turbidity, line breaks, limited local testing, and incomplete records make source-to-tap control harder.

Sandhikharka's team spent time with OWB across wells, protected springs, a stream intake, treatment facilities, reservoirs, and municipal discussions. That time mattered because mixed-source systems cannot be understood from a desk. Operators and utility staff helped connect seasonal operating choices, field conditions, source vulnerability, treatment, storage, distribution, and public expectations.

A deep well may become part of Sandhikharka's future. The better question is what evidence must come first. Hydrogeology, test drilling, pump testing, water-quality confirmation, operating cost review, and decommissioning plans should guide any capital decision.

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Sandhikharka's willingness to work through those questions showed leadership. Capital decisions need evidence, not pressure.

Across all five utilities, one pattern stood out: local people were already carrying heavy responsibility.

Executive boards were not passive. Operators were not indifferent. Utility staff were not hiding from complexity. Municipal leaders were not detached from consequences. Each group brought knowledge that outside volunteers could not have invented.

The strongest work happened when that local knowledge met operator-to-operator support.Laboratory access became another shared priority. Water-quality work is more than a lab result. It is a route, a clock, a bottle, a cooler, a custody form, a trained sampler, a valid method, a result, and somebody with authority to act.

Residual chlorine, pH, and turbidity belong close to the field and close to the time of sampling. Microbiological samples need short holding times, controlled transport, proper bottles, and clear response procedures. Long transport can make a result look official while weakening its value for daily operations.

The participating utilities helped frame the practical solution: field control by trained operators, cluster or district laboratory confirmation, reference laboratory verification, and independent health surveillance. That layered model respects local operators while giving boards, PSDN, health partners, and communities stronger evidence.

Money sat underneath every recommendation.

Safe water costs money every month. Power, chemicals, reagents, testing, meters, spare parts, operators, repairs, emergency response, training, and capital replacement all need funding. When tariffs stay below cost, risk does not disappear. It moves into deferred maintenance, weak monitoring, equipment failure, and public distrust.

Participating boards understood that tension. They face users who need safe water and affordable bills. Both needs are real. The answer is not blanket underpricing that weakens the utility. The answer is better cost-of-service information, targeted support for poor households, staged tariff planning, and public communication that shows what bills pay for.

Evidence changes that conversation.

A residual log can show protection at far points. A leak log can show why repair funds matter. A meter register can show where water disappears. A tariff dashboard can connect service outcomes to operating costs. Public trust grows when utilities show what they measured, what they fixed, and what still needs funding.

That is why EOCP's support matters.

EOCP's contribution backed the idea that operators have something valuable to give beyond their own system boundaries. Certification is not just a credential. It represents discipline, public responsibility, field judgement, and the habit of proving control.



Pragatinagar Water Utility staff share local operating realities before field inspections begin.



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OWB's Nepal work now moves into the harder part: follow-through. Useful capacity does not live in a report. It shows up in tomorrow's logbook, next month's dashboard, a better sample route, a working field kit, a corrected dosing practice, a mapped valve, a tariff conversation backed by evidence, and an operator who knows what to do when a result goes wrong.

The participating utilities made that future work possible by opening their systems and sharing what works, what strains, and what needs support. PSDN made it possible by coordinating local relationships and keeping utility realities connected to community needs. EOCP made it possible by helping get operator capacity to Nepal.

To EOCP, thank you for backing operators helping operators.

Participating utilities did not just host the assessment. They gave it value by sharing the local knowledge no outside team can replace.

To Lamahi, Phalkapur, Pragatinagar, Gadhawa, and Sandhikharka, thank you for welcoming OWB, sharing your systems, and showing the kind of honesty that makes improvement possible.

To PSDN, thank you for building the local bridge that turned a visit into a working partnership.

Safe water is not protected by speeches, photographs, or good intentions.

It is protected by operators, boards, local leaders, communities, and partners willing to sit together, test assumptions, make decisions, and come back the next day.



OWB meets with Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO) in Kathmandu to discuss operator training, small-system support, and shared capacity for neighbouring community water systems.

Did You Know?

August 16 is National Backflow Prevention Day, a day dedicated to recognizing the vital role of backflow preventers and the skilled professionals who help protect our drinking water.

The day raises awareness of the importance of preventing contaminants from entering our potable water systems and celebrates the many people who work behind the scenes to keep our water safe. This includes backflow prevention specialists, plumbers, pipefitters, sprinkler fitters, and the water and wastewater professionals who treat, distribute, and safeguard the water we rely on every day.

National Backflow Prevention Day also commemorates a tragic event at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, where faulty plumbing cross- connections led to an amoebic dysentery outbreak that caused 98 deaths and hundreds of illnesses. The incident highlighted the critical importance of proper cross-connection control and backflow prevention practices — lessons that continue to protect public health today.

Check out the https://www.bcwwa.org/ for more information about this day of celebration.



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WHO'S ON THE MOVE

Scott Hawthorne, CWP, CWWP

What was your first job?

My first job in the industry was as a Labourer with the District of Central Saanich in March 2003. I was exposed to everything from painting hydrants to water main breaks, and wastewater lift station maintenance. It gave me the opportunity to learn the basics of municipal infrastructure and utility operations from experienced operators who took pride in the work and the systems they maintained. Starting out in the field helped build a strong foundation in both the operational and maintenance sides of the industry.

What was your path to becoming an Operator?

I was drawn to the variety of the work and the fact that no two days are ever the same. Twenty-three years later, that's still one of my favourite parts of the job. Utility operations combine hands-on work, critical infrastructure, problem solving, technology, and public service all into one career. I transitioned to the Capital Regional District (CRD) in 2006 and was exposed to a variety of water and wastewater systems. Over time, I became especially interested in SCADA systems, operational data analysis, and how information from our systems can be used to evaluate performance, improve maintenance programs, and help crews work more efficiently. I've always enjoyed finding ways to improve reliability while making sure the work being done provides the best value to the community.

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

After spending the past 20 years with the Capital Regional District, most recently as a Field Supervisor, I had the opportunity to return to the District of Central Saanich as Infrastructure Manager. In many ways, it feels like coming full circle. I started my career in Central Saanich in 2003, moved on to build my career with the CRD, and now have the privilege of returning in a leadership role. During those 20 years, I gained experience in operations, maintenance, project coordination, metering, leak detection, SCADA systems, and staff supervision. Some of the most rewarding experiences came from supporting water and wastewater systems on the Southern Gulf Islands, where operators often needed to be adaptable, resourceful, and willing to take on a wide variety of challenges. Those opportunities helped broaden my perspective and prepared me for a role focused on long-term planning, asset management, operational efficiency, and supporting staff development.



Scott Hawthorne

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

Stay curious and never stop learning. Some of the best operators I've worked with weren't necessarily the ones who knew all the answers—they were the ones who kept asking questions and looking for ways to improve. The industry is changing rapidly, with new technology, new regulatory requirements, and increasing expectations around asset management and data-driven decision making. I'd also encourage people to get involved in as many aspects of the job as possible. The more experiences you have, the better you'll understand how systems work and how decisions affect operations. Most importantly, remember that what we do matters. Clean drinking water and reliable wastewater systems are services most people take for granted, but they have a direct impact on the quality of life in every community.

What are some of your goals in your new position?

One of my main goals is continuing to improve preventative maintenance and asset management programs by using operational data and system performance trends to better evaluate maintenance effectiveness and long-term infrastructure needs. I'm also interested in expanding the use of SCADA and data analysis tools to support more informed operational decisions and improve overall efficiency while maintaining service levels and reliability. Equally important is supporting staff development. I've benefited greatly from mentors throughout my career, and I hope to create opportunities for others to learn, grow, and advance within the industry.

What do you do in your spare time?

Most of my spare time is spent with my family. My wife, two daughters and I enjoy exploring Vancouver Island, traveling when we can, and spending time with friends and family. I also enjoy running, getting outdoors, and staying active. After spending more than two decades in municipal utilities, I've learned that maintaining a healthy balance between work and family is important. The work can be demanding and there is always another project, another repair, or another challenge waiting around the corner. Spending time with the people who matter most helps keep everything in perspective.

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STATISTICS

April 1st – June 30th, 2026

EOCP
Environmental Operators Certification Program

EXAM STATISTICS

441 exams taken

122 exam sessions

FACILITIES

47 facilities added or upgraded

CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS (CEUs)

1,363 Operators submitted CEUs

2,495 CEUs earned

DEFINITIONS

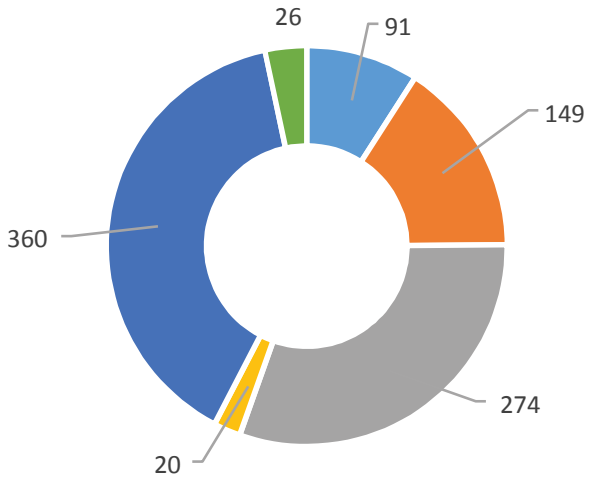
WT	Water Treatment
WD	Water Distribution
WWC	Wastewater Collection
WWT	Wastewater Treatment
OIT	Operator In Training
BWD	Bulk Water Delivery
BWS	Building Water System
SWS	Small Water System
SWWS	Small Wastewater System
SCS	Stormwater Collection System
MU	Multi Utility

OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS

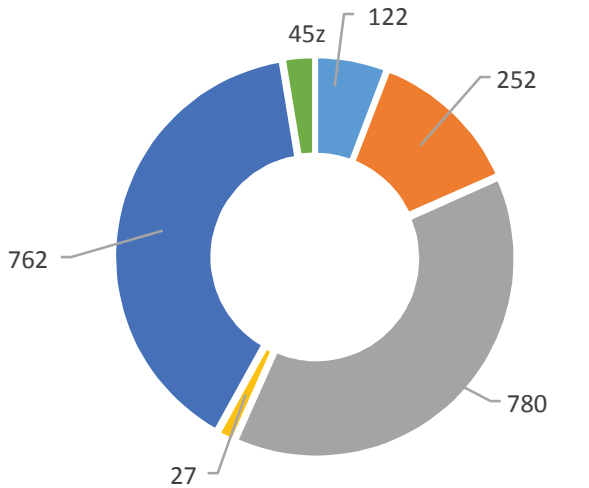
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- MU I
- IV
- III
- II
- I

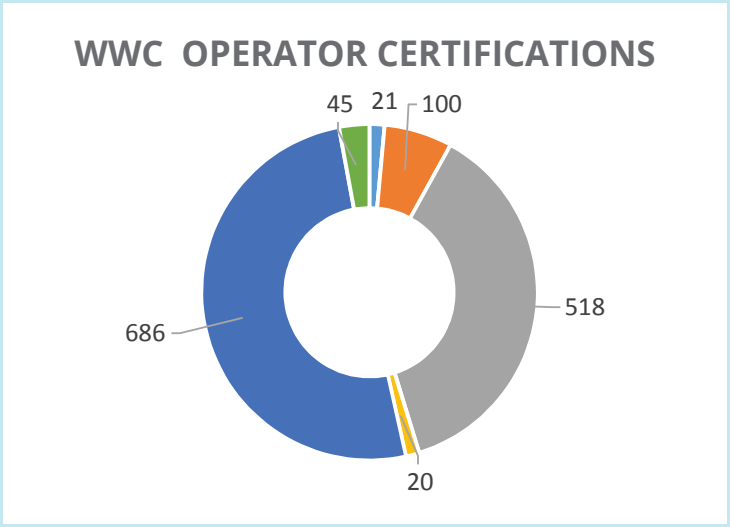
OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS

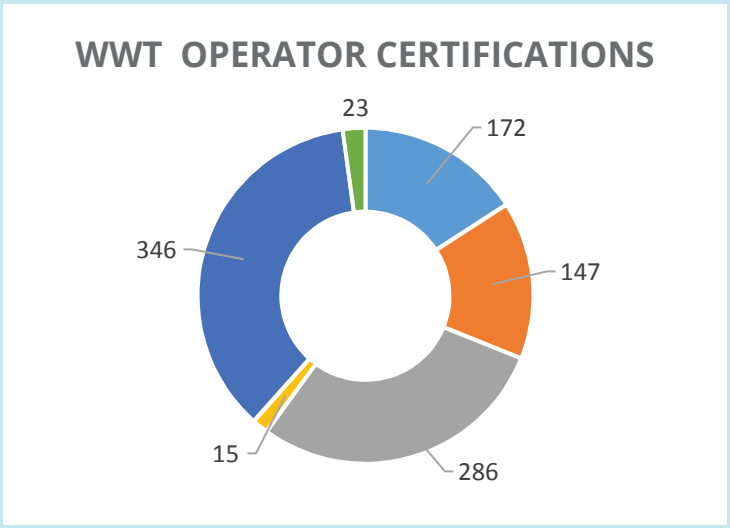
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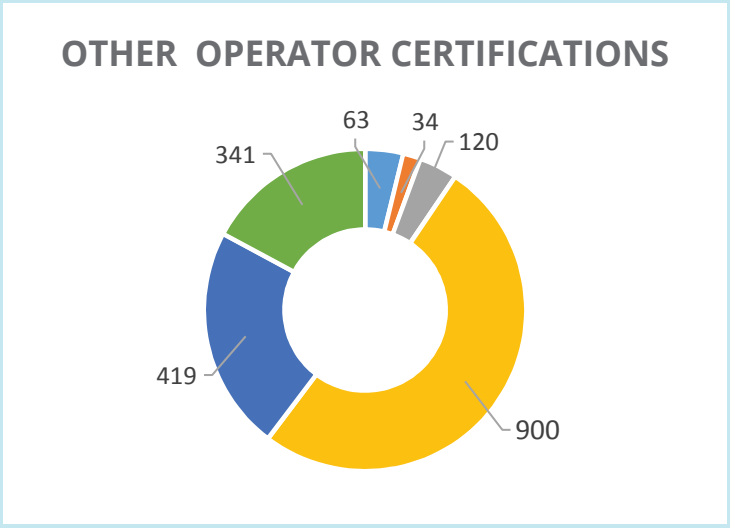


WD OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS

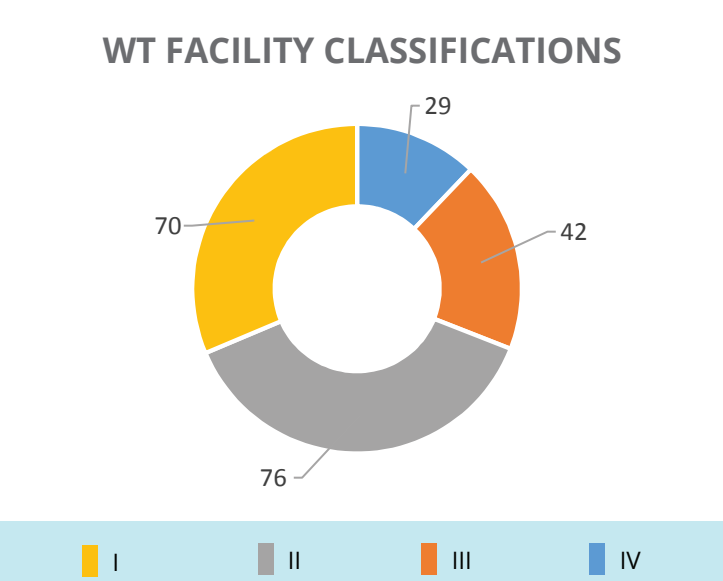


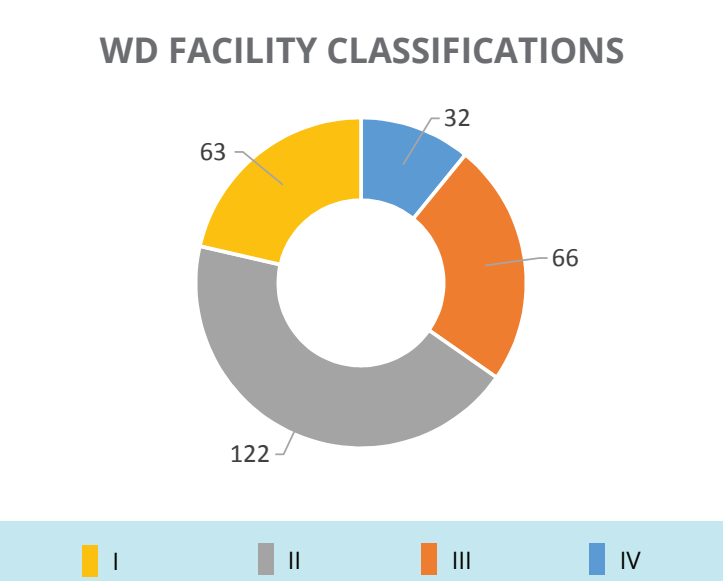

WWC OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS
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686
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MU II
MU I
IV
III
II
I

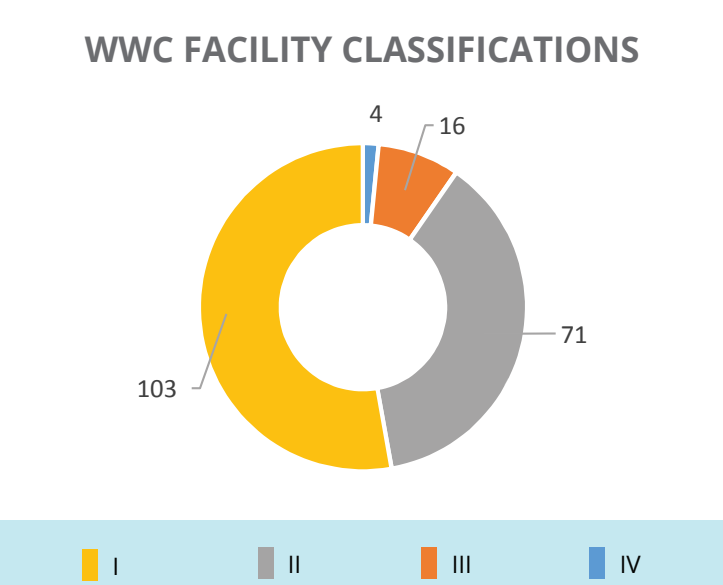

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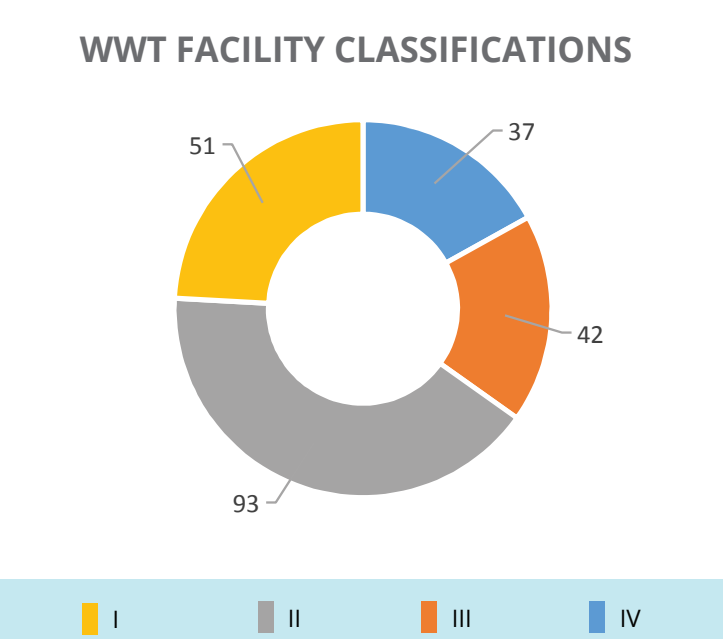

OTHER OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS
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900
BWD
BWS
SCS
SWS
SWWS
OIT

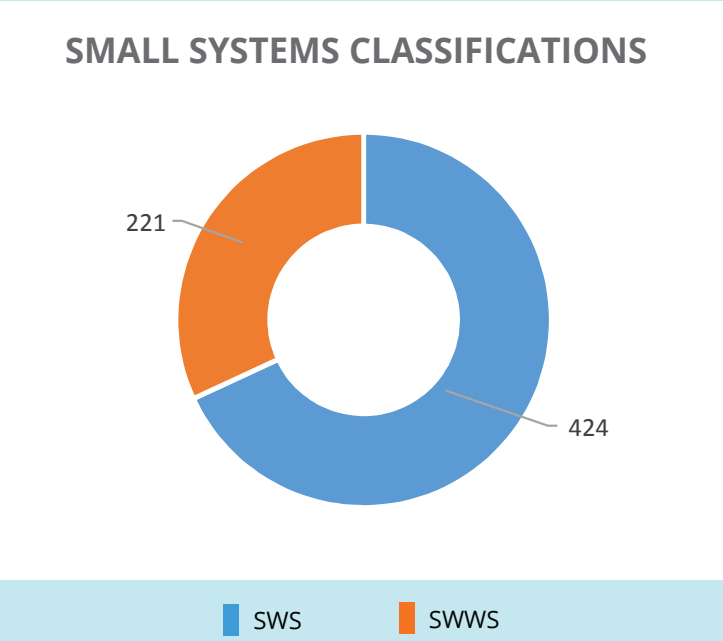
FACILITY CLASSIFICATION











A new CEU reporting period began on January 1st. Please check your Operator status by logging into your profile at https://crm.eocp.ca Choose **ACCOUNT** to see if your 2026 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 2026 dues and/or submitted CEUs for the 2024-2025 CEU reporting period. 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 2026 dues are paid, and you've met the 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

Free events are listed in the events calendar:

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"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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