



# Alberta Utility Operator

## SMALL CENTRES FEATURE

### What if AWWOA could help you closer to home?

Do you live in a smaller Alberta community? Do you think about who will replace you when you retire or leave? Or, are you called on to provide coverage for communities struggling to find and keep operators? Do you feel things could be done differently for smaller centres? It is no secret many communities struggle to find, train, and keep Certified Operators. The question is how?

The 'what' and 'how' of operator recruitment, training and retention has been the focus of an ad hoc Rural Development Committee (RDC) of the AWWOA Board of Directors. The RDC was mandated in October 2010, following a September 2010 Special Meeting of the Board called to address smaller centre issues. Since November 2010, the RDC has been mapping out practical strategies to help strengthen supports in rural Alberta.

Many Alberta communities face serious capacity challenges about the quality and sustainability of their drinking water supplies. This includes providing safe water to the tap from ground or surface water sources as well as the capacity to assure wastewater is properly managed and returned to the environment, where it often becomes another

community's raw water drinking source.

A plan with specific strategic directions to support smaller centres has been developed. The approach is known as *Closer to Home*. It focuses on the local community as the logical point where recruitment, training, and essential support ideally takes place. It recognizes the importance of helping operators by also engaging and educating local municipal officials and area residents.

The RDC has been busy behind the scenes working on behalf of members. The RDC has been reaching out provincially to other essential partners. The *Closer to Home* strategy has been considered at the ministerial-level by Alberta Environment. AWWOA Board Chair Brian Brost participated as a panelist on March 8, 2011, during a special issues panel about rural Alberta water safety on ACCESS Network's *Alberta Primetime* television program. Executive Director

### what's inside?

<b>Closer to Home</b> .....	1
<b>Slave Lake</b> .....	2
<b>The Old Operator</b> .....	3
<b>Water Week</b> .....	4
<b>Training Season</b> .....	5
<b>Awards</b> .....	6
<b>Nominations</b> .....	7
<b>Math Corner</b> .....	8

John Voyer and Brian Brost engaged Alberta's rural research community on April 13, 2011, at the Rural Alberta Development Network conference in a talk called *Responding to a Known Community Killer – Assuring Local Water Quality*.

Member input was sought by the RDC in March via a members' survey on attracting, training and retaining operators in smaller communities. The RDC also presented an update on the *Closer to Home* initiative to AWWOA members at the Annual Operators Seminar on March 16, 2011.

Throughout 2011, the RDC has also been busy developing a specific proposal for a multi-year provincial initiative called *Closer to Home – Smaller Centres Water and Wastewater Capacity Renewal Initiative*. The *Closer to Home* project would: 1) support practical succession planning of operations staff in smaller centres, 2) provide technical assistance and mentoring, and 3) offer regular outreach and regional education to help operators develop and maintain certification. It would also assist participating communities to attract and train qualified candidates up to a minimum of Level I standard, specific to the community's facility configuration. A detailed funding proposal has been developed for *Closer to Home* and will be considered by the Rural Alberta Development Fund (RADF) in September 2011. More information is available under the *Issues* tab at the AWWOA web.

Michael Aherne, Responsive Strategies Inc.

## Albertans helping Albertans

During this past spring, residents of the Town of Slave Lake and surrounding area experienced one of the most catastrophic events ever occurring in provincial history with the fire that has and will continue to affect the livelihood of many people in the Slave Lake area.

Although unfortunate, it is at these times that many residents, businesses, communities, and organizations come together with an outpouring of assistance to aid our friends, neighbours, and colleagues. On behalf of the staff and Executive of the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association, I wish to express our appreciation to those in our sector who provided assistance to the folks in the Slave Lake area whether by being on the front lines helping out with the restoration of the water and sewer systems, food and supply donations, helping out at the temporary relief centres, financial, or other "in-kind" support.

Considering the magnitude of this event and as other similar disasters may occur in the future, I am pleased to inform you that the AWWOA Executive has provided the Red Cross with a \$1000 donation as a way to help out fellow Albertans in need.

Brian Brost, Executive Chair  
Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association

The purpose of the Alberta Utility Operator Newsletter is to provide a forum for communication and networking among AWWOA members in the areas of new technologies and research, regulatory concerns and changes, outstanding service and other Association concerns. The editors welcome suggestions for content from the membership.

The Alberta Utility Operator Newsletter is published three times a year by the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association with assistance from Alberta Environment.

Deadlines for submission are in January, April and August.

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Views expressed in The Alberta Utility Operator are those of the writers. Unless otherwise stated, articles should not be interpreted as policy or regulation and do not necessarily reflect organizational or editorial policy.

**your web site:**

**[www.awwoa.ab.ca](http://www.awwoa.ab.ca)**

# The Old Operator

submitted by Doug Thorson

On the road to achievement there are always stumbling blocks that present themselves. When these roadblocks jump out at us, it's then we have to revert to plan B and it is how we tackle these roadblocks with our efforts of study and hard work that determines our achievement. Overcoming these roadblocks in the struggle to achieve need not overshadow achievement, but be more satisfying when you look back on the obstacles surmounted. It's more about achievement than success. You see, success is praise from others and is always short lived. Satisfaction has staying power and becomes a cornerstone of our character that we can always build on. Yes, there are short cuts to achievement called half-effort, but life and achievement requires thorough preparation ---- veneer isn't worth anything.

When we need to revert to plan B, how can we stay the course? We need to remain focused on the goal, thinking clearly on a plan of action. Never be fooled; without a plan and knowing where you are going, we can mistake activity for achievement. Life lessons have taught me achievement is not always success. It is by failure and trying again and again that the wall is built, one brick at a time, it is never giving up and doing your best under all circumstances. That is achievement and satisfaction.

When plan B needs to be developed, it is at that moment we need to muster all our strength in charting our new course. Some will criticize us but this is where we need to dig down deep for that determination. "It is not the critic that counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit goes

to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly." Take heed, Theodore Roosevelt said this in 1910 and it is still valid today.

*It is by failure and trying again and again that the wall is built, one brick at a time, it is never giving up and doing your best under all circumstances. That is achievement and satisfaction.*

It is not the things that happen to us in our lives that cause us to suffer, but more over how we react to them. The most successful people in life are those who are good at plan B. In today's society, the ability to switch gears is the resilience we each need to continue to achieve. A strong positive attitude will create more opportunities than any wonder drug.

In all that you do, always be prepared to develop plan B. Opportunity is quite often missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work. Well, accomplishment does require study and hard work. Failure only strengthens your resolve and determination to accomplish your goal. We need to train ourselves to be plan B opportunists when plan A doesn't work. Rather than be discouraged, we just switch gears and slip right into plan B. I find it so interesting that in life when one door of opportunity closes, usually another door opens. The curious part is we tend to not see the open door and are fixated on the closed door. The greatest part of happiness depends on our disposition, not our circumstances. At least that's how I see it.

The Old Operator

# Water Week, Red Deer, Alberta

From **November 21st to the 25th 2011**, the AWWOA is offering eight workshops on a variety of topics directly related to the water and wastewater industry. For those who are renewing their operator certification this is the perfect time to attend one or more workshops and earn those CEUs needed before the renewal deadline. Workshops vary in length from one day to three days and attendees can earn up to 3.2 CEUs for the complete week.

## **#1 MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISION**

Nov. 21, 22 and 23, 2011 - Cost \$530 AWWOA Members (\$630 Non-Members) - 2.0 CEUs

This three-day course will focus on the skills, which operators and supervisors require to effectively manage their treatment facilities and supervise people.

## **#2 NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN WASTEWATER TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY**

Nov. 24, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This course will highlight the new technologies available for treating municipal wastewater.

## **#3 NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN WATER TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY**

Nov. 25, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This course will highlight new technologies available for treating municipal water supplies.

## **#4 NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION IN WATER DISTRIBUTION**

Nov. 21, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This single day course will highlight the new & emerging technologies available in water distribution.

## **#5 NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION IN WASTEWATER COLLECTION**

Nov. 22, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This single day workshop will highlight the new & emerging technologies available in wastewater collection.

## **#6 APPLICATION AND USE OF MEMBRANES FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT**

Nov. 23, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This Workshop will present an overview of the membrane treatment processes being used for potable water and wastewater treatment systems. Operating considerations will include operating sequencing, expected treatment capabilities, daily operating and monitoring duties, and regular cleaning requirements.

## **#7 SAFETY FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER OPERATORS**

Nov. 24, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs

This introductory safety workshop for water and wastewater operators will include an overview of applicable legislation; operator roles and responsibilities; elements of health and safety management systems; hazard identification, assessment, and control; material safety data sheets and basics of chemical safety; and development of emergency response plans.

## **#8 PUMPS AND HYDRAULICS FOR OPERATORS**

Nov. 25, 2011 - Cost \$300 AWWOA Members (\$400 Non-Members) - 0.6 CEUs (continued page 5)



This one-day course will cover: centrifugal pumps types and description, principles of operation, pump tear down, performance curve understanding, gauge reading and understanding, BHP, mechanical seal operation and understanding, and trouble-shooting.

#### HOTEL INFORMATION

Black Knight Inn, 2929 - 50 Avenue, Red Deer - Reservations 1-800-661-8793

Additional information and Water Week Registration can be found online at [www.awwoa.ab.ca](http://www.awwoa.ab.ca)

## 2011 - 2012 Training Season

The Alberta Water & Wastewater Operators Association has updated our training schedule for 2011/12. A PDF version of the 2011 - 12 training program is available for downloading and printing online at [www.awwoa.ab.ca](http://www.awwoa.ab.ca)

#### WATER WEEK 2011:

The AWWOA is excited about hosting AWWOA Water Week from November 21 - 25, 2011 in Red Deer, AB. This educational week will include a number of 1, 2 and 3 day courses to choose from. It will be held in Red Deer and will be a great opportunity for operators that are in need of CEU's to meet Certification requirements before the end of the year.

#### NEW COURSE OFFERING:

We are also introducing a new course entitled *Water Well Operation and Maintenance* this training season. This two-day course will be offered in Red Deer on Nov 15-16, 2011, in Edmonton on April 18-19, 2012 and in Peace River on August 25-26, 2012. Register early as spaces will fill quickly.

#### ADDITIONAL MEMBER BENEFITS:

- **\$100 Discount:** The AWWOA has added another benefit to membership! As a current AWWOA member you are entitled to a \$100 discount on courses. Please create your member profile online to start registering for 2011-12 courses and benefitting from your member discount.
- **Small Centre Operator Course Subsidy:** The AWWOA Executive Board has decided to continue its support of rural communities and rural operators by extending the very successful Small Centres Subsidy Program.
  - The AWWOA offers a 25% registration fee reduction for operators who are AWWOA members and are from small public facilities serving communities under 5,000 people.
  - This subsidy is to encourage attendance by offsetting training costs. The cost of each course, where a participant qualifies for this subsidy, has been noted under each of the eligible classroom courses outlined within the website.

Combine your \$100 Member Discount and Small Centre subsidy (if eligible) for even greater savings.

**Register for the upcoming training season at [www.awwoa.ab.ca](http://www.awwoa.ab.ca)**

## Steve Blonsky Honorary Life Membership Award

The AWWOA is currently seeking individuals to receive the Steve Blonsky Honorary Life Membership Award.

The recipient should be retired from water and/or sewage field either by virtue of age, years service or ill health.

Recipient must have had a minimum of 10 years membership in the AWWOA. Membership need not be consecutive years.

The number of recipients each year is to be limited to a total of two.

Candidates must be nominated by any two active members in good standing. When so nominated the nominator shall submit a brief outline of candidate's qualifications for honorary life membership and the committee shall verify the nominee's membership in the Association.

If you are interesting in nominating an individual for the Steve Blonsky Honorary Life Membership Award, please submit all pertinent information, prior to October 31st to:

Kathy Abramowski, Awards Chair  
AWWOA, 11810 Kingsway Avenue  
Edmonton, AB, T5G 0X5  
Kathy.Abramowski@gov.ab.ca  
(780) 427-7713 - Fax

## Life Membership

Are you a retired water or wastewater operator? Have you been a member of the AWWOA for a minimum of 20 years? If so, you could be eligible for a Life Membership in the AWWOA. A Life Member shall receive, on an annual basis, a membership and all rights and privileges afforded regular members at no cost.

If you are interested in obtaining a life membership please contact:

AWWOA  
11810 Kingsway Avenue  
Edmonton, AB, T5G 0X5  
Kathy.Abramowski@gov.ab.ca  
(780) 427-7713 - Fax



## Charitable Donation Committee Report

submitted by Doug Thorson, Committee Chair

Leading up to our March 2012 Banff Seminar and knowing the great need for clean safe drinking water in third world countries, "Thoughtful giving begins with thoughts of giving." If you have any creative fundraising ideas for the Banff Seminar, please submit them to Doug by email.

awwoa@telus.net (attention Doug) or weedoug@telus.net (Charitable Donations)

## AWWOA Elections / Call For Nominations

The AWWOA is now accepting nominations for the upcoming March 2012 Executive election.

There are 13 full members on the Executive as follows:

- 2 members from Municipalities over 100,000 population
- 2 members from Municipalities over 10,000 but under 100,000 population
- 2 members from Municipalities over 3,000 but under 10,000 population
- 4 members from Municipalities under 3,000
- 1 Alberta Provincial Director of Western Canada Water (WCW) (3 year term)
- 1 member from the "public facilities" category
- 1 member from the "life member" category

There will be openings for the following:

- 2 openings for members from Municipalities under 3,000
- 1 opening for members from Municipalities over 3,000 but under 10,000
- 1 opening for members from Municipalities over 10,000 but under 100,000
- 1 opening for members from Municipalities over 100,000
- 1 opening for members from the "life member" category

These are all 2 year terms unless otherwise noted.

Nominated member must be in good standing with AWWOA (membership paid).

**Note:** An Executive member can, if elected, serve a total of three consecutive two-year terms. After the first two-year term the individual must be nominated and re-elected in order to serve the second two-year term. After the second two-year term the individual must be once again, be nominated and re-elected to serve the third and final two-year term.

**Note:** If an individual serves three consecutive terms he or she must take a minimum of one year off after serving the third term.

**Note:** The Life Member Category includes both "life members" and "honorary life members".

All submissions for nominations to the executive must include a black and white passport photo and a brief biography which should include reasons for running..

Grab this opportunity to be elected and have a say in Training, Provincial Operator Certification Programs, setting proficiency standards and encouraging the best possible operations for Water and Wastewater facilities in Alberta.

**For more information or to submit your nominations please contact Nancy McAteer**

**phone:** 403-886-4265, email: [nancymcateer@shaw.ca](mailto:nancymcateer@shaw.ca)

Nominations are accepted up to January 15, 2012.

Nominations Form available online at [www.awwoa.ab.ca](http://www.awwoa.ab.ca)

# Upcoming AWWOA Courses

Level I Certification Preparation Part "A" Part "B"	Calgary	September 27 & 28, 2011 October 25 & 26, 2011
Level I Certification Preparation Part "A" Part "B"	Edmonton	September 29 & 30, 2011 October 27 & 28, 2011
Entry Level Training	Edmonton	October 3 & 4, 2011
Excel 2007 - Water & Wastewater Operator Training	Edmonton	October 6 & 7, 2011
Entry Level Training	Calgary	October 13 & 14, 2011
Water Distribution Systems	Calgary	October 17 & 18, 2011
Wastewater Collection Systems	Calgary	October 20 & 21, 2011
Level II Certification Preparation	Edmonton	October 25 & 26, 2011

**AWWOA Member Discount:** The AWWOA has added another benefit to membership!

As a current AWWOA member you are entitled to a **\$100 discount** on courses. Please create your member profile online to start registering for 2011-12 courses and benefitting from your member discount.

## Math Corner

Problem from issue 14:

Given a reservoir diameter 5.8 m and reservoir height 4.2 m and fill pump flow 22 litres / sec, calculate the volume of the reservoir (in litres) and how long it will take to fill (in hours).

Answer:

$$\text{Volume} = .785 * d^2 * H = .785 * 5.8 * 5.8 * 4.2 = 110.911 \text{ m}^3 = 110911 \text{ litres}$$

$$\text{Fill Time} = V / \text{pump flow} = 110911 \text{ litres} / 22 \text{ litres / sec} = 5041 \text{ sec}$$

$$= 5041 \text{ sec} / 60 \text{ sec/min} = 84 \text{ min} = 84 / 60 \text{ min/hr} = 1.4 \text{ hours}$$

**New Problem:** Given the information below, calculate the chlorine demand in this plant.

- Nov 4 Chlorine scale reading 34.4 Kg
- Nov 5 Chlorine scale reading 31.8 Kg
- Nov 4 plant flowmeter 597432 m<sup>3</sup>
- Nov 5 plant flowmeter 598212 m<sup>3</sup>
- Chlorine residual avg 0.9 mg/l

Correct answers will be included in the next newsletter. Thanks go out to Dave Noack for submitting the information for Math Corner.

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