

VRWA 2017 Conference and Trade Show Event a Great Success

Shaun Fielder, Executive Director

Another productive and positive conference and trade show event at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee this May. Golf participants on Wednesday afternoon dodged a light late shower but had sun with a bit of a breeze and great afternoon. Congrats to the winning team (yes this is legit) Fielder, Fielder, Fletcher and Fletcher. Longest drive at 277 yards to Riley Fletcher, a high school senior. Closest to pin winner was Dave Harris of Ti-Sales, within 4' 10". We had an excellent dinner on Wednesday night with VRWA team, board, and many special guests taking part.

Thursday was very busy with stellar attendance numbers, great training, and active vendor display area. Thanks for all those firms who joined us to showcase their firm's products and services. To all who conducted trainings sessions a big thank you. This includes, Jeremy Delisle and Richard Kenney (Town of Hartford), James Fay (Champlain Water District), Christopher Cox (City of Montpelier), Bob Fischer (City of South Burlington), Hasper Kuno (Purpose Energy), David DiDomenico and Nick Giannetti (VT DEC Watershed Management Division),

(Continued on page 7)

VRWA Adds New Wastewater Position

Elizabeth Walker, Wastewater Specialist

VRWA recently signed a one year contract with DEC Wastewater Management Program for one full time employee that will enhance and add to the great work that Wayne Graham has been providing. The contract has the potential to be extended an additional two years.

The contract specific to this position is to provide education, outreach and technical assistance to Wastewater Treatment Facility operators subject to the Long Island Sound Nitrogen TMDL, Lake Champlain Phosphorus TMDL and to pretreaters connected to these systems. Priority will be given to wastewater facilities in the Lake Champlain basin that will need to upgrade their facilities under the Lake Champlain TMDL. This will include assistance with developing and implementing optimization plans through training and onsite technical assistance.

Other important areas of focus for training and on-site assistance are maintenance programs, asset management, ordinances, financial management, and board member training. Small on-site targeted training sessions at individual facilities and Informational Network for Local Operators (INFLO) sessions will be scheduled as well.

The small targeted 1-2 hour sessions will be scheduled at individual facilities covering many different subjects such as but not limited to, process control testing, basic understanding of chemistry, computer operations and maintenance and safety procedures. The INFLO sessions will be designed to bring facility operators from neighboring systems to discuss specific issues at your facilities and the different ways to address them.

I am very excited I was hired to fill this position, for those of you that do not know me I would like to briefly share my background. I started in the water/wastewater profession in 1978 at Sugarbush Resort initially as operator then chief operator in 1980. I spent a total of 22 years at Sugarbush managing the larger advanced system seeing it through one major construction upgrade and the operation of a newer smaller SBR treatment system. Also managed the community water filtration/well systems and several of the resorts TNC and NTNC water systems. Spent 9.5 years as a water system specialist for VRWA working with the DWSRF loan program, and provided technical assistance and training. The past 3.5

(Continued on page 7)

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Since 1982, Vermont Rural Water Association has supported water and wastewater systems across the state. We provide many services, including training, source water protection planning, and onsite assistance.

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News Leaks is the official publication of VRWA. It is published quarterly for distribution to operators, owners, managers and board members of water and wastewater systems in Vermont, as well as to association members, water and wastewater service providers, regulators, and other friends. Opinions expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of VRWA.

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Letters

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Bruce Patterson, Pastor
802-849-6159
Dan Frost, Youth Pastor
802-522-6898

February 27, 2017

Dear Mr. Fielder,

In going through the permitting process to build a garage for our church our engineer discovered that we never had a water permit. Upon our engineer's recommendation, I contacted Meredith Maskell at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. Meredith went over what we needed to do to secure our permit, which to me was a bit overwhelming, and then she suggested that I contact Paul Sestito to assist us with the process. What a blessing Paul was! He met with us at the church, walked through our building with us to see what we were working with, and then he made recommendations about what we needed to do and how best to do it. He also sat down with Dan, my co-pastor and me, and helped us with all the paperwork that needed to be filled out. I am writing to you because most of the people I have dealt with do their job, but then there are a few like Paul who do their job extraordinarily well. Paul was such a nice guy to talk to and he knew what he was talking about. He represented your association very well. We are thankful for his help as an individual and for the free service that the Vermont Rural Water Association provided for us.

Sincerely,

Bruce Patterson, Pastor



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News on Tap

Vermont Rural Water Association 2016 Annual Report available

To view the Vermont Rural Water Association 2016 Annual Report, please visit our web site vtruralwater.org or email us at vrwa@vtruralwater.org to request a PDF copy.

New Training Topic For Water Operators: "How Technology Is Changing The Water Utility Industry"

Date: August 10, 2017

Time: 9:00am-1:30pm

Location: Vermont Rural Water Association, 20 Susie Wilson Road, Essex Jct, VT

Credit: 4 TCH

Non-member cost: \$40

Member cost: \$32


Instructor: Tommy Birdsall (Stiles Co.)

Proctor: Matt Guerino (VRWA)

Technology change is part of our everyday lives and cannot be avoided. However, water utilities, typically, have been slow to adapt to new technology. How will this affect your water utilities operation with the rapid changes in technology? The presentation will provide tips and provide information on:

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- Questions and Answer Session
- Round Table Discussions


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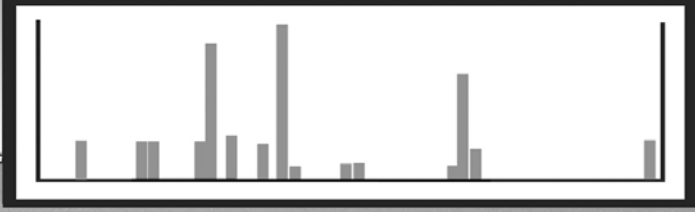
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Sampling at Water Systems in Vermont

by Matt Guerino, Training Specialist

Sampling procedures over the past 20 years haven't changed a lot. Operators still have to be careful to keep a clean area while taking total coliform samples, Disinfection By-Product and Lead and Copper Sampling sites haven't changed from the approved sampling sites identified on each water systems sampling plans. However, there have been some changes to rules and sampling requirements that operators should be aware of. Sampling requires immediate reaction from water systems, which is probably why there is concern with sampling. Let's discuss some of the sampling requirements.

Lead and Copper sites have stayed the same, but there are new requirements requiring water systems to not flush their water systems just prior to sampling. This request can cause some problems for seasonal water systems that can go long periods with little to no water usage. Sample Locations continue to be required from sites identified on the water systems sampling plan. Lead and Copper sampling plan forms can be found on the Divisions website (http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/documents/LeadCopperSamplingPlan-Form_0.pdf). Water Systems need to sample from only the cold water tap. The Division has asked that you not remove the aerator or screen while taking a Lead and Copper sample. Additional information based on the Lead and Copper Rule can be found on the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division's website (<http://dec.vermont.gov/water/drinking-water/water-quality-monitoring/lead-copper-rule-resources>).

The Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) now asks for site investigations after increased positive results. This requirement is more of a 'find and fix' requirement. There are only three repeat samples required for each total coliform positive result, while the past TCR rule required four repeat samples. The 'find and fix' approach should help water system operators identify deficiencies. Correcting these deficiencies should limit the amount of positive bacteriological results due to less deficiencies that create a pathway for bacteria to enter the water system. You can find the Level 1 Site Assessment Form on the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division (DWGWP) website (<http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/dwgwp/DW/RTCR%20Level%201%20Form%2012.21.15.pdf>).

The DWGWP cannot waive repeat or routine samples per the RTCR. You can find other information on the RTCR at the DWGWP website (<http://dec.vermont.gov/water/drinking-water/water-quality-monitoring/total-coliform>).

Operators should reach out to the DWGWP Compliance Analysts if there are specific monitoring questions. Vermont Rural Water will continue to offer Sampling Seminars throughout the state with specialists in the field. Please look at our training calendar for August and September 2017 for a course. ●

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Water Operators: Public Health's Unsung Heroes

Submitted by Robin Miller, RDH, MPH, Oral Health Director,
Vermont Department of Health

For the past three years, I have served as the Vermont Department of Health's Oral Health Director. In my career as a dental hygienist, I was familiar with the science of fluoride and its benefits to public health, but it wasn't until I became the Health Department's Oral Health Director that I came to fully appreciate the role that water operators play in protecting and promoting oral health. By adjusting the natural fluoride level in our water systems, water operators are essential to reducing dental health decay in communities throughout Vermont.

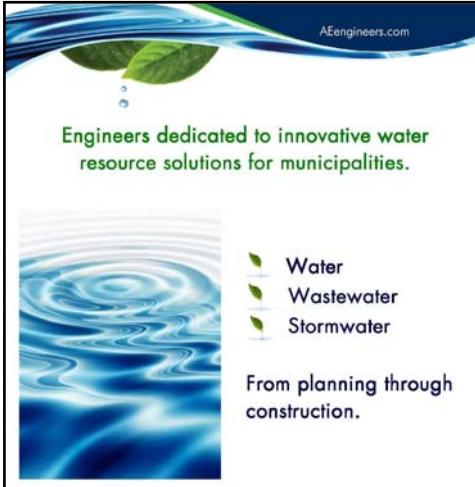
Part of our role at the Health Department's Oral Health Program is to provide information at community meetings about fluoridation. This means we also talk about water operators – their licensing requirements, what they test for, safety precautions they need to take, and more. Each time I've heard a water operator speak at one of these meetings, there has been such pride and professionalism in their words. Their dedication to the people they serve shines through.

Whether a community fluoridates their water or not, all water operators are public health champions.

You may not think of yourselves as such, but the important work that you do not only protects the public from water-borne diseases, but also provides Vermonters with fresh and clean water to drink. By making it

easier for Vermonters to choose healthy drinking water over pricey sugar-sweetened drinks, water operators help keep our teeth – and our whole bodies – healthy.

From the Health Department's Office of Oral Health to water operators throughout Vermont – thank you for being public health heroes! ●



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Succession Planning Part 2: Knowledge Management

By Aaron Perez, Water Systems Specialist

An earlier article discussed the importance of succession planning. Acknowledging that no one will be with your town indefinitely and creating a plan for transferring knowledge is essential to the ongoing operations of any town's water system. An important, and often unthought-of, part of succession planning is knowledge management.

Some knowledge comes from practiced based wisdom that leads to quick and right decisions. These decisions seem intuitive but are really based on an arsenal of tools comprised of previous experiences and values. This type of knowledge is best transferred through mentoring programs.


But, with tight budgets, mentoring programs can be challenging to fund.

However, I've seen some creative and affordable solutions. Some towns develop succession plans by training across departments. This is a great way to share knowledge at low cost to the town budget. Some other towns have had success with summer interns who have learned the ropes under the watchful gaze of successful operators serving as mentors.

On the other end of the spectrum is knowledge that is codifiable in procedures, databases, and documents. Since many water systems have operations manuals that have been updated in the last few years most of your operations documents should be electronic.

Once you have an editable document, you can easily make updates as needed. Updating your documents regularly ensures that information doesn't live just in your head and that it is available when it is needed.

As people come and go, the loss of knowledge could decrease or even undermine effectiveness and performance of your water system. Failing to make knowledge management plans jeopardizes the ability of a town to continue to safely and continuously operate beyond the operator's tenure. ●



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“All at VRWA look forward to the 2018 event back at the Lake Morey Resort and please mark your calendars we are scheduled for May 9 and 10, 2018. “

*“VRWA Adds New Wastewater Position”
continued from cover*

“VRWA 2017 Conference ” continued from cover

Amy Galford and Ben Montross (VT DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division), and Steven LaRosa, (Weston and Sampson).

At the business meeting VRWA President Ed Savage reported the 2016 audit was complete and resulted in an unqualified opinion and clean report for the association. VRWA honored many long time members and we were lucky enough to have ANR Secretary Julie Moore join us to offer our keynote address. She honed in on the importance of asset planning and its importance in long-term sustainability, a very pertinent subject for sure. We presented our annual Tony Torchia Award to Dick Pratt (recently retired from Champlain Water District). Dick’s wife Anne was able to join us as well as many CWD employees who were fortunate enough to work with Dick over a long and successful career.

Thanks to all our sponsors including, Platinum level – E.J. Prescott, Ferguson Waterworks, Otter Creek Engineering, and Weston and Sampson. Gold sponsors – DN Tanks, HD Supply, Ti-SALES. Silver Sponsors, Associated Electro-Mechanics, Ford Meter Box, Presby Environmental, Surpass Chemical.

Andy Sicard (Barton Village) won the meter toss sponsored by HD Supply and received the ratchet set prize. VRWA raffle ticket award winners were, 1st prize Keith Arlund, 2nd prize Steven Bartlett and 3rd prize to Craig Peletier. In addition our online training partner Suncoast Learning Systems donated three online training courses and the winners were, Everett Windover (Culligan), Bryan Longe and Jesse Wilkesman (both of Stowe wastewater).

All at VRWA look forward to the 2018 event back at the Lake Morey Resort and please mark your calendars we are scheduled for May 9 and 10, 2018. ●

years I was Water/Wastewater Superintendent for the Town of Randolph seeing them through construction and initial start-up of a new SBR treatment plant along with several other projects.

As most operators know you never stop learning new information about the operation and management of your facilities. I hope to provide operators and managers with tools, resources and knowledge to keep up with what is necessary to successfully operate and maintain your systems. This position will add to and compliment the training and technical assistance Wayne Graham provides and clearly will be a team effort.

Please feel free to contact myself or Wayne with any ideas you may have in regards to training and technical assistance. I look forward to working with you. ●



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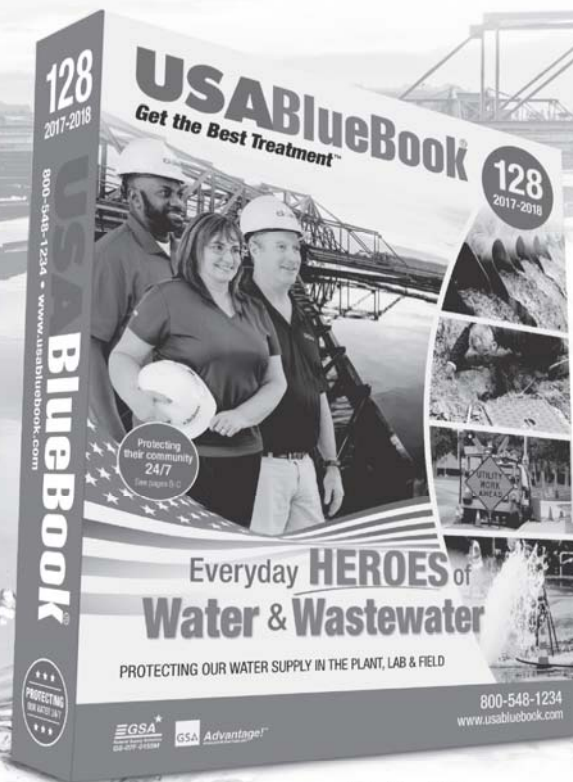
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