

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE UTILITY OPERATOR CERTIFICATION ACT

Most of you have heard the rumor that NMED is going to raise testing and certificate renewal fees. NMED's proposal has resulted in many questions from operators and utilities regarding the proposed amendments. Since some of the rumors have gotten a little wild, this article is an attempt to help answer some questions.

Q: What is NMED Certification Office proposing?

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)/ Operator Certification Program has developed proposed amendments to the Utility Operator Certification Act that will be introduced during the 2004 New Mexico legislative session. The amendments improve NMED's ability to consistently apply the provisions of the Act. They also amend the current fee structure so that collected fees support programmatic operations of the Surface Water Quality Bureau Facility Operations Section (SWQB FOS)... better know to operators as the Certification Office.

Q: Why are the amendments necessary?

The Utility Operator Certification Act remains essentially unchanged since 1972. The proposed amendments retain the original emphasis on protection of public health, the environment, and infrastructure investments through ongoing training and certification of the State's water and wastewater utility operators.

These amendments were developed through a stakeholder-based workgroup made up of representatives of NMED, New Mexico Rural Water Association (NMRWA), the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), the New Mexico Utility Operator Advisory Board (NMUOCB), the New Mexico

Municipal League (NMML), and the New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association (NMWWA). The workgroup met periodically over the last year to develop proposed amendments that are reasonable and necessary and will benefit utility operators and the general public.

Q: Is NMED increasing fees to \$200 per exam?

NO. The proposed amendments to the statute only set *maximum* fees that can be charged and are based on a 30-year projection. The actual fees that will be charged are promulgated by the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) and are set forth by regulation, not by statute. The current fees for exams and certificate renewal are \$15 across the board. Current regulations have established a 3-year certificate renewal cycle, and there is no proposed change to that renewal cycle.

The workgroup developed a sliding fee schedule that would be adopted through a regulation development hearing before the WQCC and will include an opportunity for public comment/testimony. The proposed fee schedule is summarized in the adjoining table and the details are posted on the New Mexico Facility Operator Web Site at: <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/fostop.html>

Q: Is there a limitation on the magnitude of the fee increase that can be adopted by the WQCC?

The proposed statute amendments *limit the initial increase* that the WQCC can adopt, and further limit fee increases to a *maximum of 10% annually* thereafter. Based on past

Proposed Level	Fee Changes	
	Exam	Renewal ¹
SW, SWA, SWW, SWWA	\$25.00	\$20.00
Level 1 & 2	\$35.00	\$25.00
Level 3 & 4	\$50.00 ²	\$35.00

¹Fees are based on a 3-year renewal cycle.
²Fees by statute may not exceed \$50 maximum in the first year.

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experience (i.e. the current fee schedule has been in place and unchanged for 20 years), NMED anticipates that fee increases will not occur on an annual basis. So in reality, starting with July 2004 as the earliest date that the fee change could come into effect, the \$200 cap for all levels of certification as well as the operator exam fee could not be reached until 2020. And even that date is dependent on the fees being raised a maximum of 10% every year.

“The Facility Operations Section and the Environment Department have no intention of returning to the commission for a fee increase for at least 3 years after these proposed fees are set in place...so that wouldn't be until 2007 at the earliest.”

Mike Coffman

directly support program operations, that in turn support operators. However, the fee schedule as proposed will only provide approximately 20% of the annual budget of the Operator Certification Program. NMED is currently seeking additional funds to pay for the remaining 80% of Utility Operator Certification Program costs. Without a dedicated funding source, this program will **not** be able to sustain the level of service it currently provides.

Q: Will we start to lose operators due to the high cost of test fees, and renewals?

Actually, if you compare New Mexico's test and renewal fees with other states, our fees are currently very low at \$15 per exam and \$15 for a 3-year certificate renewal (that's only \$5 per year). Even when you factor in the proposed increases, we are below the national average. Take a look at the fees in some other states.

	Exam ¹	Renewal ²
Oklahoma	\$130	\$90
Colorado	\$85	\$60
Arizona	\$70	\$25
Texas	\$105	\$20-\$80
Utah	\$70	\$50
Oregon	\$205	\$40
Washington	\$157	\$93
Montana	\$240	none
Tennessee	\$180	\$50
Missouri	\$135	\$45
Arkansas	\$100	\$60
Florida	\$340	\$120
Louisiana	\$275	\$75

¹Fees may include a mandatory application fee as well as an exam fee.
²All Certificate renewals are based on a 3-year cycle.

Q: If the fees go up and I just paid for my renewal, do I have to pay more money?

No. Renewal cycles are based on the date of your first certification. You will not be liable for increased fees until your certificate(s) is due for renewal.

Q: Do fees currently support the Operator Certification Program? How will the proposed amendments change the level of support provided to the program? Do they really need all that money?

Currently the Utility Operator Certification Act requires that all fees be deposited to the State's General Fund. This means that fees paid by utility operators are *not* currently earmarked to support the Operator Certification Program. In fact, the program has not received General Fund monies to support its operations since 1996 and has operated without a dedicated funding source for the last 2 years.

The proposed amendments will ensure that utility operator fees

Q: What kinds of activities will the fees support?

The proposed fees will support general service and supply line items for the Certification office, such as printing certificates, training materials, and postage to mail operators their certificate renewal statements. They will pay for some on-line training materials and website support including computer hardware and software to maintain the operator database. Travel expenses for operator testing sessions will also be covered. These fees will help the certification office to provide: training credit and certification tracking, evaluation and approval of training courses, free on-line training, and eleven (11) exam sessions per year. Most other states provide only 1 or 2 exam per year.

Depending on the fees collected, the fees *may* pay for Certification Office salaries, or contracts to external training providers. For example, this newsletter is published with monies that are contracted to WUTAP; WUTAP instructors are able to provide training at NMWWA schools through an FOS contract; the NMWWA TOMS training sessions were paid for by a previous FOS contract.

Q: Why should operators support these changes?

First and foremost - To protect the public health, taxpayer investments, and the environment. A strong Operator Certification Act strengthens the requirement on municipalities to hire certified operators.

Second - To secure the flow of Federal funds into New Mexico. If there is no EPA approved certification program in the State of New Mexico, 20% of the Federal funds earmarked for distribution in New Mexico's State Revolving Loan could be withheld. These monies are used to upgrade and build water and wastewater facilities for municipalities throughout the State.

Third - Maintaining the relationship of operator reciprocity. NM licenses have reciprocity with almost every other state in the US. The only exclusions are from states that do not offer reciprocity to *ANY* other state or those that refuse reciprocity to NM because NM does not accept the license of their state. (New Mexico will not accept the license of an operator coming from a state that does not meet our high standards of operator training.)

Q: What's Next?

Once the proposed amendments are accepted during the 2004 legislative session, and the statutes adopted, the NMED will propose regulation changes to align with the adopted statutes. At this time the fees will be set by the WQCC as proposed by the stakeholder based workgroup. This is projected for some time in 2005.

HIGH OPERATOR STANDARDS A DOUBLE EDGED SWORD

By Cathie R. Eisen

The Water/Wastewater field is a fabulous opportunity for anyone who is pursuing an interesting trade. One of the benefits of the field is the requirement for each individual to continue their education. A second benefit is the ongoing opportunity for advancement.

Due to the requirement that a certified operator be employed by nearly every system in New Mexico, municipalities have a constant demand for qualified people. In a State that has a reputation for high certification standards, it is these very standards that create a difficult situation. Because water and wastewater opportunities are nationwide and even worldwide.

The question came up recently. "Why are so many operators leaving the State of New Mexico?" As one of the individuals who has come close to doing just that, I can say that much of it has to do with the attitudes of our employers as well as the lack of benefits, support, and pay in relation to our qualifications. Once a person has attained the higher levels of certification, the offers that we receive from both the private and the public sectors make it hard not to look towards greener pastures. For most of the operators to stay on in our rural communities, it must be a "Labor of Love" as opposed to a financial pursuit. Unless we have the support and the recognition that we need to keep our hearts in it, we will eventually be led to look for better positions in other states.

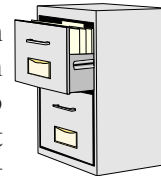
If I were to offer a solution I would not recommend a lower standard of certification for our operators, but rather a higher degree of education and awareness on the part the administrators. This might increase their respect and appreciation for the people that they depend on to provide their most important services, supporting and maintain the community's most expensive infrastructure investment.

Although being paid well for your work is amongst most people's priorities, the appreciation shown by our employers and the communities that we work for is of equal bearing for many of us. I for one would much rather live and work in a small town that is grateful to have me there and supportive of my efforts, rather than live in a big city where no one even knows who I am. It is the beauty of this state and it's wonderful people that has, so far, kept me here.

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION NEWS

Operator Exams

Any operator who fails an examination more than once, should request an examination review within 60 days of notification of having failed. No reviews will be given within 30 days of the next examination. Reviews will be scheduled on a first come/first served basis, as staff time allows.



Certification Renewals

The FOS program for renewal training credits has occasional problems. Sometimes your form may not have the correct number of hours listed on it. Please be sure to keep good personal records. If you are renewing your certification please send a copy of your training certificates along with your renewal form, and be aware that at least 30 hours must be submitted for your renewal to be processed.

NMED/Facility Operations Web Site

What's new at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/fostop.html ?

Basic training for small water is offered for 13 credit hours and is free; Sanitary Survey training is offered for credits hours, and the water study guide is available for downloading. You can link to the NMRWA and NMWWA for other training opportunities.

Applications can be downloaded and you can check the schedule for exam dates. Current and proposed regulations are available for your review. We plan to expand the site and hope to be able to post training credits hours, examination results, and application status for individual operators in the future. Let us know what you want.

Proposed Amendments to the New Mexico Utility Operator Certification Act

The proposed amendments and fee structure are posted on the NMED web site. Please check it out and if you have any question or comments let us know. It is time to stand and be counted for you all do to support New Mexico's public health and environment.

2004 UTILITY OPERATOR CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

Application Deadline	Exam Date	Location	Event
01/02/04	1/30/04	Las Cruces	NMWWA Annual Short School
02/24/04	3/25/04	Albuquerque	NMRWA Annual Conference
03/24/04	4/23/04	Farmington	NMWWA NW Section Workshop
04/28/04	5/28/04	Las Vegas	NMWWA Northern Short School
05/12/04	6/11/04	Ruidoso	NMWWA SW Section Workshop
06/09/04	7/09/04	Gallup	NMWWA WC Section Workshop
07/07/04	8/06/04	Carlsbad	NMWWA SE Section Workshop
08/18/04	9/17/04	Albuquerque	NMWWA Central Short School
09/15/04	10/15/04	Espanola	NMWWA NE Section Workshop
10/6/04	11/5/04	Albuquerque	NMWWA CT Section Workshop
11/03/04	12/03/04	Tucumcari	NMSU WUTAP Workshop

Download a current application form at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/fostop.html or call FOS at (505) 827-2804. Applications must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the examination date and must be accompanied by payment in check or money order. Test dates and locations are subject to change.

2003 NEW MEXICO TRAINING CALENDAR 2003

OCTOBER

NMWWA NORTHEAST SECTION WORKSHOP

TOPICS: Levels 1 – 2, Basic water & wastewater

DATE: October 15-16, Wednesday & Thursday

TIMES: 7:30 to 4:00 each day

LOCATION: Espanola, National Guard Armory,
705 Industrial Park

REGISTRATION: \$80, members; \$100, non-members

Advanced registration is requested

CREDITS: 13 hours

CONTACT: David Salazar, 667-6904

NMED EXAM: October 17, 8 to 2:30.

Submit your test application by Sept. 17th at the latest.

NMSU WUTAP WORKSHOPS —

■ BASIC WATER SYSTEMS

TOPICS: water characteristics, disinfection, distribution, wells

DATE: October 15, Wednesday

■ BASIC & ADVANCED WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

TOPICS: wastewater characteristics, lagoons, trickling filters &
RBCs, activated sludge

DATE: October 16, Thursday

TIMES: 8-5, both days

LOCATION: Clovis, Clovis Community College, Rm 104

REGISTRATION: \$100 for both workshops or \$55 for one workshop.

Advanced registration is requested

CREDITS: 7 hours per day

CONTACT: NMSU WUTAP, 505-984-0676, FAX 982-3137;

e-mail wutap@qwest.net

NOVEMBER

NMWWA NORTHWEST SECTION WORKSHOPS

TOPICS: Levels 1 & 2, Basic & Adv. Water & Wastewater

DATES: November 3-4, Monday & Tuesday

TIMES: 8 to 4, each day

LOCATION: Bloomfield Multi-Cultural Center

REGISTRATION: \$50, members; \$75, non-members

Advanced registration is requested.

CONTACT: Cindy Huntsman, 505-334-8684

CREDITS: 13 hours

NMRWA TRAINING — WW LAB TRAINING (BOD,TSS,FC)

DATE: November 6-7

LOCATION: Roswell WWTP

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031

RAGSDALE & ASSOCIATES WORKSHOP —

ADVANCED WATER CERTIFICATION

TOPICS: level 3 & 4 water certification

DATE: November 12-14, 2003, Wednesday - Friday

LOCATION: Albuquerque - TVI Workforce Training Center

REGISTRATION: \$200 - *Pre-Registration Required*

CREDITS: 21 hours

CONTACT: F. Ragsdale, 293-465, fredragsdale@comcast.net

NMRWA TRAINING — SMALL WATER O & M

DATE: November 12-13

LOCATION: Bayard Community Center

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031

NMSU WUTAP WORKSHOPS —

■ BASIC & ADVANCED WATER SYSTEMS

TOPICS: water characteristics, disinfection, distribution, wells,
surface water treatment

DATE: November 19, Wednesday

■ BASIC & ADVANCED WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

TOPICS: wastewater characteristics, lagoons, disinfection,
collections, secondary treatment

DATE: November 20, Thursday

TIMES: 8-5, both days

LOCATION: Cimarron, Philmont Boy Scout Ranch

REGISTRATION: \$100 for both workshops or \$55 for one workshop.

Advanced registration is requested

CREDITS: 7 hours per day

CONTACT: NMSU WUTAP, 505-984-0676, FAX 982-3137

NMED EXAM: November 21, 8 to 2:30. *Submit your test
application by October 22nd at the latest.*

DECEMBER

NMRWA TRAINING — SMALL WATER O & M

DATE: December 10-11

LOCATION: Hobbs TBA

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031,
800-819-9893, FAX 505-884-1031, www.nmrwa.org

JANUARY

NMRWA TRAINING — SMALL WATER O & M

DATE: January 7-8, Wednesday & Thursday

LOCATION: Tucumcari Convention Center

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031

NMSU WUTAP WORKSHOP — HOMELAND SECURITY

TOPICS: historical overview & case studies, chemical & biological
agents, procedures & solutions for protection and detection

DATE: January 13, 2004, Tuesday

TIME: 8-5

LOCATION: Albuquerque, TVI Workforce Training Center,
5600 Eagle Rock Ave. NE, Rm. 106

REGISTRATION: free of charge, but *Preregistration is required.*

2004 NEW MEXICO TRAINING CALENDAR 2004

CREDITS: 6 hours

CONTACT: NMSU WUTAP, 505-984-0676, FAX 982-3137;
e-mail wutap@qwest.net

RAGSDALE & ASSOCIATES WORKSHOP — ADVANCED WATER CERTIFICATION

TOPICS: level 3 & 4 water certification

DATE: January 13-15, 2004, Tuesday-Thursday

LOCATION: Albuquerque - TVI Workforce Training Center,
5600 Eagle Rock Ave. NE

REGISTRATION: \$200 - **Pre-Registration Required**

CREDITS: 21 hours

CONTACT: Fred Ragsdale, 505-293-4658
e-mail: fredragsdale@comcast.net

NMRWA TRAINING — INTRO TO WW SYSTEMS

DATE: January 14-15, Wednesday & Thursday

LOCATION: White Rock, Baptist Church & WWTP

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031,
www.nmrwa.org

NMWWA ANNUAL SCHOOL

TOPICS: This general water & wastewater operations
workshop is for both basic and advanced, Levels 1-4.
Includes special workshops.

DATES: January 26-29, Monday through Thursday

TIMES: 8 to 5 each day [26 hours credit]

LOCATION: Las Cruces, Hilton Hotel, 705 Telshor Blvd.

REGISTRATION: \$200 for members, \$250 for non-members.

Advance registration is required for all classes.

CONTACT: NMWWA, Caroline Martinez,
505-753-8840, FAX 505-753-9810

CREDITS: 26 hours

NMED EXAM: January 30, 8 to 2:30.

Submit your test application by Jan. 2nd at the latest.

FEBRUARY

NMRWA TRAINING — SMALL WATER O & M

DATE: February 18-19, Wednesday & Thursday

LOCATION: Ruidoso Convention Center

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031,
www.nmrwa.org

MARCH

NMSU WUTAP WORKSHOPS —

■ SURFACE WATER SYSTEMS

TOPICS: water characteristics; surface water treatment -
coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation & filtration; jar

testing, alkalinity & pH testing

DATE: March 10, Wednesday

■ HOMELAND SECURITY

TOPICS: historical overview of water sabotage, terrorism case
studies, chemical & biological agents, areas to protect,
procedures to follow, solutions for protection and detection

DATE: March 11, Thursday

LOCATION: Alamogordo, NMSU @ Alamogordo, 2400 North
Scenic Drive

REGISTRATION: \$55 for Surface Water; Homeland Security is
free. **Advanced registration is required**

CREDITS: 7 hours per day

CONTACT: NMSU WUTAP, 505-984-0676, FAX 982-3137

NMRWA TRAINING — ANNUAL CONFERENCE

DATE: March 22-24, Monday-Wednesday

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031,
www.nmrwa.org

NMED EXAM: March 25, 8 to 2:30.

Submit your test application by Feb, 24th at the latest.

APRIL

NMWWA NORTHWEST SECTION WORKSHOPS

TOPICS: Levels 1 & 2, Basic & Adv. Water & Wastewater

DATES: April 20-22, Tuesday through Thursday

TIMES: 8 to 5, each day

LOCATION: Farmington, San Juan College. 4601 College Blvd.

REGISTRATION: \$100, members; \$130, non-members

Advanced registration is requested.

CONTACT: Cindy Huntsman, 505-334-8684

CREDITS: 20 hours

NMED EXAM: April 23, 8 to 2:30.

Submit your test application by March 24th at the latest.

NMSU WUTAP WORKSHOP — NPDES LABORATORY PARAMETERS & QA/QC

TOPICS: Standard Methods update, BOD, pH, TRC, Fecal
Coliform, TSS, & troubleshooting

DATE: April 21-22, Wednesday & Thursday

LOCATION: Socorro, Holiday Inn Express (1100 N California)
& Wastewater Treatment Plant Laboratory

REGISTRATION: \$150. **Pre-Registration is Required.**

CREDITS: 13 hours

CONTACT: NMSU WUTAP, 505-984-0676, FAX 982-3137;
e-mail wutap@qwest.net

NMRWA TRAINING — SMALL WATER O & M

DATE: April 28-29, Wednesday & Thursday

LOCATION: Truth or Consequences Civic Center

CONTACT: N.M. Rural Water Association, 505-884-1031,
www.nmrwa.org

ON-GOING TRAINING

RAGSDALE & ASSOCIATES

SERVICES: on-site training, plant start-ups, O&M trouble shooting, technical assistance

CONTACT: F. Ragsdale 505-293-4658; fredragsdale@comcast.net

MEC TECH SERVICES

SERVICES: On-site training, technical support, on-site lab services

CONTACT: N. Mangin, 505-896-8018;

nicole@mectechservices.com; www.mectechservices.com

NM MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SECTION AWWA/WEA

DATES: 4th Tuesday of each month

TIMES: 11:45 AM to 1 PM

LOCATION: Furr's Family Dining, 109 Montgomery

CONTACT: Joel Rife, 505-243-3200

SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE WATER TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM COURSE UPDATE

The Water Technology program at Santa Fe Community College continues to grow. The program began in the spring 2003 semester with 2 courses: **WWTT 120 Introduction to Wastewater Collection and Treatment** and **WWTT 140 Introduction to Water Treatment and Distribution Systems**. Students came from all over Northern New Mexico, from as far as Cleveland & Dixon. These same two courses are being offered during the fall 2003 semester along with an additional course, **WWTT 112 Math for Water and Wastewater**.

All three courses are a combination of ON-LINE & ON-CAMPUS delivery. Students in each class meet 4 Saturdays from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm at the SFCC campus. These meetings provide students with direct access to instructors who are professionals working in the water & wastewater field.

The ON-LINE aspect of the course allows students to access the course from their computers at home or work & follow the textbook reading assignments, discussions, and quizzes outlined on the course website. Students can contact the instructor and/or other students with questions & discussion through the course website. Instructors monitor student progress weekly.

Many students are working toward a Certificate in Water Technology, & some are preparing for the State Level 1 and 2 Certification Exams. Other students are interested in achieving an associate's degree, & SFCC is working to meet that educational goal.

These SFCC courses can be used for certification renewal credits at a rate of 10 certification credits for each college credit. With each course offering 3 college credits, this can provide some operators an alternative for obtaining renewal credits.

For more information about the program, visit the website at www.sfccnm.edu/water or contact Carl Shearer at 505/428-1406.

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NMED ADOPTS NEW WASTEWATER REUSE POLICY

The New Mexico Environment Department adopted a revised policy for domestic wastewater reuse entitled the *New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Policy for the Above Ground Use of Reclaimed Domestic Wastewater* on August 7, 2003. The policy replaces the 1985 document entitled NMEID Policy for the Use of Domestic Wastewater for Irrigation, which had become outdated with respect to current knowledge about wastewater reuse. The formulation of the new policy incorporated input from a wide variety of viewpoints, including members of the public, the municipal league, the regulated community, the State Department of Health, the State Environment Department, WUTAP, and consultants. It was widely distributed in draft form in March 2003 for review and comment. In preparing the final Policy, NMED addressed many of the comments received.

The policy will be utilized to evaluate renewal & modifications of existing ground water discharge permits & proposed new discharges. The standards found within the policy were selected to protect public health and allow a variety of uses recognizing that water supplies in New Mexico are limited and use of reclaimed domestic wastewater is necessary to preserve potable water supplies. Where significant public contact with reclaimed wastewater is likely, high standards for treatment are applied. Adherence to the policy will allow the citizens of New Mexico to safely enjoy the benefits of a reliable source of water in landscapes, agriculture, and other useful applications.

Ground water discharge permit applications for *new facilities* which discharge domestic wastewater for above ground reuse should propose effluent quality & monitoring which meet or exceed the standards of the new policy. *Existing facilities* discharging wastewater for above ground reuse should plan to come into compliance prior to the date of their permit renewal or future modification. If you have questions regarding the new policy contact Fred Kalish at 827-2713 or the technical reviewer for your discharge permit at 827-2900. Or take a look at the policy by visiting the Groundwater Quality Bureau website: www.nmenv.state.nm.us/gwb/gwqbhome.html. Scroll down to the policy section where you will find "Policy for the Above Ground Use of Reclaimed Domestic Wastewater"

NEW MEXICO WATER & WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION

2004 ANNUAL SHORT SCHOOL - PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Annual Short School
January 27-30, 2004
Las Cruces Hilton Hotel
705 Telshor Blvd.
Las Cruces, NM

IMPORTANT:

Payment in full must accompany this form or it will not be processed. Please call for payment arrangements. Student enrollment in any given category is limited to the number specified for that category. Pre-registration is on a "first come - first served" basis. There will be *NO* registration at the door. Registration confirmation will *NOT* be sent. Call (505)753-8840 to confirm registration. Refunds apply *ONLY* if cancellation instructions are received one week before the short school. There will be a \$25 processing fee for all cancellations or substitutions. Fax: 505-753-9810

NAME: _____ **SOCIAL SECURITY #:** _____
HOME ADDRESS: _____ **CITY:** _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____
EMPLOYED BY: _____ **EMPLOYER PHONE #:** _____
ARE YOU A MEMBER OF NEW MEXICO WATER & WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION: YES NO
ARE YOU CURRENTLY CERTIFIED: YES NO

REGISTRATION FEES: (mark what you are paying for)

Member Fee: \$200 _____
Non-Member Fee: \$250 _____

NMWWA State & Section Dues (if not yet paid):

Active \$30 _____
Corporate \$28 _____
Associate \$25 _____
Student \$20 _____
TOTAL \$ _____

CLASSES:

You MUST mark the *category* of classes that you will be attending in order for this form to be complete.

You may attend one or two categories of classes. 26 credits each category:

ENROLLMENT	CATEGORY	_____
55 people	Basic Water (I-II)	_____
55 people	Basic Wastewater (I-II)	_____
55 people	Adv. Water (III-IV)	_____
55 people	Adv. Wastewater (III-IV)	_____
55 people	Workshops (III-IV)	_____

Make check payable to:

N.M. Water & Wastewater Association

Mail form & check to:

Caroline Martinez, Executive Manager
 P.O. Box 819
 Española, NM 87532

Preregistration Deadline:

January 21, 2004

Accommodations:

NOTE: Make your motel reservations *Before January 8*, to insure you get a room. Mention that you are with NMWWA to get these rates:

- **The Hilton** 705 Telshor Blvd. 1-505-522-4300
61 single, \$61 double
- **Mesilla Valley Inn** 901 Avenida De Mesilla 1-800-327-3314
\$42 single, \$50 double
- **Super 8** 245 La Posada Lane 1-505-523-8695
\$36 single, \$40 double

NMWWA PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Eric Lopez

In October, Caroline Martinez will have been Executive Manager of the NMWWA for 30 years. She has been and continues to be the backbone of this Association. To honor her for her continued years of service, during the Awards Banquet the members of the NMWWA and the officers of the Executive Board will be honoring her by changing the "Outstanding Achievement Award" to the "**Caroline Martinez Award**". As in the past, this Award will be presented to an individual or facility that demonstrates a significant achievement or accomplishment....just as her service has been significant to the Association. We hope to have another 10-15 years of service from Caroline.

On another note, the time has come to elect new officers to the NMWWA Executive Board. I encourage more operators in the water and

wastewater field to get involved in the Association. There are changes that are occurring throughout our field and the only way to have a say in the changes is to get involved. One way to make a difference is to get out there as experienced and knowledgeable operators and share that knowledge with other operators through the schools that the Association and its Sections provide on a yearly basis.

My term as NMWWA President will be coming to an end in January and I would like to take this time to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity to serve you in this capacity. We must remember where we were, and how far we have come in the profession of water and wastewater operations. In order for the profession and the Association to continue to move forward we must be ready to accept change and work with the changes to make a difference. As I stated last January at the Annual Banquet, we are the work force that is the most under-rated but we are the ones that touch the most lives with the service we provide.

OPERATOR SPOTLIGHT - CAS RUYBALID

Cas Ruybalid was hired on as summer help for the City of Aztec in 1970. Throughout the 1970's he took classes and studied on his own, constantly upgrading his certification until he obtained both water and wastewater Level IV certifications in 1976. During this time he was also very active in the Northwest Section, teaching classes for section schools and serving in various positions on the board. He worked for the City of Bloomfield and did a short stint at the San Juan Generating Station as a water analyst. In 1979 he returned to the City of Bloomfield as the Superintendent of Water and Sewer.

During the 1980's and 90's he continued to volunteer his services to operator associations. Cas has held numerous offices, both on a section and state level, culminating with a 1999 term as President of the NM Water & Wastewater Association. He also represented his fellow operators during a 3-year term on the State Operator Certification Advisory Board. He has offered his services as an instructor to the Water and Wastewater Association as well as NM Rural Water Association.

During his watch, the Town of Bloomfield has garnered numerous awards from NMWWA, including the Good Housekeeping and Max Summerlot Awards. And Cas was presented the John Clark Award in 1999 for outstanding service to the Association. Cas plans to retire in June, 2004. He'll be doing a lot of camping and fly fishing on the San Juan and since he's a big race fan, he and his wife will be traveling to different tracks to watch the races.



NMWWA MONTHLY SECTION MEETINGS

- Southeast Section
 - ⊕ 1st Wednesday, rotating
 - ☎ Mark Earnest, 505-624-6731
- Southwest Section
 - ⊕ 3rd Wednesday, Las Cruces
 - ☎ Mario Gonzales, 505-642-8312
- West Central Section
 - ⊕ 4th Wednesday, Gallup
 - ☎ Ray Espinoza, 505-863-1210
- Central Section
 - ⊕ 1st Monday, Albuquerque
 - ☎ John Kelley, 505-857-8286
- Northeast Section
 - ⊕ 2nd Monday, rotating
 - ☎ David Salazar, 505-667-6904
- Northwest Section
 - ⊕ 1st Thursday, rotating
 - ☎ Cindy Huntsman, 505-334-8684