

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
STATE BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF
WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS OPERATORS**

**Board Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2025
Room 105 / Teams Call**

Board Members Present

Mary Roland, Board Chairperson, Certified Water Operator (via Teams)
Mike Kyle, Certified Wastewater Operator (via Teams)
Mark Smith, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc., General Public (via Teams)
Jeff Bickel, Aqua PA, Inc., Official of Private System (via Teams)
Autumn Crawford, Western Butler County Authority, Employee of a Political Subdivision (via Teams)
Heath Edelman, Thaddeus Stevens College, Teaching Staff (via Teams)
Ed Chescattie, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water (BSDW), DEP Secretary Designee (via Teams)

Non-Board Members Present

Laura Chambers, Board Secretary
Bill McNamara, BSDW (via Teams)
Shalini Moola, BSDW
Mahendra Patel, BSDW
Jeff Schultz, BSDW
John Cantwell, Legal Counsel to the Board (via Teams)
Kevin Buss, BCW
Victor Landis, BCW
Lori Weaver, BSDW
Bill King, BSDW
Jill Anderson, BSDW
Jen DiGilarimo, BCW
Brian Chalfant, Policy Office (via Teams)
Leda Lacomba, BRC (via Teams)
Brad Baker, BSDW (via Teams)
Jeff Allgyer, BSDW (via Teams)

Public Present

Matthew Buck, Government Relations Associate, Pennsylvania Municipalities Authorities Association (PMAA) (via Teams)
Jenny Shade, Senior Director of Government Relations, PMAA (via Teams)

Meeting was called to order at 10:02am.

Approval of December 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Kyle motioned to approve the December 11, 2024, meeting minutes including the minor edits provided. Chairperson Roland seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New and Upgrade Applications

Ms. Chambers presented the following new and upgraded licenses for Board consideration:

- 87 new water licenses
- 45 upgraded water licenses
- 60 new wastewater licenses
- 22 upgraded wastewater licenses
- 6 Operator in Training (OIT) upgrades

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve all the new and upgraded license applications. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Downgrade

Operator 293790, Eric Barton – holds a **WWA,E-1,4 license that expires on December 31, 2025 and is requesting to downgrade to a WWE4 (Collections) license**. The system where he works (PWS 02598, LAFAYETTE TWP SEW AUTH) is a **WWE4 (Collections)** system.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 293790 downgrade to WWE4 certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Reciprocity Requests

Water

Andrew Cavins – Holds a Virginia Class 2 drinking water license that was issued on January 18, 2023, and expires on February 28, 2025. His application documents a total of 2 years and 2 months of experience working at Carfax Water Plant water system, which DEP determined is a Class B system using subclasses 1,7,8,12 and distribution.

Mr. Cavins's experience was obtained at a Class B system and an operator is required to have 2 years of experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class C license. Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed the Class II drinking water exam developed by WPI and administered by the state of Virginia. The Class II exam includes questions relative to subclasses 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12 and distribution.

The Department's determination for Board consideration is that Mr. Cavins has documented the adequate experience and exams relative to a WC-1,7,8,12 and distribution.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Mr. Cavins for WC,E-1,7,8,12 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Wastewater

Edmond Pisani – Holds a New Jersey S1 Public Wastewater license that was issued on July 23, 2024, and expires on September 30, 2025. Applicant holds a Pennsylvania Collections license, which was obtained on February 6, 2009, and expires on June 30, 2027. His application documents a total of 15 years of experience working at Delaware County Regional Water Authority in PA, which DEP determined is a Class A system using subclass 1 and Collections.

Mr. Pisani's experience was obtained at a Class A system and an operator is required to have 4 years of experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class A license. Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed the S1 wastewater exams developed by WPI and administered by the state of New Jersey. The S1 wastewater exam includes questions relative to subclass 1 (activated sludge).

The Department's determination for Board consideration is that Mr. Pisani has documented the adequate experience and exams relative to a WWA-1.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Mr. Pisani for WWA-1 certification. Mr. Edelman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Secretary Report

Ms. Chambers shared that the 2025 exam schedule has been finalized and posted on DEP's website and provided the following summary:

- Number of exam sessions scheduled for 2025: 56
- Number of exam seats offered for 2025: 2,208
 - Total number of computer exams for 2025: 30
 - Total number of paper exams for 2025: 26

Chairperson Roland mentioned that the 2025 Board meeting dates and deadlines for receipt of applications have been posted on DEP's website.

Old and New Business

Cybersecurity Preparedness – Mr. McNamara provided a brief update regarding cybersecurity preparedness. After some discussion, the Board agreed that DEP should request to have the cybersecurity information moved to the top of the Operator Certification webpage since it is not easily noticeable where it is currently located.

New Operator Recruitment – Mr. Chescattie suggested that DEP staff meet separately to brainstorm and prepare some better fleshed out ideas (e.g., a series of short videos) to present to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting in April. Chairperson Roland recommended that Mr. Bickel add recruitment as a potential agenda item for the upcoming Public Water Systems Technical Advisory Center (TAC) Board meeting. Mr. Chescattie suggested that all Operator Certification Board members who sit on other Boards or Committees for water and/or wastewater raise the point of recruitment so it can be more of a joint effort. Mr. Edelman asked whether the Board could do more to evaluate and identify patterns that inform its patterns or decision making. Mr. Chescattie said that DEP staff will work to put data together to present at the April Board meeting. Chairperson Roland suggested DEP create a survey for operators who have passed exams but have not applied for certification to attempt to gain insight as to why that is and what can be done to fill any existing gaps the survey might reveal.

Letter from Senator Kim – Chairperson Roland informed the Board of a letter from Senator Kim Ward regarding standard procedural requirements. It informs the Board that if DEP were to open the Chapter 302 regulations for revisions, the Committee on Environmental Resources and Energy will need to review the regulations. DEP will follow this on behalf of the Board. This type of letter is sent at the beginning of every legislative session.

Chairperson Roland motioned for Mr. Bickel to remain the primary Operator Certification Board representative on the TAC Board with Chairperson Roland remaining secondary. Mr. Edelman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned for Laura Chambers to continue serving as Operator Certification Board Secretary for the Board for 2025. Seconded by Mr. Kyle. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kyle motioned Mary Roland to continue serving as Chairperson of the Operator Certification Board. Seconded by Mr. Bickel. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Brad Baker asked whether the Board has ever worked with the US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to discuss recruiting military service members into the water/wastewater field. Mr. Chescattie explained that DEP has a special process in place for applicants who have military experience and suggested that DEP staff incorporate a question in the previously discussed survey to determine whether our service members are aware that the drinking water/wastewater industry is a potential career path for them, given their applicable experience.

The Board went into Executive Session at 11:10am to review 11 criminal history applications and one ADA request.

The Board reconvened for public session at 12:01pm.

Extension Request

No extension requests were received for this Board meeting.

Criminal History Report

Criminal History Review Evaluations were conducted for the below applicants. It has been confirmed that charges were not related to the operation of a drinking water or wastewater treatment system. Therefore, the preliminary review committee recommended the below applicants for presentation and approval at the February 12, 2025, Board Meeting:

1. Operator 372973: WE certification
2. Operator 375552: WWC-1 certification
3. Operator 386253: WE certification
4. Operator 388676: WE certification
5. Operator 373675: WA,E – 1,2,8 certification
6. Operator 386731: WWE4 certification
7. Operator 380459: WWA1 certification
8. Operator 389017: WWD, E – 1,4 certification
9. Operator 386570: WWE4 certification

10. Operator 388850: WWA,E – 1,4 certification

11. Operator 388661: WWE4 certification

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 372973 WE certification. Mr. Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 375552 WWC-1 certification. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 386253 WE certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 388676 WE certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 373675 WA,E – 1,2,8 certification. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 386731 WWE4 certification. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 380459 WWA-1 certification. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 389017 WWD, E – 1,4 certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 386570 WWE4 certification. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 388850 WWA,E – 1,4 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 388661 WWE4 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ADA Requests

Operator 375675 – Submitted an ADA request on December 16, 2024, requesting that someone read operator certification exams to him due to his medical condition specified within the ADA request form.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Client ID 375675 ADA request for a one-time accommodation for one test session lasting up to four hours to read test questions verbatim for exam or exams that are identified in advance for the session via the operator exam registration form. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to adjourn. Ms. Crawford seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm.