



# Partnership for Safe Water

*Optimizing surface water treatment plant performance*

## Membership Benefits

The *Partnership for Safe Water* was opened for membership starting in 1995. Since that time, more than 500 treatment plants have joined the program. Many of the “founding” plants are still involved actively in the program. Some plants have only joined recently. Utility managers periodically inquire about the benefits of continuing to participate in the *Partnership*. Below is a short description of the benefits to utilities of membership in the *Partnership*. Use this description to help management understand the value of continuing participation in the *Partnership for Safe Water*.

The benefits to participating utilities fall into five broad categories:

**Improved water quality**  
**Recognition**  
**Regulator confidence**  
**Consumer confidence and community support**  
**Employee support**

**Improved Water Quality:** *Partnership utilities report performance improvement without major capital expenditures.*

- *Annual report finished water data (6/1/03 – 5/31/04) revealed that 48% of the plants reported that their monthly 95<sup>th</sup> percentile turbidity value was less than 0.10 NTU for all of the twelve months. Comparing this data with the baseline results, where only 22% of these plants reported this level of performance indicates that the program has lead to impressive improvements.*
- *Phase III award-winning plants compared “baseline” data with the most recent data (6/03 – 5/04). This comparison shows that (based on 95<sup>th</sup> percentile turbidity values) plant performance improved more than 50% following the Partnership self-assessment.*
- *More than 90% of the treatment plants participating in the program report finished water turbidity results less than 0.2 NTU 95% of the time.*
- *The program has proven effective for all size utilities. Utilities serving more than 100,000 comprise slightly more than 50% of the membership. But there are a growing number of smaller utilities that serve less than 18,000. The results from all utilities are the same; as the participants progress through the program, treatment plant performance improves.*

**Recognition:** As of February 2005, *Partnership* utility membership consisted of 232 utilities with 408 water treatment plants.

- *One hundred ninety-three plants have completed the self-assessment and have received the Phase III Directors Award recognition.*

- *Thirty-seven Phase III plants have maintained this status for five consecutive years and have received the Five-Year Directors Award of recognition.*
- *Three Partnership plants have achieved the Phase IV Excellence in Water Treatment Award – the highest level of plant performance in the program.*
- *More than 90% of the eligible utilities serving more than 700,000 are members of the Partnership and more than 30% of all the utilities serving between 35,000 and 700,000 are now members of the program. Participating treatment plants are identified as the best operated plants in the country.*

**Recognition by your Community and Customers:** Participation in the program demonstrates your commitment to quality and safety for consumers. Successful completion of the program earns awards to demonstrate your accomplishments to your community and can be cited in consumer confidence reports.

- *Phase III Directors Award plants submit data annually that is reviewed by a team of peers to maintain the integrity of the program. Award status is suspended for plants that do not maintain their performance level.*
- *The Partnership issues news releases to local media to recognize award-winning treatment plants.*
- *Members and award-winning utilities are recognized for their efforts in all AWWA publications (Journal, Opflow, MainStream) as well as other national publications throughout the year. A special awards ceremony takes place at the AWWA annual conference each year.*
- *The Partnership places notices for award-winning plants annually in national publications like U.S. Mayors and Nation's Cities. This raises awareness of your accomplishments among elected officials and community leaders.*

**Regulator Confidence:** The Partnership's technical materials and software help prepare utilities for more stringent *Cryptosporidium* removal regulatory requirements (LT2ESWTR). Participation in the program assures local, state and federal regulators that superior plant performance is your goal.

- *USEPA is an active partner in the program. This ensures both national and local recognition at the highest level. Partnership award-winning plants are identified as high performers by State regulatory administrators. All Partnership awards include the endorsement of the USEPA and the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators.*
- *Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is an excellent example of state support for the Partnership program. DEP has provided and will continue with public recognition and promotion for the state's 114 Partnership members. More importantly, DEP has trained staff in its field offices to help systems with the Partnership software as well as with any technical difficulties concerning the self-assessment procedures. The Pennsylvania Section, with support from the Partnership, succeeded in obtaining CEU credit for completion of Phase III from the Pennsylvania DEP. At the completion of Phase III, operators can apply for 20 CEU credits if they receive a satisfactory score on an assessment examination. This program is now being offered to all AWWA Sections and may lead to this CEU credit in more states.*
- *The Partnership is in the process of developing a national online course that qualifies for CEU credit. The course is based on Partnership optimization principles and, therefore, operators involved in Partnership plants should easily qualify for CEU credit needed for operator*

certification renewal. Operators in Partnership plants will be able to enroll in the course for a much reduced fee.

**Employee Support:** Employees of *Partnership* utilities demonstrate a sense of purpose and commitment to achieving high standards. Focusing on optimizing operations improves communication throughout the utility.

- *Water utility staff identify and prioritize performance limitations and implement actions to improve system performance and monitor the impact of the changes.*
- *Working on a self-assessment encourages input from all operations and administrative staff at the utility, which in turn fosters better communications among staff. See article in November 2004 Opflow "Much More Than a Turbidity Goal" by Ed Chescattie.*
- *Partnership logo apparel, pins, and hats are available to utilities as rewards and to recognize the efforts their employees make to achieve improved treatment plant performance.*

These important benefits coupled with the low annual fee for membership makes justifying continued membership in the *Partnership* for Safe Water easy. Please contact Bill Lauer, Program Manager (303-347-6220 or by email, blauer@awwa.org), if you have questions.

<b>Partnership for Safe Water</b>	
<b>Annual Fee Schedule</b>	
<b><i>Utility Population Served</i></b>	<b><i>Annual Fee (\$)</i></b>
>700,000	3,300
525,001-700,000	2,450
350,001-525,000	1,675
175,001-350,000	1,200
88,001-175,000	800
35,001-88,000	500
18,001-35,000	250
<18,000	50

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