



# BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

**Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, JUNE 18, 2019 - Regulations**

**Members in Attendance:** Paul Desrosiers, Frank McLynch, Bill Patenaude, and Jon Schock

**Others in Attendance:** Ed Davies, Quonset WWTF, Christina Hoefsmit, and Traci Pena, RIDEM

At 2:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order.

Note: This was a special meeting to discuss proposed amendments to the Regulations.

Mr. Desrosiers asked that the first item to be discussed be new business, as he wished to gather the Board's input about if an operator could get hired as an operator at another facility if he/she is removed from an operator's position elsewhere after exceeding the one-year operator in training period. Mr. Patenaude stated there was nothing in the Regulations that would not allow it. Board members generally agreed that based on what it understood of this hypothetical scenario, there would be no need to intervene unless the individual was re-hired as an operator by the same organization.

Per the approved schedule for special meetings for drafting changes to the Rules and Regulations of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Facilities: The item to be discussed at this meeting will be those duties/labor categories that can be licensed or granted examination at varying levels.

Mr. Patenaude read the definition of Operator as stated in the Board's enabling legislation and Regulations: *An Operator "means an individual who is assigned the responsibility on one or more mechanical treatment units, processes, or other important functions at a wastewater treatment facility."* Mr. Patenaude said that in his mind, the phrase "other important functions" gives room for definition expansion and that he is open to allow some maintenance individuals that are integrated in operators to sit for Grade 3 examination. Mr. Schock noted that "important functions" is a broad statement and asked if it would also be applied to other duties, such as laboratory personnel or pretreatment. Mr. Patenaude suggested that the Board would better serve its mission by including only those individuals that perform direct, physical functions on systems associated with wastewater treatment on the treatment works site. Mr. McLynch agreed that maintenance individuals perform "important functions," as noted in the definition. Mr. Desrosiers also agreed that mechanics fit the definition and noted that from his conversations, many maintenance staff are asking merely for the opportunity to take the Grade 3 examination. Mr. Schock had concerns with a mechanic having a Grade 3 license and without experience in operations.

Mr. Patenaude asked if non-Board attendees had any thoughts. Mr. Davis encouraged the Board to provide the opportunity of taking the Grade 3 exam to maintenance staff and that many who serve in that role do have the aptitude for passing the exam.

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Mr. Patenaude noted that an option would be to allow an “if & when” status for maintenance staff taking the Grade 3 (similar to the one that exists now for those individuals not working in direct responsible charge).

Board members also discussed issues of the size of each plant and the necessary evaluation of individual position task assignments/expectations.

Board members ultimately expressed an openness to the proposal but that many details must be considered, such as requirements to sit for a Grade 3 exam and triggers/stipulations to later be granted an OIT status. These details would be discussed at subsequent meetings.

Mr. McLynch motioned to adjourn at 3:00. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, as such the motion passed.