WEFMAX 2018
WEF and MA Professional Operator Initiatives
Joint Session - WEF HOD Operator Initiative Workgroup and WEF Operator Advisory Panel
WEF Professional Operator Initiatives

Agenda

- Brief report on history
- Brief overview of current initiatives – WEF and MAs
- Looking for input from you!
WEF Vision

• *WEF - essential to water professionals around the world*
• Strategic Plan Goals Focused on Operators
• Supporting operator jobs that are:
  – STEM cluster jobs that don’t require a bachelors’ degree
  – Green jobs that don’t rely on legislative subsidy
  – Pay family sustaining wages
  – Are largely immune to economic externalities
  – Are necessary wherever people live
WEF Strategic Plan

Goals for Operators

• Providing a broad range of professional content and programming that is relevant and widely valued….and leading the development and adoption of national standards for operation certification (Ref. Goal 2.e)

• Developing an engaged membership that is representative of multiple areas….and increase the numbers from a sector that is underrepresented…operators (Ref. Goal 1.a and 1.b)
WEF Operator Initiatives

• History:
  – Board of Trustees Focus
    • Operator Strategy Workgroup 2013
    • Most recent Operator Task Force in 2016
    • Developing a Relationship with Association of Board of Accreditation (ABC)
WEF Operator Initiatives

• History:
  – HOD
    • 6 different Operator Workgroups (2009 – 2014)
      – 3 surveys
      – Whitepapers
    • Current Operator Workgroup 2017/18
WEF Operator Initiatives

WEF has been ramping up focus on operators. Operator Initiative is key in meeting two Board of Trustee strategic goals.

Board Operator Taskforce:

• Trustees Jackie Jarrell and Joanie Hawley
• CLC liaison John Trofatter
• Operator Advisory Panel
Operator Advisory Panel - 14 expert volunteers and 2 staff - to execute these important efforts - Representatives from:

- WEF Board of Trustees
- Committee Leadership Council
- Plant Operations and Maintenance Committee
- Operations Challenge Committee
- OWWL (On Demand Wastewater Library)
- House of Delegates
- Association of Boards of Certification
- At Large – YPs, Canada, Workforce Development
Final Output – Recommendations to the Board

• Promote national licensure and reciprocity to support a mobile workforce
• Promote the goal of Prepare, Attract and Retain Professional Operators
• Provide quality operator training
Final Output – Recommendations to the Board of Trustees

• Increase the professional status of operators through advocacy and public communication

• Develop “Operator of the Future” through partnerships.

• Support resources for a sustainable program
WEF Operator Initiatives

- Re-draft of WEF “WW System Operator Professionals Certification and Training” Position Statement
- WEF Operator Certification and Training Summit in 2011
- Operator Apprenticeship Standards
WEF Operator Initiatives

- Operator training at WEFMAXs
- WEFCOM community “Operators of the Future”
- No cost operator-based WEF webcasts
WEF Operator Initiatives

- On-Demand Wastewater Library (or OWWL) program
- WEF Wastewater Treatment Fundamentals training manual
WEF Operator Initiatives

- Operator-Oriented Events at WEFTEC
  - Operator-focused technical and mobile sessions
  - Operations Challenge
  - Operator Ingenuity Contest awards ceremony
  - ABC Professional Operator “pinning” ceremony.
Benefits of a challenge team can include:

- Enhancing operator skills
- Workforce development
- Public Relations focus on the industry
WEF Operator Ingenuity Contest

- Entry submission closes June 1st
- Submission requires a 1-page description of a problem you faced and how it was fixed
- Photos of invention or improvement are encouraged
- Not limited to process operations – also encourage maintenance, public education, etc

Judging criteria:
- Relevance and usefulness
- Originality/creativity
- Resourcefulness

Winners…
- Are invited to give a 10-minute presentation at WEFTEC
- Are featured in WE&T

Questions: email innovations@wef.org
MA Operator Initiatives

• Kansas
  – Student poster competitions
  – Testing service with ABC

• California
  – Voluntary technical certification
  – Sponsors Bay Area Consortium for occupational programs

• South Carolina and Virginia - Sponsoring WEF Challenge teams

• Chesapeake – Mentorship program
MA Operator Initiatives

- Nebraska - Pilot WEF/MA partnership
  - Operator help line
  - Regional training sessions
- Utah - Operations Challenge
  - Promotes in local media, family barbeque
  - Subsidizes teams
- Pennsylvania – Operator Ingenuity Award
  - Award to recognize operators for work that is creative, innovative, or simply makes the job easier
WEF Operator Initiatives

• What can YOU do?
  – Promote WEF Operator Ingenuity Contest
    • Host MA contest?
  – Volunteer to help write and review the OWLS
  – What else???
WEF Operator Initiatives

• Looking for ideas from you!
  – How do you engage your operators?
  – How do you train and develop your operators?
  – How do you promote the operator profession?
Thank You!

Open Discussion / Q&A