

North Central Regional WWOA Meeting

February 2, 2010

Merrill, WI

The winter meeting of the North Central Region of the WWOA was held on February 2, 2010. The Merrill Wastewater Treatment Facility hosted the meeting. The meeting was held at the Arena Banquet Facility in Merrill. There were 67 attendees and seven vendor displays.

Terry Vanden Heuvel opened the meeting at 8:30 am. He introduced Doug Williams, the Mayor of Merrill. Mr. Williams welcomed attendees to the City of Merrill. He mentioned a few highlights and interesting facts about the city and expressed his hope that people would come back to visit the city again.

After the Mayor's remarks, Terry introduced Grant Weaver of The Water Planet Company. Mr. Weaver's specialty is helping treatment facilities assess their facility to make it more efficient and take advantage of existing facilities in different ways that avoid expensive capital costs to address nutrient removal and operational problems.

He began by explaining the basic principles and mechanisms of how nutrient removal is accomplished. He explained volatile fatty acid production to drive nutrient removal. He discussed how alkalinity is destroyed and recreated through the nitrification de-nitrification cycle. He proceeded to focus on anoxic zones and how they can improve plant operations and nutrient removal. He discussed simple ways to create anoxic zones such as turning blowers off for short periods of time.

After the morning break he continued with a case study of Suffield, NH and led a group exercise to examine possible improvements to the Merrill WWTF.

Joe Cantwell, Wisconsin Focus on Energy, followed with a presentation on the programs and assistance available from FOE and case studies of improvements at various facilities.

Steve Ohm, Rhinelander DNR, gave the DNR update. He explained the recent budget cuts and the effects they have had on business hours at contact centers, filling vacant positions, and the backlog of permits. He also updated the status of thermal rules, nutrient regulations, storm water changes, NR 151, and TMDL's.

Lyle Lutz called the business meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

1. He thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. He thanked the speakers for their presentations.
2. He thanked Terry Vanden Heuvel and the Merrill WWTF staff for hosting the meeting.
3. Lutz introduced Regional Operator of the Year recipient Jeff Wunrow, who was in attendance.
4. Lutz announced that the North Central Region was selected as the 2009 Region of the Year.
5. Lutz introduced WWOA State President Bruce Bartel. Bartel announced several upcoming events and WWOA activities.
6. Ron Dickrell announced the date of the 2010 Northwood's Collection System Seminar and some of the planned activities for the meeting.
7. Lutz called for any questions, comments, and or changes to meeting minutes from the September Whiting meeting as posted on the WWOA website. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as printed.
8. The Treasurer's report was presented and accepted.
9. The Steering Committee held a meeting on November 17, 2009. The minutes of the meeting are posted on the North Central Region section of the WWOA website.

10. Spencer will host the next regional meeting in mid May. Northern Lake Service will host the summer meeting in Crandon. Wausau will host the 2011 winter meeting.
11. Lutz congratulated Chris Helgestad and the Spencer WWTF for receiving the 2009 Registered Lab of the Year Award.
12. Lutz and Ken Bloom gave the group a short summary of their experiences at the national operators competition at WEFTEC. They strongly encourage anyone interested to get involved in the operators competition at the State conference as a first step.
13. WWOA annual conference will be October 19 - 21 at the Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells. Registration information is available online at the WWOA website.
14. Membership for all non-members is encouraged. Benefits include discounted rates to annual convention and training opportunities, student scholarships, tuition aides, the Clarifier Magazine, the Membership Directory, and eligibility for WWOA awards.
15. Scholarships- two of \$1000 each available for either 2 or 4 year program students. Candidate must be a child or grandchild of a member and in an eligible program this academic year. More information available on the WWOA website.
16. Attendees were encouraged to nominate deserving operators for the Regional Operator of the Year Award. Nomination forms are available on the WWOA website.
17. Tuition reimbursements- Six for \$150 each academic year, credit courses or advanced non-credit seminars. Contact Wade Peterson for more information.
18. Anyone interested in having your community host a future meeting should contact a steering committee member for details. The Steering Committee members are available to provide you with as little or as much help, as you need. It is a great way to showcase your community and your facilities.
19. There was no new business. The meeting was adjourned.

Lunch was served, followed by the raffle giveaway.

Jack Saltes kicked off the afternoon session with a rousing discussion of several topics. He discussed electronic reporting including an EDMR update. He discussed the status of operator certification exams, the updated study guides, and their potential use as training materials for plant staff. He finished his presentation with a review of resources available to help develop a CMOM and a focused discussion of the collection system section of the CMAR report.

Lamont Albers Closed the afternoon with a presentation on the concept of using service life assessments to make decisions on whether to rebuild existing equipment or replace it with new equipment.

Terry thanked everyone for attending and invited everyone to tour the Merrill WWTF.

Submitted by Rich Boden, Secretary, North Central Region