

# **North Central Regional WWOA Meeting**

## **October 14, 2008**

### **Crandon, WI**

On October 14, 2008, the North Central District held its summer meeting at the Mole Lake Conference Center. The meeting was hosted by Northern Lake Service. The meeting had originally been scheduled for August 21, but was postponed and rescheduled. There were 34 attendees, 4 vendor displays, and 6 members of the Northern Lake Service staff at the meeting.

Ken Bloom welcomed the attendees and thanked Northern Lake Service for hosting the meeting.

The first presentation was given by Steve Hefter and Doug Jennings of Northern Lake Service on sampling and testing of low level mercury. Steve discussed the sources of mercury and its release to the environment. He outlined the health and environmental problems caused by mercury, how mercury accumulates in the food chain and is ingested by humans. He also discussed other routes of exposure.

Doug explained the low level and ultra-low level mercury procedures. He detailed the difficulties in testing at the extremely low part per trillion level and the high chance of contamination at those levels. He explained all the unusual and detailed precautions needed to control contamination in the testing procedure. Doug and Steve demonstrated the field sampling procedure for ultra low level mercury and discussed field contamination sources and precautions. Doug finished the presentation by explaining how samples are handled in the lab, quality assurance testing, and reporting results.

R. T. Krueger, Northern Lake Service, followed with a presentation on collecting legally defensible environmental samples. He started by explaining the legal basis for collecting samples and reporting results to regulatory agencies. He pointed out that if sample collection and handling is not properly documented, the sample results are not legally defensible. He discussed chain of custody procedures and the importance of completing chain of custody documentation accurately. He provided insight on selecting a contract lab to do analysis, discussed sample integrity, sampling locations, and sample holding times. He also discussed using appropriate sampling equipment based on the analysis and method performed and training personnel to sample properly. He cited several examples of improper sampling leading to inaccurate or invalid results. He finished by discussing shipping and handling procedures.

After a short break, Steve Ohm, DNR Area Engineer, Rhinelander, presented a discussion of the reed bed biosolids drying process employed at the Crandon Wastewater Treatment Facility. Steve outlined the permit requirements for Crandon, process design criteria, and advantages and disadvantages of the reed bed technology. He gave a detailed description of how the process operates. He stated that the phragmites species of reed is considered an invasive species and detailed the specific permit requirements to prevent the release of phragmites to the environment. He explained the precautions that are taken by the staff the Crandon WWTF to prevent phragmites release.

Steve also gave the DNR update. He discussed the DNR initiative regarding electronic DMR's and web based permit application submittals. He also explained the nutrient testing initiative to gain baseline information on the discharge of nitrogen.

### Business Meeting

Lyle Lutz, NCR Vice Chairman, called the business meeting to order at 11:48. He thanked Northern Lake Service for hosting the meeting and providing the refreshments and rolls. He offered a special thanks to Tracy Huber, Andy Ostrowski, and the rest of the NLS staff for all their work organizing the meeting.

Lyle thanked all the speakers for agreeing to speak. He also thanked the vendors for their support of the meeting.

Lyle called for any changes or corrections to the business meeting minutes of the April 22, 2008 meeting in Rosholt, as printed in the September 2008 issue of the Clarifier. Hearing none, the minutes were accepted as printed.

NCR Treasurer Ken Bloom read the Financial Report. As of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the NCR escrow account balance was \$793.99 and checking account balance is \$2748.24. The report was accepted by unanimous consent.

Lyle read the election results. Lyle and Terry Vanden Heuvel from Merrill were elected to 3 year terms on the Steering Committee. Lyle is serving his second term and Terry will serve his first term. Chris Helgestad is stepping down from the Committee.

The 2009 Steering Committee Officer Assignments are Chairperson Lyle Lutz, Vice-chair Matt Saloun, Treasurer Ken Bloom, Secretary Rich Boden, Committee Members Ron Dickrell and Terry Vanden Heuvel.

The NCR Operator Competition Team competed at the Annual Conference at Stevens Point. Team members included Lyle Lutz of Amherst, Chris Lefebvre of Stevens Point, and Vern Williams of Rib Mountain.

Lyle congratulated Gus Strehlo, Wausau, for receiving the 2008 North Central Regional Operator of the Year Award.

Lyle encouraged all non members to consider joining the WWOA. At a cost of only \$40 for a two year membership the benefits are well worth the money and include: discounted rates for the annual conference and other training opportunities, student scholarships and tuition aids, the Clarifier magazine, the Membership Directory and eligibility for WWOA awards.

The next North Central Region meeting will be hosted jointly by Marathon and Edgar on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The second 2009 meeting will be hosted by North Central Labs in Birnamwood on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Anyone interested in hosting a meeting should contact a steering committee member. The steering committee members will help out as much as needed and it's a great way to show off your community and your facility.

Lyle opened the floor for any new business. Being none, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm. The group proceeded to lunch.

Camille Johnson and Tom Trainer, both from DNR, did a tag team presentation on the requirements of the NR 149 revisions that went into effect on September 1. Their presentation, entitled "Hear comes

the Auditor, What you really need to know to pass a new NR 149 audit”, was a thorough and comprehensive explanation of the numerous revisions to NR 149. They covered accreditation, proficiency testing, the quality manual, records, documentation, standard and reagent traceability, sample handling, SOPs, and quality control.

The meeting concluded with a tour of the Northern Lake Service laboratory in Crandon.

Submitted by Rich Boden, NCR Secretary.