

# First Nations and Water in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Planning for Success



**EOCP**

Environmental Operators  
Certification Program

*Kalpna Solanki, June Williams, and Warren Brown  
Assembly of First Nations Water Symposium  
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*The light in me  
honours the light  
in you.*





## Some History



Since 1966, the EOCP has been responsible for the classification of drinking water and wastewater facilities and systems, and the certification of Operators.



We work with all communities – First Nations and non-First Nations.



The EOCP is a non-profit society and is not part of government.



## Our Vision



A Canada where all people have access to safe drinking water and good sanitation. We firmly believe that this is possible.



## What Do we Do at the EOCP?



- We classify Facilities and certify Operators
- ...and we do a LOT of other stuff, most of which now interfaces with our new Customer Relationship Management system!



What does Classification have to do with Certification?

**Classification**  **Certification**



## Our New Classification Models



- Make the classification process open and transparent
- Encourage comparison between similar facilities
- Provide a mechanism for appealing/disputing results
- Provide a mechanism for modifying the models due to errors/omissions, changes in technology, or changes in legislation
- Engage stakeholders in the details of the classification process



## Model Breakdown – Infrastructure and Influencers

Factor	Weight
Operational Complexity	7
Operational Sensitivity	5
Operator Attention and Maintenance	3
Consequence of Failure	10
Impact to Water/Effluent Quality	8



## Pre-Classification Plan Before You Build





## Our Certification Process and CRM



This is to certify that:



Certification No. 4048  
Valid until: 31-12-2019

**Warren Brown**

By examination has qualified as a  
**Water Treatment Operator**  
**Level II**

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A society incorporated under the Society Act, S.B.C. 5-28/24

Through our new Customer Relationship Management system, we can now:

- Track Operators throughout the full lifecycle of their interaction with the EOCP
- Provide an interface for career management
- Assess training courses
- Collect and process Continuing Education Units
- Enable Operators to apply for exams



## What Else is New?





# Operator Tradeshow and Conference





## Operator of the Year Award





# Webinars





# Online Exams





## Oral Exams (SWS and SWWS)





# Workforce Studies





# Centre of Excellence for Small Water Systems





# Operators

***WITHOUT BORDERS***





# Operator Peer Network



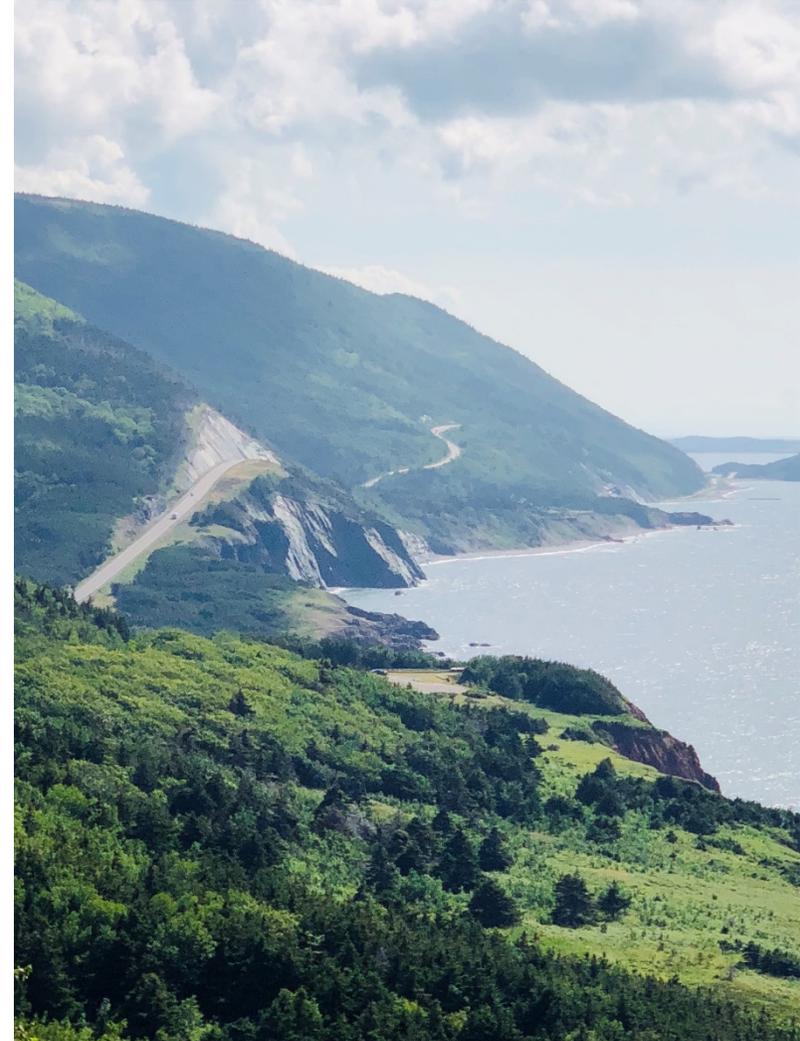


## What Does Success Look Like?



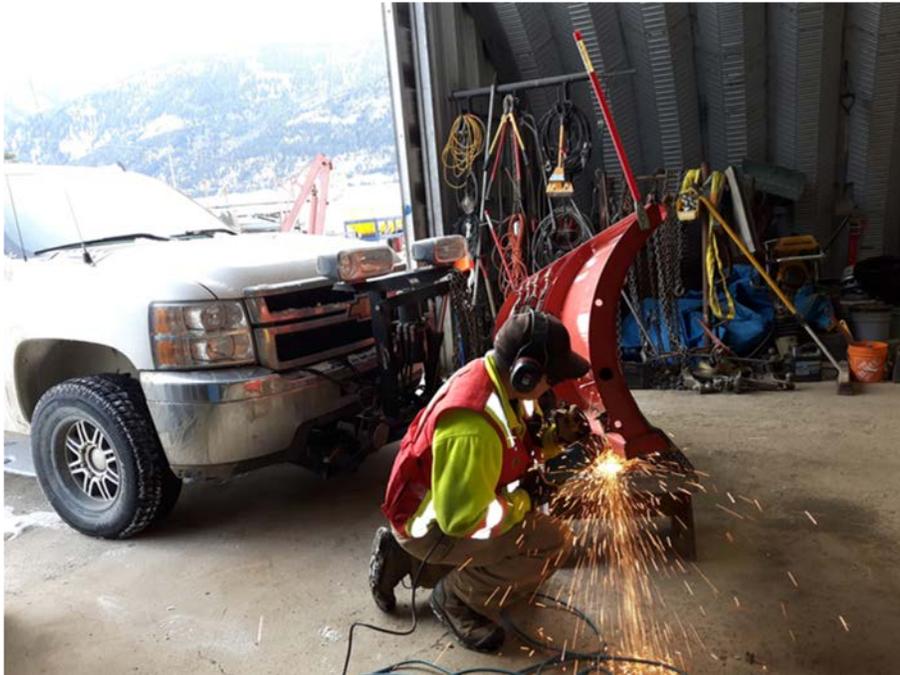


How Do we Get there?





## An Operator's Perspective



- Operators know how to keep your water and wastewater systems running
- Lots of resources are expended to ensure they know how your system works
- You have invested in their training to make sure they are certified for their position
- When problems arise, it's your Operators who know how to correct problems quickly and efficiently with little impact to your members



## An Operator's Perspective



- With a Safe Drinking Water Program, your Operator, with scheduled water sampling, can inform your members on its potability
- Without them being on site, they can be direct a fellow operator/employee on corrective actions until they can get there, through clear instructions, because they know their system like the back of their hand
- Operators have a sense of dedication to their position, built by a positive working atmosphere within the department and the Band



## What Else Can your Operator Do?

- Your Operator can show your members what kind of work goes into the Water and Wastewater treatment processes
- Your Operator can show the members that they are adequately trained and certified to do their jobs.
- They can help to educate your members on the need to conserve your water, or understand what should not enter your wastewater system
- By creating a positive relationship with your Operators, you increase the chance of attracting the next generation of Operators from your community
- The better your Operator looks to the members, the better the Leadership looks as well





# The Impact of Operator Turnover

- Operator turnover can impact operational issues
- You will not have an Operator with all the essential knowledge of your system, which can cause longer disruptions of services
- Not all Operators are the same, each will develop skills at different paces. For each loss of an Operator, you lose a possible beneficial aspect of your system which would have improved if given time to grow
- You may lose your members trust in the operations of your systems
- Lose the interest of your members in taking on the Operator position, causing you to hire outside of your community





## Keep your Operator



- Allow your Operators to further their training and certification for their position.
- Develop a good communication strategy within your departments so everyone is up to date on information or plans.
- If possible, plan for a back-up Operator, or at least someone that is dependable and responsible to look after the operations, so the main Operator can take some time off
- Encourage your Operators to reach out to the members through conversations or community gatherings, to talk about their responsibilities, and build positive relationship with your community



Thank-you!



In the Nlaka'pamux  
**Kwukwstemx!** (Cooks-cham)