



Kentucky Rural Water Association

Helping water and wastewater utilities help themselves

November 7, 2014

RECEIVED

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PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

Mr. Jeff Derouen, Executive Director
Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 615
Frankfort, KY 40602-0615

2014-393

Dear Mr. Derouen:

Kentucky Rural Water Association will offer classes entitled "Sustainable Management of Rural and Small Water and Wastewater Systems Workshop." These workshops, jointly developed by the USEPA and the USDA, are intended to help rural and small utilities conduct utility assessments and develop action plans for improving utility management. These workshops will be delivered to utilities upon their request and will offer six (6) hours per session of continuing education credit.

Training for the workshops will follow the guidelines in the "Rural and Small Systems Guidebook to Sustainable Utility Management" (see Table of Contents and Introduction enclosed). The 41-page Guidebook is available online from the USEPA website (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/sustain/upload/SUSTAINABLE-MANAGEMENT-OF-RURAL-AND-SMALL-SYSTEMS-GUIDE-FINAL-10-24-13.pdf>). Any handouts provided to attendees will come from the Guidebook.

Along with the first few pages from the Guidebook, a training summary/timed agenda for these workshops is also enclosed. These classes have also been submitted to the Kentucky Board of Certification of Water Treatment & Distribution System Operators. A copy of the application is included.

With this letter and enclosures, Kentucky Rural Water Association respectfully requests that these workshops be approved for continuing education credit for commissioners as referenced in regulation 807 KAR 5:070. If additional information is needed, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Janet Cole
Education Coordinator
j.cole@krwa.org

Enclosures
(Original and 10 packets)



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Rural and Small Systems Guidebook to Sustainable Utility Management

2013



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Sustainable Utility: Ten Key Management Areas.....	3
System Improvement Priorities: Self Assessment	6
Improving Outcomes	11

Appendix I: Self Assessment Worksheet.....21
Appendix II: System Management Improvement Plan Worksheet24
Appendix III: Resources for Rural and Small Systems25

INTRODUCTION

Background & Purpose

Many rural and small systems throughout the country struggle with various issues, which may include aging or inadequate infrastructure, difficulties recruiting or retaining qualified staff, growing or establishing financial reserves, and setting rates that are reflective of their operational costs.

This *Rural and Small Systems Guidebook to Sustainable Utility Management (Guidebook)* is an important part of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2011 to jointly support a series of activities to help rural and small water and wastewater systems address various issues and more effectively provide sustainable services to the communities they support. As part of this MOA, EPA and USDA hosted a series of four, day-long pilot workshops, which included participants from over 60 rural and small water providers, in cooperation with local sponsors dedicated to small water and wastewater system management. The first workshop was held in Acme, Michigan, in cooperation with the Michigan Rural Water Association, the second in Santa Cruz, California, in cooperation with the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, the third in Helena, Georgia, with the Georgia Rural Water Association, and the fourth in Nashville, Tennessee, with the United South & Eastern Tribes.

The workshops were designed as a pilot project with the intent of each workshop building off of previous ones. Their goal was to provide information to help address rural and small water and wastewater system management concerns and improve rural and small system operations. At each workshop, participants were given an introduction to the management areas described in more detail in this guide, and then were asked to do a short self-assessment of their operations based on the management areas. Participants also identified management improvement opportunities at their systems based on the assessment, and shared experiences from their systems to better understand how to approach implementing the identified improvements and provide a basis for working with staff and community members to operate more effectively. Participants also provided feedback to EPA and USDA on the usefulness of the information used and exercises undertaken during the workshops. Finally, participants were introduced to a compendium of resources that could help them implement the improvements identified during the assessment.

Based on the approaches used in these workshops and feedback from the workshop participants, the *Guidebook* is designed to introduce rural and small water and wastewater systems to the key areas of effectively managed systems. It provides background information on ten key management areas, as well as instruction and assistance on how to conduct a system assessment process based on the key management areas. It also includes information on how to prioritize areas for improvement, while developing measures of progress that can help small systems with performance improvement. In addition to the *Guidebook*, a companion resource was developed for those who wish to host their own workshop. The *Workshop in a Box: Sustainable Management of*

Rural and Small Systems Workshops kit provides guidance for workshop preparations, execution, and copies of all materials necessary to run a successful workshop on utility management improvement.

The *Guidebook's* aim is to support rural and small water and wastewater systems in their common mission to become more successful and resilient service providers. Because of its dynamic nature, this resource can be used effectively in many different ways:

- By system managers, water systems operations specialists and staff as a guide for taking actions leading to short- and long-term improvement to system management and performance;
- By service providers as they work with individual systems or groups of systems through workshops or other assistance efforts;
- As a resource for system improvement workshops, like those sponsored by USDA and EPA;
- As a resource for guiding conversations about sustainability with utility board members; or
- As a resource for communicating and educating utility board members on the importance of effective management.

The information presented in the *Guidebook* draws on the results of four workshops conducted by EPA and USDA described above, as well as feedback from managers of rural and small systems that attended those workshops. Additionally, several small systems and water systems operations specialists provided input to this guide as it was developed.

The *Guidebook* begins by introducing each of the ten key management areas of effectively managed systems, followed by a self assessment to help users identify their strengths and challenges to prioritize where to focus improvement efforts. The *Guidebook* ends by discussing improving outcomes in the ten management areas by examining what constitutes high achievement in each area, and identifying resources for small systems. The overall approach and steps described in this *Guidebook* are similar to the approach in another initiative, called Effective Utility Management, which has been supported by EPA and several major water sector associations since 2008 and used successfully by a number of medium and larger utilities. The *Guidebook* takes the approach embodied in Effective Utility Management and adapts it for the needs of rural and small water and wastewater systems.

What's In It for Me: Why Should My System Use this Guidebook?

*The information in the
Guidebook can help
rural and small systems
in several important
ways by:*

- *Giving you a simple and objective way to evaluate your system's strengths and areas for improvement*
- *Helping you develop an easy to follow plan for improving your operations based on your assessment*
- *Helping you better communicate internally and with others like board members and customers about your system and your challenges*
- *Help build the necessary support for improving your system over time*

Training Sponsor: Kentucky Rural Water Association
Title: Sustainable Management of Rural and Small Water and Wastewater Systems Workshop
Dates/Locations: As Requested

Learning Objective:

The objective of these workshops is to provide small and rural water and wastewater systems with beneficial tools to help address ongoing challenges to improve management practices and deliver the best quality service to their communities. These workshops, jointly developed by the USEPA and the USDA, are intended to help rural and small utilities conduct utility assessments and develop action plans for improving utility management.

Criteria for Training Credits:

Attendees will be granted credit for actual time attending the training session. The maximum number of training credit hours will be six (6) hours.

Training Summary/Timed Agenda

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

3 hours

Session 1: Key Utility Management Areas

This session will cover common challenges for utility managers, such as aging infrastructure, rate issues, and operational expenses. Also covered will be characteristics of well managed utilities and will address the 10 Key Management Areas for Sustainability. The 10 Key Management Areas are: Resource Adequacy, Product Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Community Sustainability and Economic Development, Employee and Leadership Development, Financial Viability, Operational Optimization, Infrastructure Stability, Operational Stability, and Stakeholder Understanding and Support.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

1.5 hours

Session 2: System Improvement Priorities: Utility Self-Assessment

This session will be a utility "Self-Assessment" where attendees will rate their utilities level of achievement in the 10 Key Management Areas. In this session, the instructor will guide the attendees through the assessment process which is meant to be an honest assessment of the utilities' achievement level within the various management areas. Attendees will work in groups.

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

1.5 hours

Session 3: Improving Outcomes

This session is designed to start utilities along the path of developing a management improvement plan. Attendees will be guided through a prioritization process to determine their highest, medium, and lowest management goals as a means to develop a management improvement plan. Part of the discussion will center around who within the organization would be responsible for certain areas of improvement, and why. This exercise will also be a time for discussion on what is working, what is not working, and why.

Speaker Bios

Each Workshop will include one or more of the following instructors:

Randall Kelley has been with Kentucky Rural Water Association (KRWA) since January, 2006. Since joining KRWA, Randall has held the positions of Wastewater Circuit Rider, ARRA Circuit Rider and Training Specialist. Prior to joining KRWA, Randall worked for the University of Louisville at the Center for Watershed Research as a Research Biologist. He participated in numerous projects on small headwater streams, stream restorations, Tri-halomethane formation in natural waters, and numerous other projects. Randall's experience also includes working for a contractor to the USEPA in Cincinnati, Ohio as an aquatic macroinvertebrate taxonomist. Randall received a B.S. in both Biology and Environmental Science from Western Kentucky University and an M.S. in Biology from the University of Louisville.

Joe Burns has been with Kentucky Rural Water Association since April 1994. His experiences at KRWA have included implementing the NRWA source water protection program and oversight of the NRWA wellhead program and the Division of Water wellhead protection assistance grant. Joe currently oversees the Utility Optimization Program and works with utilities in the program to provide technical, managerial, and financial support. Prior to joining the KRWA staff, Mr. Burns was a Senior Groundwater Hydrologist for the Kentucky Division of Water beginning in July, 1991, where he was responsible for formulating Kentucky's Wellhead Protection Strategy. He also has experience in drilling and environmental monitoring. Joe holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Geology from Eastern Kentucky University.

Matt Glass joined Kentucky Rural Water Association in March of 2002 as a Groundwater Technician. He later worked in the Water and Wastewater Services Division of KRWA providing practical infrastructure management solutions for small and rural communities, such as mapping, manhole inspection, smoke testing, flow monitoring & video inspection. Matt now serves as the Wastewater Circuit Rider for KRWA. Matt attended Western Kentucky University where he obtained a bachelor's degree in Geography with an emphasis in hydrogeology. He worked on several projects as a geologic technician for the Center for Cave and Karst Studies at Western and completed a planning internship under Dr. Nicholas Crawford, focusing on the development of a stormwater management plan for the city of Bowling Green.

Gary Larimore has been Executive Director of the Kentucky Rural Water Association since its formation in March, 1979. He received both Bachelor of Science and Master of Public Service Degrees from Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Mr. Larimore is responsible for the administration and day-to-day operation of the association's office. His duties include budgeting and financial management, personnel management, and acting as the primary representative with the membership, the board of directors, and other outside organizations. Other primary duties include representing the Association's legislative and regulatory interests as a full-time lobbyist and working with water-related groups and organizations.

Andy Lange is the Assistant Director for the Kentucky Rural Water Association (KRWA) and has been employed there since 1989. Prior to joining KRWA, Mr. Lange worked for the Barren River Area Development District for five (5) years, providing administrative and financial assistance to local governments in the ten-county BRADD region. Mr. Lange has earned a Bachelor of Science in Geography and a Master of Public Administration from Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Mr. Lange's duties include involvement with all management and administrative activities of the Association. Other responsibilities include: coordinating and monitoring internal membership activities, producing and editing KRWA printed publications, and assisting in the administration of KRWA finance programs. He has been involved in the production of operation and maintenance manuals for water systems, the final report for the KY River Authority Water Counts project, and Operation Review studies for utilities.

Robert Mohon of The Neil Group is a veteran of the credit card, debit card and check processing industry. In 1995, Robert began his career in the credit card processing industry and set up one of the very first websites to accept online credit card payments. With a degree in Marketing from Auburn University, Robert has helped grow the client base of the company through sales process development, CRM, and client support improvements. Robert is an Ambassador of the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce (TN), a Board Member of the Nashville Investors Group, and past member of the Minds in Motion Advisory Board and Nashville Business Breakfast Club. His expertise includes advising clients on security (customer, employee, and office), technology, internal controls, interpersonal skills, leadership, and social media/public relations.

<p>Mail to:</p> <p>Division of Compliance Assistance Certification and Licensing Branch Operator Certification Program 300 Fair Oaks Lane Frankfort, KY 40601</p>	<p>Commonwealth of Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection</p> <p>Application for Approval of Courses for Continuing Education Credit</p> <p><i>Drinking Water Treatment, Drinking Water Distribution, Bottled Water, Wastewater Treatment and Collection System</i></p> <p>Telephone: 1-800-926-8111 www.dca.ky.gov/certification</p>	<p><i>For Official Use Only Do not write in this space</i></p> <p>COPY</p>
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I. **Course Sponsor Information:** Agency Interest Number: 108571

A. Sponsoring Organization (school, business, association, etc.):

Kentucky Rural Water Association

Key Contact Person:

Name and Title: Janet Cole, Education Coordinator

Address: 3251 Spring Hollow Avenue

City, State and Zip: Bowling Green, KY 42104

Phone and Fax: Ph: 270.843.2291 Fx: 270.796.8623

E-mail: j.cole@krwa.org

Web Page: www.krwa.org

One-Time Approval Requested

Two-Year Approval Requested

B. If individual requesting approval is different than the key contact person for the sponsor, please complete the following information:

Name and Title: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone and Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

II. **General Course Information:**

A. Title: Sustainable Management of Rural and Small Water and Wastewater Systems Workshop

B. Location and Date/s: As Requested

C. Cost per Student or Group: \$ -0-

D. Delivery Format or Media (check those that apply):

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Web/Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Laboratory | <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field | <input type="checkbox"/> CD-ROM | <input type="checkbox"/> Video/Audio | <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Explain) | _____ | | |



E. Continuing Education Credits (**hours**) Requested for Target Audience:

Drinking Water Treatment, Distribution and/or Bottled Water: 6 hrs.
Wastewater Treatment and/or Collection: 6 hrs.

(Attach a detailed description explaining how this training relates to the wastewater treatment process.)

III. **Required Items** (must be attached to submittal, check off as completed):

- A. Course Learning Objectives
- B. Criteria for Successful Completion by Operators
- C. Agenda (timed with instructors identified and brief description of topics)
- D. Credentials for All Instructors

IV. **Additional Attachments** (required for distance learning courses, optional for other training):

- A. Instructional Design (developed by whom/their credentials)
- B. Curriculum Content (subject matter experts/their credentials)
- C. Required Assignments and/or Examinations (type, passing score, etc.)
- D. Mandatory Time Constraints (deadlines, granting of extensions, etc.)

V. **Signature of Sponsor's Contact Person**

I confirm that all information provided with this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge. A complete list of attendees and credits to be awarded to them will be forwarded on a "Continuing Education Activity Report" to the Kentucky Division of Compliance Assistance (within 30 days of completing the course when possible).

Printed Name and Title: Janet Cole, Education Coordinator

Signature and Date: 

October 31, 2014