



Matthew G. Bevin
Governor

Charles G. Snavely
Secretary
Energy and Environment Cabinet

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Public Service Commission
211 Sower Blvd.
P.O. Box 615
Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-0615
Telephone: (502) 564-3940
Fax: (502) 564-3460
psc.ky.gov

Michael J. Schmitt
Chairman

Robert Cicero
Vice Chairman

Talina R. Mathews
Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Andrew Melnykovich
502-782-2564 or 502-564-3940
502-330-5981 (cell)
Andrew.Melnykovich@ky.gov

PSC Revamps Required Training for Water District Boards

Commissioners now will need to receive initial training directly from the PSC

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Mar. 15, 2018) – Newly appointed water district commissioners now will be required to receive training in key areas only through courses offered directly by the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC).

In an order issued today, the PSC cited a need for more consistent and rigorous training for new commissioners, noting that a number of water districts recently have been found by the PSC to be in violation of basic statutory requirements governing issues such as financing and operations.

Those problems have raised “urgent concerns about the level and consistency of training received by water district commissioners,” the PSC said in the order.

Under Kentucky law, newly appointed water district commissioners are to receive 12 hours of training within a year of taking office. Once water district commissioners have completed their first year in office, Kentucky law allows them to attend six hours of training per year in order to receive higher annual compensation.

The PSC has the authority to determine the content of water district commissioner training and by whom it may be offered.

In today’s order, the PSC set the following training requirements:

- New commissioners must attend a training seminar conducted by the PSC, which covers nine core subject areas.
- Water district commissioners who have received the initial 12 hours of training may attend either training conducted by the PSC or by PSC-approved third parties in order to receive their six hours of annual continuing education.
- Continuing education may include either core courses or elective courses offered or approved by the PSC.
- Third parties wishing to offer water commissioner training must have the courses and course materials approved in advance by the PSC. Course materials must be provided to attendees in order for third-party courses to be approved.

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The core curriculum includes topics such as complying with PSC regulatory requirements, setting rates, infrastructure planning and maintenance, emergency planning and preparedness, water district finances and operations, customer service, ethics, and compliance with state open meetings and open records acts.

The PSC typically offers three two-day water district training seminars each year. The seminars are open not only to water district commissioners, but also to water district staff, staff and commissioners of water associations, and to other interested parties.

PSC seminars are held in various locations across Kentucky in order to allow water utility officials from across the state to attend.

The first PSC seminar this year will be held April 17 and 18 at Jenny Wiley State Resort Park near Prestonsburg. A seminar will be held in late summer or early fall in western Kentucky, with the final seminar of the year held at the PSC offices in Frankfort in early December.

Today's order is available on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov. The case number is 2018-00085.

The PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It regulates more than 1,500 gas, water, sewer, electric and telecommunication utilities operating in Kentucky.

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