



A Newsletter for Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators!

# THE WATERDRUM

April 2020

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## Thank you

In these unpredictable and unprecedented times, we have been seeing a lot of praise and thanks to the frontline workers all around the world. Water professionals are working around the clock to ensure that safe, reliable water services continue to flow.

AWWAO would like to **thank** all Water and Wastewater Operators working during these challenging times. We appreciate how fortunate we are to have our essential services working tirelessly and with such focus on the wellbeing of our communities throughout the world.

We encourage everyone to do their best in regards to quarantine and social distancing. We can all use this opportunity to grow individually. Look for the positives instead of the negatives! Reach out to family, friends and neighbors. Remind them they are not alone and they are loved. Stay safe!!



## DO THE FIVE Help Stop Coronavirus

- 1 HANDS** Wash them often
- 2 ELBOW** Cough into it
- 3 FACE** Don't touch it
- 4 FEET** Stay **SIX FEET** apart
- 5 FEEL** Sick? Stay Home

**Sponsored by:** Indigenous Services Canada and First Nations Inuit Health Branch





*The meaning of the AWWAO logo as described by the artist:*

*Tree—represents Mother Earth*

*Sun—brings Life to our Environment*

*Eagle—watches over the Environment*

*Sky—ensures the Cycle of Water*

## ABOUT US

The Aboriginal Water & Wastewater Association of Ontario is an information source for water environment and Operator training and certification issues and technology. AWWAO's members include professionals from Ontario First Nations, Environmental Health Officers, Tribal Councils, Municipal Suppliers and some Government Agencies.

AWWAO is dedicated to the transfer of information and concepts regarding all areas of the water environment. As members of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the Ontario Water Works Association (OWWA), the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and the Water Environment Association of Ontario (WEAO), we provide an invaluable network for those involved in water and wastewater industry. AWWAO, through a partnering agreement with Keewaytinook Okimakanak and Health Canada co-operates and liaises with the above noted associations, and all provincial and federal government agencies. AWWAO has a volunteer seat on many of the various association's committees.

AWWAO offers its members the opportunity to:

- ◆ Be updated and informed about issues that affect the water environment.
- ◆ Interact with persons in various fields of water expertise.
- ◆ Promote concerns of the membership through a collective voice.
- ◆ Exchange information and ideas to other members, the public and Chiefs and Council.

To date, the AWWAO consistently rank the training and certification of Plant Operators as its top priority. The attainment of Certification is widely recognized as essential to performing a good job, at a high level, in the water and wastewater treatment plant operations, and an indicator of a responsible and contributing community member.

## MEMBERSHIP

\$200.00 Membership Fee for First Nations Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators per operator. This Membership entitles the Operator(s) to the AWWAO Newsletter, monthly bulletin, Annual Report and the Annual General Assembly and Training Conference cost reimbursement, if applicable.

\$400.00 Membership Fee for Non-Operator, Public Works Management, Administration and Management of a First Nation or Non-First Nation. This Membership entitles the Member to the AWWAO Newsletter, monthly bulletins, Annual Report and invitation to the Annual General Assembly and Training Conference.

Please Print

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Nation/Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## VISION

Our Vision is to be the Association that best understands and satisfies the training, education, certification and licensing needs of Operators of Ontario First Nations. Our dedication to supporting Operators touches not only health, but safety, spirit and empowerment ... most of all knowledge.

## OBJECTIVES

- ◆ To act as a voice and forum for First Nation Plant Operators in Ontario, publish a newsletter, promote communications and networking among Plant Operators and other persons interested in AWWAO's objectives;
- ◆ Promote the importance of a safe and potable water supply and the highest standard of wastewater operations;
- ◆ Promote the development and delivery of continuing education and training programs for Plant Operators and others involved in water and wastewater treatment;
- ◆ Promote the importance of technical training in maintaining and upgrading the Operator's knowledge of proper water and wastewater operation and maintenance requirements;
- ◆ Promote the importance of involving qualified Operator's in the design, construction or upgrading of water and wastewater treatment plants;
- ◆ Promote the importance of proper training, certification and licensing of Operators;
- ◆ Promote the importance of enhanced lab testing of potable water and monitoring of wastewater effluents; and
- ◆ Promote the importance of establishing an effective Operations & Maintenance Management Plan to ensure proper care is performed for the assets.

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are a member oriented, non-profit Association, providing province-wide and year-round high-quality services and an annual forum for the First Nations Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators, allowing for networking opportunities at the same time. We are committed to providing high quality information on the water and wastewater industry through the quarterly newsletter. We are dedicated to promoting, preserving and protecting the water, natural resources and environment through the education, training and networking of the Ontario First Nations Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators.

The Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario's newsletter is published quarterly by the AWWAO at Box 20001, RPO, Riverview Postal Outlet  
Dryden, ON P8N 0A1  
Tel: (807) 216-8085  
E-mail: [info@awwao.org](mailto:info@awwao.org)

Advertising opportunities and/or submission or request of information, please contact the Association Coordinator.

## AWWAO Board of Directors

Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario was very pleased to have hosted the 25th Annual General Meeting and Training Conference and Tradeshow at the Casino Rama in Orillia, Ontario. The conference was held during the week of February 25, 2020.

Organizing a conference is a lot of fun, but requires a lot of hard work, too. AWWAO has hosted several conferences through our 25 year history. This year marked our 25th Anniversary. After more than 25 years, membership is still growing and we look forward to it every year.

This conference captured a three-day program of CEU courses, Water Ceremony, 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tradeshow, AGM, Water Cup Challenge, Top Ops Game, Operator of the year North and South, keynote speakers and Chippewas of Rama Water Plant Tour.



The conference welcomed water and wastewater professionals from across Ontario. The purpose of the conference was to promote the development of continuing education and training for Plant Operators and others involved in water and wastewater treatment. There were 97 operators in attendance.

The 5th Annual Tradeshow showcased a wide variety of options for attendees and businesses to engage and interact with each other. We had 44 vendors this year! The vendors put on an excellent show for those attending the tradeshow. The tradeshow offered an excellent opportunity for their company to demonstrate products and services. Throughout the conference, attendees had the opportunity to network, socialize and explore challenges in the protection and treatment of our water supply.

A big thank you to Indigenous Services Canada and First Nations Inuit and Health Branch for funding this event. It is through their continued support that sustains our organization and makes all the difference.

Thank you to Walkerton Clean Water Centre, Keewaytinook Centre of Excellence, Hany Jadaa and World Water Operator Training Company for providing us with the training courses.

## *AWWAO Membership*

AWWAO would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support over the past 12 months. We value all contributions to AWWAO and memberships make up the lifeblood of our organization. Your involvement is extremely important to us and very much appreciated.

In 2020 AWWAO has seen new faces and welcomed new members, both Regular and Associate Memberships to the Association.

**Total Regular Membership 2020-148**

**Total Associate Membership 2020-14**

## *25th Annual Conference Registration*



**2013/14  
Conference  
Attendance: 87**

**2014/15  
Conference  
Attendance: 69**

**2015/16  
Conference  
Attendance: 96**

**2016/17  
Conference  
Attendance: 99**

**2017/2018  
Conference  
Attendance:  
100**

**2018/2019  
Conference  
Attendance: 90**

**2019/2020  
Conference  
Attendance:  
107**

## Water Ceremony

AWWAO had their 25th AGM & Training Conference & Tradeshow at Chippewas of Rama First Nation on February 24-27, 2020. We had a water ceremony at Casino Rama to open the conference on Monday night that was conducted by our own Grandmother Lorraine McRae. It was a great honour to have all the women from other First Nations as well as our Regional Chief Roseanne Archibald to help conduct this ceremony. Our Mnjikaning Water Song was offered, along with all of our prayers to the Creator for our water.

Chi Miigwech to everyone who participated in this water ceremony and to all of the Grandmothers who have been praying for our water since the beginning of time across Turtle Island.

Miigwech  
Chad McRae



## *Top Ops Game*

An idea had been tossed around before to create a Jeopardy style quiz game related to water and wastewater.

This idea came from another group, and so it was decided that for our 25th Anniversary we would try to have some fun one night and run a game for our operators.

The plan was to create the same style board as the game Jeopardy, and then to figure out how we would include our amazing operators. It turned out, trying to complete a game with 20 or 30 people is a little hard to keep track of !

The game had prizes for the winning group and also lesser value prizes for participating.

At the Top Ops Games we had 6 groups of 5. The game was well attended but it had some learning curves, good fun, laughs and knowledge was shared by all in attendance. It was a good change of pace from the usual classes and added something for operators to do during the evening.

It would be great to continue in the future with some trivia or hands on styles of games. It peaks our interests and allows everyone attending to have a bit of fun !

Thanks to all who participated !



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Winning team!



## *Annual General Meeting*

This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Casino Rama on February 27, 2020. The agenda was distributed to all members in attendance for their review and reference. There was a total of 66 First Nation Operators in attendance.

The AWWAO directors presented the organizational past fiscal year's financial and legal activities to the membership at the AGM.

AWWAO thanks the membership for attending and encourages members to keep an open dialogue throughout the year.



## *The Gary Oja Award, Instructor of the Year*

AWWAO would like to congratulate James Haskell on receiving the Gary Oja, Instructor of the Year Award. This award stands alone proudly witnessing your hard work and dedication as a trainer.



## Classes

AWWAO would like to thank all of the instructors for providing excellent classes!!



## 5th Annual Tradeshow

AWWAO would like to express our thanks to the 44 exhibitors for sharing their knowledge and expertise at the 5th Annual Tradeshow!



April 2020

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## *Guest Speakers*

AWWAO would like to thank our honored guest speakers, Anne Scotton (Regional Director General), Lorri Bova (Past President), Joe Francis (Past President) and Calvin Jamieson (Past President) who have shared their very interesting and exclusive presentations providing the conference attendees with new information for thinking and further



## Operator of the Year

Aboriginal Water and Wastewater of Ontario recognizes that there are First Nations Operators in Ontario who go above and beyond doing a good job; they provide an example for others of many facets of being an Operator, particularly in supporting the other activities of other Operators. They make an extra effort to support their fellow Operators, and teach others what they have learned through many years of working in the field. Often, they encourage others to become more involved including training opportunities. They go out of their way to help everyone in the water and wastewater field. They volunteer to help others, they serve on committees, and all while doing the things that are necessary to be considered "good at their job."

Each year we give the chance for our members and their respective communities to nominate a water or wastewater operator who has provided outstanding service in their community. Votes are cast by our Board Of Directors and 1 winner from the south and 1 winner from the north is chosen.

On February 26, 2020 Ian Fortin AWWAO director announced that Levius Anderson from Kasabonika First Nation was chosen to be the Paul Strohack Operator of the Year 2020 for the South . Ben Brant from Mohawks Bay of Quinte was chosen to be the Paul Strohack Operator of the Year 2020 for the South.

Congratulations Levius and Ben!!



Levius Anderson and Ian Fortin



Ben Brant and Ian Fortin



## *Water Taste Challenge*

This years' water taste challenge judging session was scheduled for Wednesday February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 1330 hrs. however it was postponed until the morning of February 27 on account of the Rama Casino evacuation that occurred on Wednesday afternoon.

After the excitement ended and the judging took place winners of the Northern Josephine Mandamin and the Southern Derek Kamanga cups were chosen by a panel of 4 dignified judges. Criteria for choosing the winners was based on taste, color, clarity and overall refreshment factor.



*Judges from left to right: Enrico Ferrari, Corinne Louther, Anne Scotton & Justin Chalecki*

Winner of the Josephine Mandamin Northern Water Taste Challenge Cup was the Community of Naicatchewenin whose Water Treatment system was represented by OIT Montgomery J. Smith.

The Southern Derek Kamanga Cup winner was Tyendinaga, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte whose water treatment system is operated by two operators one of which is Ben Brant who represented the First Nation in the Water Cup Challenge.





Ben Brant & Elizabeth Brant Southern Cup Winners & Montgomery Smith, Northern Cup Winner

The AWWAO coordinator and the board of directors extends its gratitude to the entrants and the judges of this year's Water Taste Challenge Cup. We encourage all member First Nation operators to participate in this fun and revealing event and look forward to seeing you there next year with a gallon of your finest treated drinking water.



Chi Miigwetch all!

Author: PTangie

## *Chippewas of Rama Water Treatment Plant Tour*

The Chippewas of Rama First Nation Water Treatment Plant was built in 1996, and upgraded in 2000. It is classified as a Class II Treatment Plant and with Class I Distribution. It serves approximately 365 private homes and 22 commercial buildings including the casino and hotel.

The facility consists of chemical coagulation, rapid mixing, flocculation and sedimentation followed by rapid sand filtration. The treatment consists of a chemically enhanced gravity filtration process using Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and Stern Pac. Sodium Hypochlorite is used for disinfection. In total we have approximately 15.3 kilometres of pipe in our distribution system, and 125 fire hydrants.

Our water source is drawn from Lake Couchiching using a 250mm diameter pipe installed 100m off shore in 4.3m of water. The raw water is gravity fed into our Low Lift Station where we have 3 x 15hp pumps to draw it to our plant. CO<sub>2</sub> has been added at this point to adjust the pH of the raw water so the chemical addition reacts better with the water. The water then goes through the clarifiers followed by the filters that is topped with Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) which helps with taste and odour. Sodium hypochlorite is added for disinfection. We have 4 underground reservoirs and 3 clear wells inside with a storage capacity of approximately 4,500 m<sup>3</sup>, and an elevated storage tank with a capacity of approximately 800 m<sup>3</sup>. We have 2 x 20hp domestic pumps for normal day to day operation. We also have 2 x 50hp and 3 x 100hp pumps for fire protection for the community.

The plant is staffed 8 hours a day 7 days a week, and there is always an operator on-call 24 hours a day. The staff consists of a total of 7 Water Treatment Plant Operators who are licenced in both Water Treatment and Distribution as well as Wastewater Treatment and Collections and we cross train at both the Water and Wastewater Plants.

Every year we take part in celebrating World Water Day with our Community. The community participates in a water ceremony across the road from the Water Treatment Plant at our lake front. This event has grown over the years with more people joining us in giving thanks and prayers to our water. It's a great feeling to see so many people who care and want to help protect our precious resource. Water is our greatest gift and it is everyone's responsibility to protect it.

Miigwech,  
Chad McRae  
WTP/WWTP Manager



Chippewas of RAMA  
First Nation



## *In Memoriam: Jay Benedict(1961-2020)*

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Jay Benedict. Jay was the Director of Technical Services in Akwesasne and worked for over 37 years bettering our communities. He was a member of OFNTSC for well over 25 years and was a mentor to many and was also a proponent for AWWAO. He will be sadly missed by all!



### **Obituary**

Jay Benedict, Teonietathe, 58, was called home by creator on Enniskó:wa/March 30, 2020. Surrounded with love, Jay has found peace after a lengthy illness. His spirit is carried on through his parents Charles (Buster) and Pat Benedict, his wife Lisa Francis-Benedict, his daughters Dorian Benedict and partner Pat Tasse-Phillips, Janisa Benedict and partner Jake Martin, his grandchildren Taeys, Ever, Kansas, Kennen and Indi Mae, his siblings and their wives Keith (Keesee) and Nola, Billy, Willie and Darla, Quinn and April, and many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Jay, was Turtle clan and a self-proclaimed lifetime member of Akwesasne. He was a loving Husband, Father, Tota Man, Uncle, Son and beloved friend to many. Jay was born on Ohiarí:ha/June 27, 1961 in Cornwall, Ontario to Pat and Buster Benedict, who along with his family are very proud of all of the great accomplishments Jay achieved throughout his life and during his many years of service to the Akwesasne Mohawk community. Jay exuded a passion and dedication toward his role as the MCA, Director of Technical Services (DTS). With his 37 years of service he leaves behind a legacy of successful projects, strong mentorship of Akwesasne's young engineers, and an overall desire to improve the community as a whole.

When Jay wasn't in the office you would find him enjoying pontoon rides with his loving family on the waterways of the St. Lawrence, which he treasured so dearly. He also enjoyed working the garden, and riding his four-wheeler. He was always one to enjoy a good joke and will be remembered for his laughter and smile. He took a great deal of pride in his home, his beloved wife Lisa, his daughters Dori and Janisa and his grandchildren. He found tremendous joy in being a Tota Man who loved hugging and giving his infamous mustache-adorned kisses to his grandbabies. You would find him a frequent fan at their Lacrosse, Hockey and dance recitals, or taking them along on his adventures hiking mountain tops, or skiing the slopes. He truly cherished his family and the time he spent with each of his loved ones. His passion for life will be remembered and his impact on the community will be greatly missed.

# Drinking Water Training for First Nations Communities



## **Managing Drinking Water Systems in First Nations Communities** *A course for First Nations Chief and Council, management and supervisors with responsibility for drinking water systems.*

This one-day course is designed as an introduction to management practices related to the drinking water systems in First Nations communities. The course provides a high-level overview of drinking water systems, explores components of effective drinking water system management and provides resources and practical tools for consideration in developing or making improvements to current practices.

## **Entry-Level Course for Drinking Water Operators**

This course provides operators with an understanding of water characteristics and public health, water science and mathematics, treatment and distribution systems. It is delivered over a two-week period.

- Week 1 – facilitated self-study with face-to-face instructor support
- Week 2 – classroom instruction and hands-on component delivered by two instructors

**Registration fees for these courses are free of charge, expenses will be reimbursed**

**We can bring training to you!**  
**Contact us to find out how.**

Visit our website: [wcwc.ca/firstnationszone](http://wcwc.ca/firstnationszone)

 [www.facebook.com/FirstNationsDrinkingWaterTraining/](https://www.facebook.com/FirstNationsDrinkingWaterTraining/)

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