



A Newsletter for Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators!

THE WATERDRUM

September 2019

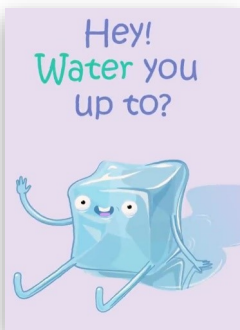
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Save the Date!!

AWWAO will be having their 25th AGM & Training Conference & Tradeshow the week of February 24th, 2020 at the Casino Rama, Rama, ON.

Our event features CEUs, keynote speakers, 5th Annual Tradeshow, Water Cup Challenge, and an opportunity for professional development and networking opportunities. More information to follow!!



Sponsored by:



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
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Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario





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 Keewatinook 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

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



2019 AWWAO Awards



GCIndigenous

Canada

Congratulations to the winners of the 2019 Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario Operator of the Year and Water Taste Test awards! The Government of Canada commends the efforts of the recipients in ensuring their communities continue to have access to safe, reliable drinking water.

2019 Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario Awards

Water Taste Test Winner, southern Ontario
Whitefish River, prize accepted by Andrew Recollet

Water operator of the year, southern Ontario
Aaron Beaucage, Nipissing First Nation

Water operator of the year, northern Ontario
Charles Friday, Seine River First Nation

Water Taste Test Winner, northern Ontario
Constance Lake, prize accepted by Michael Gillis



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Canada



Charles Friday

I began my water journey in mid 2012 on the Seine River First Nation. Immediately in the job interview I was interested in the subject matter. I accepted the challenge and took home the 40 hour pre-study course that I worked through and mailed in with a heart full of doubt. I scored well enough to get my position and begin my facility education. It was an intimidating setting but I chose to persevere.

I showed up to work daily with the expectation of facing another challenge that would offer me another lesson that I could build my skill set upon. We were up against everything that could go wrong and we usually faced it with what was available to handle it. With a small supply of maintenance equipment and spare parts we ran a tight ship.

I passed my OIT in November 2012. I worked there for the next 4 years on a part time basis. In that time I achieved my Class 1 WT and Entry Level. In that time I had experienced many types of situations that were both intense and urgent.

When the opportunity presented itself I would bring the enthusiasm I held for my duties to our CEU training courses and relate them to the class as examples of what we all face as a working group.

In time, my enthusiasm for the job went noticed and I was able to secure an internship with my Tribal Council, Pwi-di-goo-zing Ne-yaa-zhing.

From my current position in the development of trained and experienced operators I enjoy helping others and seeing them rise. With that outlook I operate as an assist to my First Nation communities who are looking to develop a long term commitment with individuals who care for the objectives of a safe and clean water producing facility.

Over time I have accumulated enough experience to achieve a Class 2 WT certificate , write my Class 1 Distribution and pass.

I've passed my WWT1 exam also. It was a subject that holds my interest because of the difference in knowledge you must acquire in order to meet those regulation guidelines effectively. I am on a path of learning how to be a better service person to our area operators.

It is my interest to be available to assist my 7 First Nations communities. I have been exposed to a lot of different experiences from each specific setting. It's like day one again on my first job to enter into a situation that requires a plan to execute a solution in a short period of time. From an operators point of view I like to plan our group training activities with topics that are relative to current events in area facilities or specific goals of a community to develop an operator to see them into the future with confidence.

If there is one message I can pass along, it would be that you must carry yourself in Confidence ! You will Succeed !

Charles Friday



Charles Friday



Congratulations to Charles Friday on being named Northern Operator of the Year by Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association!



AWWAO Vice chairperson, Wes Morriseau presented the plaque to Charles Friday on May 2, 2019.



Northern Exam Prep Week Timmins

AWWAO held a one week certification and CEU session (June 10-14, 2019) in Timmins for First Nation Operators culminating in the OWWCO Exam. There was a total of 35 operators in attendance. World Water Operator Training Company Inc. (WWOTC) and Hany Jadaa provided the training for these courses.



Congratulations to Joanne Archibald for winning the iPad.



Northern Exam Prep Week Timmins



CLASSES



Northern Exam Prep Week Timmins

The courses and instructors for the certification week were: Dave Russell (OIT) , Mohammed Karim (WT I & II) and Hany Jadaa WTIII & IV.

AWWAO Director, Phil Tangie presented the gift cards to the instructors.



Congratulations! You've run the course and passed the exam! There are no secrets of success. It is the result of preparation and hard work. The AWWAO Board would like to congratulate the following First Nation Operators for successfully completing their course and passing the exam.



*Liz Brant WTIII
Elvis Debassige WTIII
Gary Wheatley WTIV
Montgomery Smith WTII
Melissa Shawbonquit OIT
Phil Tangie WTIV*

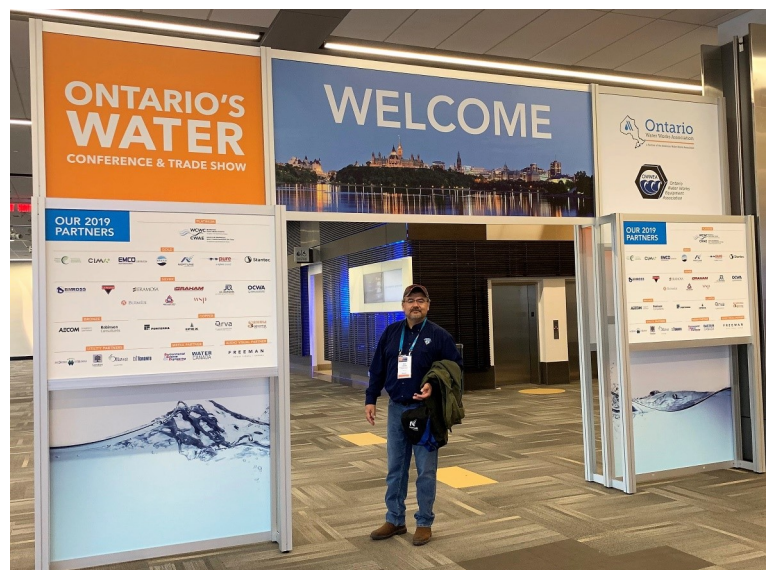


September 2019

Ontario's Water Conference & Tradeshow

The Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario attended the Ontario Water Conference & Tradeshow in May 2019 in Ottawa at the Shaw Centre.

The Conference continues to be the premier drinking water event in Ontario, consistently attracting over 900 delegates from all areas of our industry: operators and owners, manufacturers and suppliers, consultants, academics and regulators. The Trade Show had more than 100 exhibitors representing the manufacturers and suppliers of products and services to the water industry. This was a great opportunity to network, and keep informed about technical, regulatory, and equipment development which affect the industry.



Frankie McKay -Practical Certification Exam

My name is Frankie McKay Lead Operator for the Fly in Community of Wapekeka. Wapekeka First Nation (formerly known as Angling Lake First Nation) is a First Nation band government in the Canadian province of Ontario. An Oji-Cree community in the Kenora District, the community is located approximately 450 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout.

This system has been notionally classified as Class II by the Ministry of the Environment Ontario.

Distribution System Classification Class I
Estimated population served 439

The plant design capacity is 4.0 L/Sec (345 m³/day). The plant has been sized for treatment of maximum 4 L/sec. The plant process consists of two pre-fabricated biological filtration modules each consisting of a roughing filter, slow sand filter and a granular filter-absorber.

I was asked to write a few things about on how I was able obtain my Class 1 Water Ticket by Taking the Practical Certification Exam.

First we had to apply. To apply for the exam contact the Ontario Water Wastewater
> Certification Office (OWWCO) at 1-877-231-2122 or send an email to
> <<mailto:info@owwco.ca>> info@owwco.ca

If accepted there is a follow up letter from OWWCO .We also needed a letter of support from Chief and Council.

O&M manager Sidney Anderson set up hotel and meals and a date March 6 for exam with AWWAO Assessor Mohammed Karim.

ORO Bill Moore was in touch with Lisa Christie OWWCO Program Manager and Sara Campbell AWWAO Coordinator with possible study material needed for exam. They were a big help.

So Bill Moore and I made a list of possible study questions to help me prepare for exam. Mohammed and Bill Moore came a day early to discuss the specific features of the facility, and how the exam will work. Which helped to put me at ease and to see what I was getting myself into?

The next day we did an oral exam started 8:00 stopped for a brief lunch done by roughly 16:00.

Now the hard part waiting for the results. I received an email April 5 from OWWCO Lisa Christie. I passed with a 97% I even impressed myself all that studying paid off I guess.

Just want to say thanks to Chief and Council, Sidney, Bill, STS staff, Mohammed, Lisa and Sara for their support.

Frankie McKay



*Frankie McKay Class 1 Water Treatment
Wapekeka Ontario*

Update: Practical Certification Exams for Operators of First Nations

The Aboriginal Water and Wastewater Association of Ontario (AWWAO) is continuing to work with the Ontario Water Wastewater Certification Office (OWWCO) and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to deliver practical certification exams for eligible operators working in First Nation drinking water systems.

The Ministry has updated the eligibility criteria for the practical exams to allow more operators to participate in the program. The updated criteria can be found on [OWWCO's website](#).

What is a Practical Certification Exam?

- Practical exams are an alternative to written exams for experienced operators
- The exam occurs on-site at your facility and allows you to answer questions orally or through demonstration
- If you pass the exam, you will receive a conditional certificate, valid only in the First Nation community where you work.

How much does it cost to take a Practical Certification Examination and get a certificate?

- The cost to take a practical certification examination is the same as writing a paper-based exam, or \$140.00.
- The certificate issuance fee is an additional \$175.00.

How to apply

To receive a practical certification examination application package, contact OWWCO at 1-877-231-2122 or <https://owwco.ca/contact/>.

Visit www.owwco.ca/practical-certification-examinations/ to learn more.



KCE Operator Highlight-AWWAO Vice Chairperson

O P E R A T O R H I G H L I G H T



Wes has been employed in the water and wastewater trade since 2001. He was the water plant operator at the Rainy River First Nation from 2001 to 2004, CRTP trainer at Pwi-Di-Goo-Zing Nee-Yaa-Zhing Tribal Councils for OFNTSC from 2004 to 2012, and is the present WTP ORO for Rainy River FN. Wes is also on the AWWAO board.

Wes is an automotive service technician, a truck and coach technician, an internal combustion alternative fuel technician, and a petroleum equipment mechanic helper. He has his Water Treatment Level 3, Water Distribution Level 2, Wastewater Treatment Level 1, Wastewater Collection Level 1, and his Water Quality Analyst. He is a member of the Couchiching First Nation (Fort Frances). Wes occasionally provides

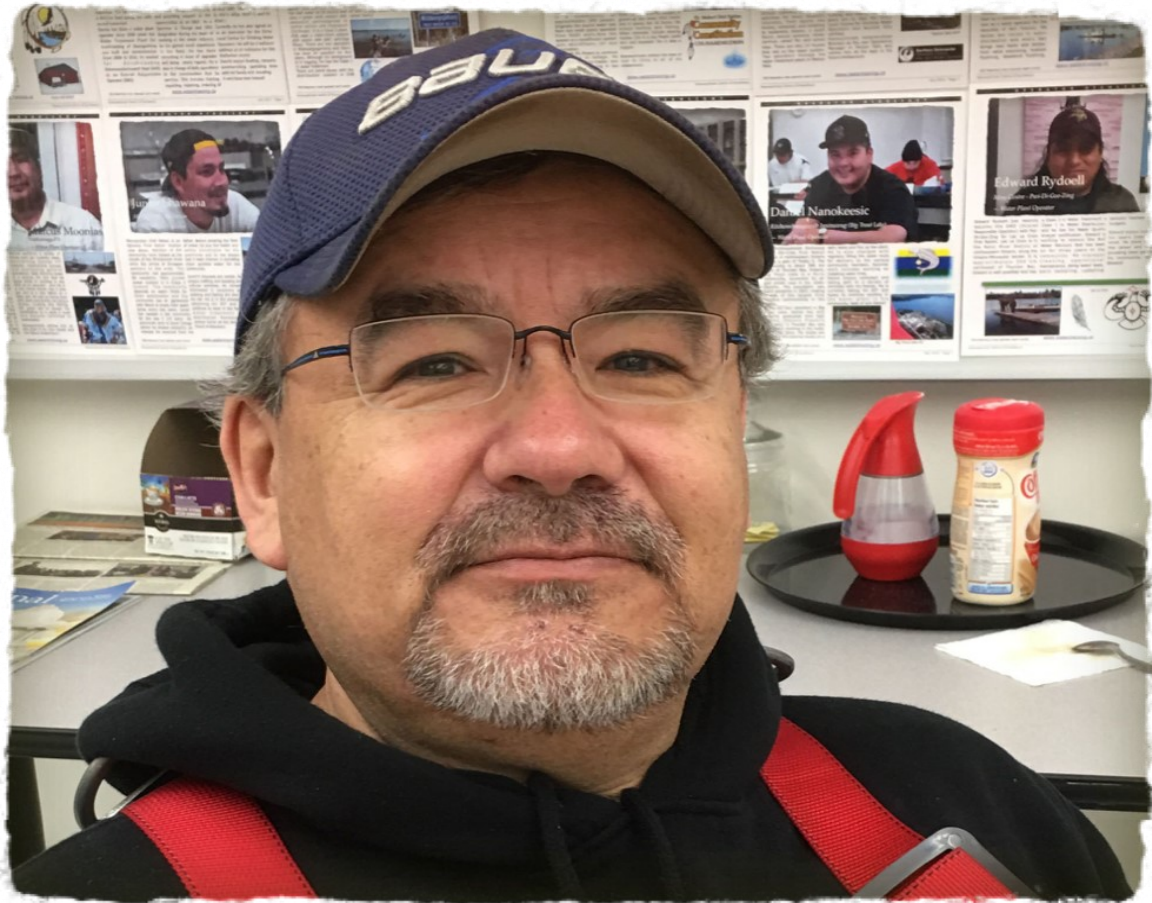
instruction services at the Keewaytinook Centre.

Wes plays guitar in a band called Centre-line and in the summer has enjoyed stock car racing for the last 31 years.



KCE Operator Highlight-AWWAO Treasurer Steve Laronde

O P E R A T O R H I G H L I G H T



Steve is originally from Temagami First Nation which is located on the Bear Island Indian Reserve in the middle of Lake Temagami. Steve worked for 15yrs as the Water Wastewater and Heavy Equipment Operator.

Steve loves playing & watching sports - like hockey, baseball, football. He also loves hunting, fishing and the outdoors.

Steve was a great asset to the KO organization.



**TEMAGAMI
FIRST NATION**

He has a Class II in Water Treatment, a Class I in Distribution, and a Class I in Wastewater Collection.

Steve worked for the KO Chiefs Tribal Council for one and a half years as the Overall Responsible Operator (ORO).

Along with other operators, he took care of five First Nations water and wastewater plants, and their distribution.



Temagami - an ancient canoe country



First Nations Water News Update



After a busy month for First Nations water news, Environmental Science & Engineering Magazine takes a look at several new developments across Canada.

Plant Upgrade and Water Distribution Expansion

Up to \$6 million in funding from Indigenous Services Canada has been announced to advance the design and construction of a water treatment plant upgrade and water distribution expansion for Nibinamik First Nation in northern Ontario.

Once complete, the project will eliminate the drinking water advisory that has affected the community of 360 residents since 2013. Construction is set to begin in spring 2020 and is projected to be completed in spring 2021.

“What Nibinamik needs is a long-term, reliable solution to our infrastructure crisis,” said Nibinamik First Nation Chief Johnny Yellowhead in a media statement. “With this funding Canada is finally signalling that it sees the need to provide more than a band-aid approach and that is a very positive step forward,” he added.

The First Nations reserve is located approximately 500 km northwest of Thunder Bay.



Eabametoong First Nation in Ontario declares state of emergency over drinking water

National News | July 15, 2019 by APTN National News



The Eabametoong First Nation in northern Ontario has declared a state of emergency after its drinking water supply had higher levels of trihalomethanes (THMs) than provincial standards allow.

“The discovery of high levels of trihalomethanes, combined with and ongoing issues with our water and wastewater systems, has forced us to declare a State of Emergency to protect the health of our community,” said Chief Harvey Yesno in a statement released Monday.

“Many of these issues have been ongoing for decades, but we are especially concerned about the effects of trihalomethanes on our most vulnerable community members, including newborn children, youth, the elderly and infirmed.”

According to the community which sits about 370 km due north of Thunder Bay, water quality lab tests taken by an independent lab on June 28 to June 30 indicate high levels of THMs, exceeding the allowance of 100 micrograms per litre Ontario Drinking Water Objectives by 122-182 per cent.

According to the website of the National Institute of Health in the U.S., THMs are the result of a reaction between the chlorine used for disinfecting tap water and natural organic matter in the water. At elevated levels, THMs have been associated with negative health effects such as cancer and adverse reproductive outcomes.”

The community says the issue is in the water distribution system.

“It is unacceptable that Eabametoong has been on a boil water advisory for 18 years. Progress has been made to upgrade our infrastructure, but our members cannot be expected to consume water that fails to meet Ontario drinking water standards,” said Yesno.

“We have a responsibility to protect the health of our members and will do everything we can until our water issues are permanently resolved.”

According to the release, the community has started an “emergency response plan” and has been forced to rely on reverse osmosis units to draw water for drinking and cooking.

Community members could notice a foul smell and taste if they use the tap water.

Yesno said he has contacted Indigenous Services and has requested “immediate action from the Government of Canada.”

Water Cup Challenge Trophy Delivery to Whitefish River First Nation

The Southern Cup (formally called the Derek Kamanga Water Taste Challenge Cup) winning entry was from Whitefish River, also known as Birch Island First Nation.

Jason Fox, AWWAO Secretary presented the cup on behalf of the association to Mark Shawanda.



Whitefish River First Nation wins fifth Water Challenge Cup title for best water in Ontario



Whitefish River First Nation water plant operator Mark Shawanda stands in front of a collection of first place Water Taste Championship Cups the plant has secured at the Aboriginal Water Wastewater Association of Ontario since the award was implemented in 2013. The plant has once again secured a first place finish at the association conference held in Thunder Bay this year.

WHITEFISH RIVER FIRST NATION—Water plant operator Mark Shawanda has taken home plenty of prizes for water quality in the decades he has worked for the Whitefish River First Nation in its water plants.

“We have won at least three of these annual awards as having the best water with the bands in Ontario,” said Chief Shining Turtle. “What that means is our operators care about water and are proud of the work that they do.” The chief noted that the community is also very proud of their staff and the work they do.

Standing watch over the community’s drinking water supply is a responsibility Mr. Shawanda has never taken lightly. In fact, when he first stepped into the job, the Walkerton water disaster was all over the news and he wasn’t at all sure he wanted to take on that role.

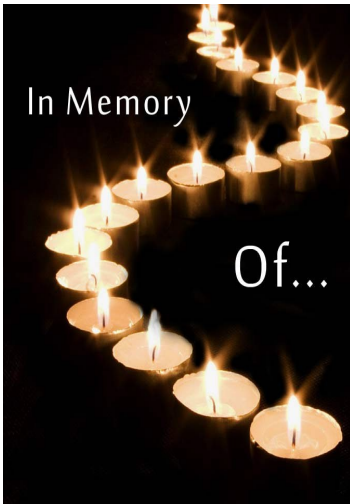
But he found security in doing things strictly by the book and keeping his credentials well up to speed. He said he was very aware of the importance of ensuring safe water to the community that he serves.

The Water Challenge Cup competition panel consists of four anonymous judges who judge the competitors on a series of exercises. “We had a lot of different things we had to do,” said Mr. Shawanda.

These days, Mr. Shawanda spends a lot of time at the water plant, assisted by Amy Waboose who has her water quality qualifications and will be writing her operator’s exam in the next couple of weeks and Gerry McGregor, Mr. Shawanda’s backup operator.

Soon there will be another cup to add to the collection atop the bookshelf in the water plant office—an ongoing tradition Mr. Shawanda and his colleagues intend to keep going.

Tyson Denning



Tyson Denning
December 22nd, 1992 – Saturday, June 8th, 2019

Obituary for Tyson John Sinclair Denning

Suddenly in Wiarton, Ontario on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at the age of 26. Loved son of Lori Horan (Greg) and John Denning (Jenn). Cherished brother of Cole and Troy. Beloved step-brother of Colton and Braden. Loving grandson of Margaret Denning and Jack & Carole Terrell. Predeceased by his grandparents Mervin Denning, Barry and Mary Jane Becken. Special nephew of Cathy Denning (Pat), Cyndi Cramer (David), Dan Denning, David Denning, Andrea Kary (Jeff), Mark Terrell (Melissa) and Kent Terrell (Jeanette). Tyson will also be greatly missed by his many cousins, former band mates other relatives and many friends. After completing high school in Orangeville Tyson went to the U of G and earned Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies. He then attended Fleming College and earned a Certificate in Advanced Water Systems Operations Management. Tyson has been working in Cape Croker at the Neyaashiingmiing First Nations Water Treatment Plant.

He was a gentle soul with a kind heart, wide smile and big laugh. He will be greatly missed. A tree will be planted in memory of Tyson in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville.



Tyson was not only my employee, he was like family to me – a true friend. I remember when Tyson came for his interview, he lit up the room with his personality, smarts and honesty. I hired him for his many traits that made him the person he was. I got to know Tyson well after he started work as he lived with me for 3 months, while he looked for an apartment. He was an eager, caring guy who wanted to prove himself and he did. When he first started he was an O.I.T. in water and just achieved his Class II this year. Tyson touched many people's lives in the 2 years he was at Nawash and had a huge attendance at his services from Nawash. He will be missed by many.

Fred Dubeau



Notices

AWWAO recognizes that there are First Nation Operators in Ontario who go above and beyond doing a good job; they provide an example for others of the many facets of being an Operator, particularly in supporting the other activities of other Operators. They make the 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.” If you know of a First Nation Operator who is an AWWAO Member that fits this bill, please **nominate him/her**. AWWAO will be announcing a North and South Winner at the upcoming 25th AGM & Training Conference & Tradeshow , February 2020.

The lucky recipient will receive the Operator of the Year Award (North and South) and will be included in the AWWAO Waterdrum!

Nominate Now

Please fax or email form to:

Fax: 807-223-1222 Email: info@awwao.org

JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

1. 2020 Membership renewals will be sent out shortly.
2. Save the date for the upcoming 25th AGM & Training Conference & Tradeshow.
3. Nominate an operator!

Board of Directors

Ian Fortin - Chairperson
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