

**ONSITE WASTEWATER NEWS BULLETIN****ISSUE #3 | JULY 5, 2016**

There are many new developments! Here is an outline of the most significant ones. Stay tuned for additional bulletins coming soon.

**ASTTBC Staffing Changes**

In March 2016, Jim Andersen, DipIT, ROWP was appointed Manager of the program. Many thanks to Bob Burns, former Manager, for his years of valuable service. Bob remains active in the industry, now with more time for his very busy ROWP practice.

**Registration Support**

Jim's workload involves one on one contact with applicants for ROWP certification. The goal is to clarify the requirements for certification, and help applicants develop their online application to the Onsite Wastewater Certification Board. In a typical situation Jim connects with each applicant using screen sharing software. In this way the two can look at the OWCB Certification Policy, the ASTTBC web site resources including work document examples, webinar recordings, learning exercises, and so on. The approach seems well received. The result is improved quality of application submissions - better aligned with the Board's expectations for approval. If you are considering adding a category of certification (or a first time ROWP certification) we encourage you to contact Jim to help you submit a successful application.

**More ROWPs Needed!**

BC needs more ROWPs, especially Maintenance Providers and Private Inspectors. Those areas of practice are becoming more prevalent, with an improved market for Maintenance Providers and Private Inspectors. The initiatives of several Regional Districts to promote maintenance are making a difference. Also the Real Estate Industry is more inclined to recommend inspections, and lenders more often require inspections as a condition of mortgage approval. Existing MPs and PIs have experienced significant increases in business. We don't have enough Maintenance Providers and Private Inspectors to properly meet the demand, especially outside the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. Adding Maintenance Provider and/or Private Inspector categories of certification can provide great business opportunities. Contact us for assistance.

**New OWCB Certification Policy**

In November, 2015 we enacted a new Certification Policy.

Check it out at <http://owrp.asttbc.org/p/documents.php>

The new Policy brings some very significant changes. Here's a brief outline of changes that may affect you:

#### Policy 2.0 Certification and Registration Categories.

To provide maintenance or inspection services a ROWP must have the corresponding certification.

#### Policy 3.0 Certification Criteria and Appendix 1.

Certification criteria no longer requires completion of specific training. Rather, applicants are now required to report and demonstrate an extensive list of Occupational Competencies.

Most applicants will find it necessary to complete formal training in order to achieve the competencies but have the option of attaining the required knowledge and skills by other means. For example, a few weeks ago Jim chatted with an applicant who earned a Masters degree in Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has significant experience in wastewater. Presumably, he could 'skip' much of the training that the rest of us required!

The other side of that coin is that many of the required competencies (as per Policy Appendix 1) can probably not be attained within the entry level training programs. Additional experience and self study are required.

#### Policy 5.0 Work Experience Requirements.

Work experience requirements are substantially reduced. The requirement for Planning or Installation is now just three systems (including at least one pressure system). For Maintenance just five systems (including at least one pressure and one type 2). For Inspection, the requirement is intentionally vague – with no specific number of system inspections.

The 'old timers' will recall the requirement in 2005 – 2011 was fifteen systems for Installation; twenty systems for Planning; thirty systems for Maintenance. So things have changed significantly. This may seem odd. It has been the topic of much debate within ASTTBC and with other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Health and Industry groups. The short version is – it's a response to very strong criticism along the lines of 'ASTTBC poses unfair obstacles to registration'. The issue has been further complicated by inter provincial trade agreements, whereby applicants with out-of-province certifications can apply for BC ROWP designation without a specific experience requirement. The vast majority of new ROWPs in the previous three years have come to us via the inter provincial route. So our reduced experience requirement could be considered as a 'more fair' approach for those applicants coming through the BC pathway to registration and more reasonable for existing ROWPs who wish to add a category of certification, since those applicants do need to demonstrate wastewater experience.

### Policy 6.0 Transfer.

Applicants requesting transfer from another province shall be required to successfully complete a Jurisprudence Exam (including questions about the SSR and SPM). We have launched a revised version of this exam.

### Policy 6.3 Practice Assessment Review and Appendix 4.

All applicants will undergo a Practice Assessment Review (PAR). The goal is to complete a PAR within six months of registration, with some latitude for those who have not found work in our industry within that time frame. We have begun rolling out PARs, with much more to come.

### Policy 5.7 Mentoring, Field Training and Field Assessment and Appendix 3.

New, cool and helpful. You can now access mentoring and training from ASTTBC. We have designated specialists who can help identify competency gaps and how to fill those gaps. This can be very helpful for new applicants and existing ROWPs seeking additional categories of registration. It is an option for those who need to gain experience under the oversight or supervision of an Authorized Person. Fees apply.

This is not intended to replace the introductory training provided by training organizations. Rather, field training and mentoring by ASTTBC will serve as an option to achieve advanced competencies, or for Continuing Professional Development ... and as noted above – to work with an Authorized Person as required by the Sewerage System Regulation for ‘real world’ projects.

### **SPM orientation training as a condition of on-going registration.**

As most of you know, we enacted a requirement in 2014 for all ROWPs to complete orientation to the new SPM Version 3. Most ROWPs attended one of the thirteen workshops offered in eleven different locations from October 2014 to January 2015. Over 500 people attended those. For those who missed that opportunity, we offered ten live webinars from September to November 2015. Approximately 35 persons attended those. For the remaining ROWPs who were unable to take the webinars, we posted recordings on our website. Also on the website are learning exercises intended to prepare ROWPs for the required SPM3 Exam.

Approximately 75 ROWPs had not met this requirement as of a few months ago. Notifications have been sent ... a few times. Approximately 10 of those resigned; approximately 35 have agreed to complete the exam and approximately 30 have not responded. Yikes.

To continue as a ROWP, those folks need to complete the requirement ... just as the rest of us have done. Our observation is that many ROWPs were not entirely pleased at the requirement, but after attending the workshops or webinars were satisfied with the outcome and gained an appreciation of the goal shared by ASTTBC and the Ministry of Health - to ensure Authorized Persons are familiar with the new standards.



We encourage those who have not yet done so – return that form (sent only to those who have not already met the requirement). Indicate whether you wish to take the Exam or resign. We hope you intend to continue as a ROWP. Contact Jim for help. He can show you the learning resources and webinar to help you pass the exam. We much prefer providing that assistance rather than removing registrations for non compliance.

**Other things ...**

ASTTBC is working with Health Authorities to develop more consistent procedures for Filings and Certification submissions.

ASTTBC is engaged with the Ministry of Health to promote maintenance and to better define the allowable scope of work for Maintenance Providers for type 3 systems.

ASTTBC is working with other provinces to move towards better alignment of Policies for certification and wastewater practices in general.

ASTTBC has launched online resources for applications, including online declarations of competency, submission of work examples, references, etc.

That is all for now. Much more to share in upcoming bulletins. We invite your comments and questions. We also encourage you to review the ASTTBC – Onsite Wastewater web site for information and answers to common questions <http://owrp.asttbc.org/p/index.php> If you cannot find what you are looking for, connect with Jim Andersen at the ASTTBC office 604 585 2788 ext 254 or e-mail [jandersen@asttbc.org](mailto:jandersen@asttbc.org)

Jim Andersen, DiplT, ROWP, Manager, Onsite Wastewater Program  
ASTTBC office 604 585 2788 ext 254  
[jandersen@asttbc.org](mailto:jandersen@asttbc.org)

**Important notice**

**Please be advised that we want to distribute ROWP Bulletins by email in future. If you want to continue receiving paper versions by regular mail, please notify staff at [fbracht@asttbc.org](mailto:fbracht@asttbc.org). Also ensure we have your current email and address on file. Thanks for your cooperation!**