



WATER RINGS

7 Authority Employees Receive Operator Certification

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. 7 Employees Receive Operator Certification
2. Customer Questionnaire Results
3. Watershed Protection: What You Can Do To Get Involved
4. Your Questions Answered - Can Lawn Care Impact Local Drinking Water Quality?



North Wales Water Authority
P.O. Box 1339
200 West Walnut Street
North Wales, PA 19454-0339
(215) 699-4836
www.nwwater.com
email: wizard@nwwater.com

Pennsylvania, like many other states, has an Operators Certification Program that requires each water utility to have at least 1 certified water works operator on staff to make informed decisions concerning the quality and quantity of the water you receive. An operator becomes certified by taking approved course work, serving an apprenticeship of 3 to 6 years and taking the certification exam.

At the North Wales Water Authority we believe that all of our operations personnel should be adequately trained and certified to make those decisions. There are many decisions made in the field on a daily basis which could

impact the service you receive, therefore, we encourage and reward our employees for obtaining certification.

The state administers the examination twice each year and we are proud to note that 7 more of our operations personnel have received their certifications. We now have 16 licensed operators to help insure the quality of the product that you utilize on a daily basis. We would like to congratulate the following employees:

Ray Bolton
Matt Brown
Matt Coletta
Jay Gerhart

Scott Grant
Michael Mayes
Mark Reilley



Pictured L to R: Ray Bolton, Mark Reilley, Scott Grant and Matt Brown
Missing: Matt Coletta, Michael Mayes and Jay Gerhart

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Question: *Can lawn care impact local drinking water quality?*

Answer: The safety and fate of herbicides, pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers applied to residential lawns remains somewhat of a mystery. It seems to depend on whom one talks to - environmentalists, scientists, lawn care professionals or water providers - as to what answer you will get.

The fact that enormous quantities of these products are being applied to lawns is beyond dispute. The key question is how much of these products are reaching local streams or leaching into groundwater supplies. Stream researchers are frequently detecting a wide variety of these components in both dry weather and storm runoff conditions from residential watershed areas.

The US-EPA estimates that nearly 70 million pounds of active pesticide ingredients are applied to lawns each year. Collectively, residential lawns cover over 30 million acres of our country's landscape. Homeowner surveys suggest that herbicides, pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers are regularly applied on half of these acres.

The diversity of these treatments applied to lawns is staggering. Each individual compound differs greatly in its mobility through soil, persistence and potential aquatic impact. It is very difficult to ascertain the exact environmental risk each individual component of the treatment may pose.

While residents show an increasing awareness about the links between lawn care and water quality, their primary objective still seems to be a lush looking lawn. Monitoring drinking water supplies for these products remains a continuous process.

Customer Questionnaire Results

The North Wales Water Authority continually seeks to improve the customer service we deliver to the 25,000 customers in our system. We most recently hired an outside market research firm to conduct a baseline customer satisfaction survey. We would like to extend our thanks to the 1,144 customers who responded to the survey, which resulted in a 23% response rate.

Customer feedback is an essential element of our continuous improvement program.

The survey results indicated that the large majority of customers, over eight out of ten, are satisfied or very

satisfied with the North Wales Water Authority and eighty percent of the respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their tap water.

We do realize there is always room for improvement and therefore we are currently seeking ways to address the concerns that the respondents indicated in the comment area of the survey. Please look for future articles in *Water Rings* and visit our website at [www.nwwater.com](#) for additional information.

Watershed Protection: What You Can Do To Get Involved

Most recently, watershed protection has evolved into community partnerships with local water utilities, municipalities, DEP, and various organizations. With this in mind, the North Wales Water Authority decided to become proactive in this arena. We are strongly urging customers to protect their watersheds by educating them on the everyday pollutants they utilize at home and how they can preserve the watershed located in

their backyards. We are currently working with local townships and DEP to organize a watershed association for the North Branch Neshaminy Creek and are seeking volunteers that would be interested in being involved in this organization.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Kelly Kendall-Kelly at 215-699-4836.

WATER RINGS IS PUBLISHED
QUARTERLY TO SERVE OUR
CUSTOMERS IN:

NORTH WALES BOROUGH AND LOWER GWYNEDD, MONTGOMERY, NEW BRITAIN,
UPPER DUBLIN, UPPER GWYNEDD, AND WHITPAIN TOWNSHIPS.