AWT OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

A joint committee from the California-Nevada American Waterworks Association (CA-NV AWWA) and California Water Environment Association (CWEA) is completing a new voluntary Advanced Water Treatment Operator (AWTO) Certification program, which includes AWTO Grades 3-5. To enter the AWTO certification series at the grade 3 level, an operator needs to hold a California or Nevada minimum grade 3 or higher certification in drinking water treatment or wastewater treatment. CA-NV AWWA and CWEA are planning to launch the certification exams in Spring 2019.

**Advanced Water Treatment processes include:**
- Ozone and biologically active filtration
- Microfiltration, ultrafiltration and membrane bioreactors
- Reverse osmosis
- UV/Advanced Oxidation Processes
- Adsorption/Exchange

**The need for another certification program was seriously evaluated**
- Number of AWT systems is increasing; current water/wastewater certifications do not address AWT
- Several groups have recommended a joint water and wastewater AWTO certification program: Division of Drinking Water Expert Panel and Advisory Group on direct potable reuse, California Urban Water Agencies, the Water Research Foundation and various utilities
- AWT is integral to potable reuse and the California State Water Board is participating in the joint committee and encouraging the AWTO certification process.

**Significant work has been completed to date by CA-NV AWWA, CWEA and the committee:**
- Job Analysis for AWT operators
- Range of knowledge development by subject matter experts
- Development of examination questions by subject matter experts
- Determination of minimum qualifications for AWT certification
- Evaluation of possible changes to State operator certification regulations and statutes to provide credit for job experience that allows advancement of AWT operators

**Next phase of the program deployment**
- Launch of operator certification exam/programs
- Training webinars for operators planning to take the exam
- Coordination with educational institutions to develop and teach curriculum for AWT operators
- Outreach to utilities and operators to encourage operator participation in certification program
- Transition of committee tasks for certification and training program