

Operations and Maintenance Infoshare Group Report to BACWA Board

Committee Meeting on: 01/25/17
Executive Board Meeting Date: 02/17/17
Committee Chair: Doug Little substituting for David Stoops

Committee Request for Board Action: None

15 attendees representing 7 member agencies

Highlights of New Items Discussed and Action Items

Succession Planning - Round Table Discussion

The topic for the committee's discussion was "Succession Planning- How to hire new staff, train in-house staff, and retain historical experience". Agencies reported on what they are doing to hire and train new staff, and what challenges they are finding in retaining the historical experience from their staff that may be nearing retirement.

Key points in the discussion were:

- Many agencies are experiencing high turnover rates due to retirement, especially amongst supervisors.
- Cities are having a difficult time retaining higher grade operators, compared to special districts, due to less competitive salaries and benefits
- Agencies in higher cost of living areas are also having a difficult time retaining staff due to housing challenges.
- Soft skills and interpersonal skills are very important when hiring staff, and many agencies have hiring practices to target these
- Several agencies maintain a formal "up or out" policy, whereby operators need to advance their certification in order to retain employment.
- Most agencies prefer to hire internally, or "test out" future staff via internships before hiring.
- Several agencies use leadership academies to train technical staff to be managers.
- Baywork maintains a website with hiring resources.

Next Meeting: April 26, 2017 (tentative), location tbd

The committee will discuss a potential special certification for advanced water treatment for recycled water. There will also be a roundtable discussion on a topic to be determined.