



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEIWPCC Receives EPA Environmental Merit Award

Lowell, Mass., June 27, 2013 – The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission is proud to announce that we have received a 2013 Environmental Merit Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s New England branch (Region 1) for our many years of work with multiple states on wastewater management schools. Such training is critical to prepare operators to take on management positions at wastewater treatment facilities, which have been experiencing a surge in retirements at the manager level. Through NEIWPCC’s work with states on management schools, we are helping the states develop pools of qualified men and women ready to fill wastewater managerial openings as they occur.

The effort began in 2007, when NEIWPCC played a pivotal role in setting up and coordinating the first such school—the Rhode Island Operator Boot Camp. The 13 participating operators, who were chosen for the program based on management potential, attended one class a month for 10 months, learning about the permitting process, media relations, budgeting, and much more. The success of the Rhode Island school led to NEIWPCC’s involvement with similar efforts in other states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In Maine, NEIWPCC’s training arm, JETCC, is now in its fourth year of conducting a management school that is open to wastewater and drinking water operators.

“It is an honor to be recognized for our efforts in working with and supporting the states on their management school programs,” said Tom Groves, NEIWPCC’s director of wastewater and onsite programs. “Our role varies from being very active in teaching and leading the program to a lesser role as program financial administrator. Whatever role the states need us to play is what we do. The schools are a worthwhile, low-cost way to prepare operators for management, and we’re pleased that the program template is being adopted not only regionally but across the country.”

Groves (below, center) and NEIWPCC’s Leeann Hanson, the coordinator of JETCC, accepted the award at EPA’s Environmental Merit Award ceremony, June 26 in Boston.



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