



# Minnesota Water Quality Association

*Representing the  
Water Quality Improvement Industry  
in Minnesota*

## Plumbing Code Remains on MWQA's Radar

MWQA Board members Bret Tangley and Jeff Hill met with David Ybarra and Gary Thaden of the plumbing industry in August to discuss MWQA's proposals to the Department of Labor and Industry.

MWQA is preparing legislation to be presented to the Minnesota Legislature in 2015. There are a number of concerns, and MWQA's proposals to the DLI could change the Water Conditioning industry. These proposals include new rules for license applications, changing enforcement interpretations, an apprenticeship program, and on-the-job-training of Water Conditioning Installers. DLI has only regulated Water Conditioning for five years, and since then Minnesota statutes have changed, and the playing field is still in flux.

"Scope of work" is likely to be the most contentious issue. Both Mr. Ybarra and Mr. Thaden expressed concern on the part of the plumbing industry that legislation floated last year caused significant resistance. That legislation would have allowed all water conditioning installations - commercial as well as residential - by water conditioning contractors.

"Scope of license" is hoped to be less contentious. MWQA plans to clarify the long-standing custom that licensing is not required for repairs to water conditioning equipment.

As we know, this work - 90% or more - is done by water conditioning personnel - commercial repair as well as residential, and repair is good training for those working to become licensed.

Apprenticeship and training programs will also be reviewed. Both can be endorsed through the DLI, and may work for the Water Conditioning industry. In order to validate skill for a broadened scope of plumbing, contractors will need to provide and demonstrate their knowledge base. Water conditioning knowledge was removed from State testing years ago, but an apprentice or on the job training program accepted by the state as a part of the water conditioning license application would reinstate and improve on that. The Water Quality Association's new and extensive training program could become a part of the Minnesota program, just as it has in Wisconsin.

MWQA does not believe that a higher level of regulation will serve the consumer or public health. What we do believe is that there is a regulatory structure in our future that is reasonable, where the regulators are well versed on our industry, allowing a path for qualified people to become licensed, with appropriate fees. In return, we must work for a closer cooperation and very high level of compliance by both plumbers and water conditioning contractors. That will serve the consumer and public health together.

# MWQA Convention Scheduled for October 8 - 9



Minnesota Water Quality Association will offer several opportunities to obtain Continuing Education at its annual convention on October 8-9. The event, planned for the Holiday Inn located in Lakeville, Minnesota, will feature seminars on reverse osmosis, Minnesota Plumbing Code, water softening and UV disinfection. CEU will be awarded, pending approval by WQA, Minnesota DOLI, and Wisconsin's Department of Safety and Professional Services.

New state regulations require proof of attendance via an online attendance system, as well as presentation of certificates to anyone who attends a class offering CEU.

The annual convention will feature a vendor fair, WQA certification exams, and an introduction to WQA's new Modular Education Program. Pre-registration for WQA exams and the MEP is required, and forms will be available with the convention packet that should reach your mailbox in the next few days.

All licensed individuals in Minnesota must now earn CEU in order to retain their Water Conditioning Journeyman or Master license. If you or your employees need CEU, you can get your credit at our annual meeting in October!

Wednesday's schedule tops off with an awards banquet recognizing many MWQA members who have supported the organization throughout the years. Sure to be a topic of discussion at this year's meeting will be the status of Minnesota's Plumbing Code, and MWQA's involvement in proposing changes to the Code that benefit the water quality improvement industry.

If you do not received a convention registration packet by August 29, or need more information, contact the MWQA office at [info@mwqa.com](mailto:info@mwqa.com) or 763-754-2123.

Registration materials will also be available on the MWQA website, with links provided on our Facebook page.



# WQA's New Modular Education Program Will Be Offered At MWQA Annual Convention

The Water Quality Association will offer its Modular Education Program at Minnesota's annual convention on October 8. WQA's Modular Education Program (MEP), which launched this year, mirrors the precise POU/POE training needs of today's water treatment companies. The MEP was crafted with essential input from both certified and noncertified member personnel, along with Cognitive Advisors, a learning design consulting company.

The MEP combines theory with practice, with the goal of maximizing on-the-job performance. All material is delivered online in "bite-sized" courses that are more manageable for full-time workers to integrate into their daily routine. Separate training plans are available for employees at every level, including non-technical office staff, sales and marketing personnel, installers, service technicians and system designers.



Dean Jarog will present the MEP seminar on Wednesday, October 8, at the MWQA convention. Registration forms and more detailed information will be available soon from MWQA. Questions about WQA's education and professional certification programs can be directed to Tanya Lubner at [tlubner@wqa.org](mailto:tlubner@wqa.org).

Presentation of the MEP in Minnesota follows the WQA's announcement in February that their professional certification program will be restructured. Beginning in March 2015, WQA will offer two advanced-level certifications – master water specialist and master service technician – and four core titles – certified water treatment representative, certified water specialist (CWS), certified installer (CI) and certified service technician.

While the title will live on, the CWS designation will cease to exist in its current form. Certified professionals holding the titles of CWS-V and CWS-VI will be redesignated as master water specialists,

and professionals holding the titles of CWS-I, CWS-II, CWS-III and CWS-IV will be redesignated simply as CWS. All those holding the CWS certification will be able to work through the advanced curriculum of the new MEP program to achieve the master water specialist title.

Individuals currently holding the CI designation will retain that title. They also will have the opportunity to progress to the level of certified service technician and subsequently to the master service technician level. Individuals currently holding the certified sales representative title will be redesignated as certified water-treatment representatives (CWR). Certified professionals also may pursue any other core certification title through the MEP.

Through the MEP, WQA will offer a variety of educational pathways designed for non-technical office staff, sales and marketing personnel, equipment installers, service technicians and system designers. Beginning March 2015, to become eligible for certification, all non-certified enrollees will be required to complete the foundational learning activities (offered at MWQA's convention), which consist of the basics curriculum badge followed by the fundamentals curriculum badge. Once the fundamentals badge is achieved, the learner may proceed to the core material, where they can choose from four different certification paths, including:

- The CWR path, appropriate for office staff, sales and marketing personnel;
- The CWS path, intended for system specifiers and designers;
- The CI path, geared toward equipment installers;
- The Certified Service Technician path, intended for service technicians.

After achieving the core-level certification, certified water specialists may go on to earn the master water specialist designation, while certified service technicians may pursue the title of master service technician.

# President's Message

By Mike Herman, MWQA President

Things are happening here at MWQA! Since the last newsletter the pace of events impacting the water quality industry has continued to increase. MWQA has offered two training sessions this year. The first was a six-hour course in preparation for those seeking to take the Water Conditioning license exam. The most recent session offered two classes for those needing CEU to renew their license.

MWQA will offer several classes at the upcoming convention in October. These classes will be designed to offer CEU for renewal of Water Conditioning (Journeyman, Master, Restricted Master Plumber) licenses..

In addition to the Education Committee's work on training, MWQA's Governmental Affairs Committee has been in high gear! MWQA's involvement in presenting language to the Plumbing Board prior to the implementation of the UPC (Uniform Plumbing Code) in Minnesota was very time consuming for those intimately involved. Currently the Governmental Affairs Committee is working diligently with State, Plumbing Board and other parties in presenting legislation to further clarify and allow for greater scope of work in the industry. Both of these endeavors have been costly for MWQA, as legal counsel was needed to draft language and proposed legislation in our favor. Currently our legal fund is depleted and MWQA estimates needing another \$45,000. Getting legislation presented that allows us to work in our industry and allows for an effective licensing process impacts each of us. With that being said, MWQA will be contacting all members and asking for donations to the legal fund. I know many of you provided extra funds when submitting your annual dues; unfortunately those funds will not cover this next important step MWQA is undertaking.

Please join us at our upcoming convention on October 8 - 9. This two-day event will provide updates on what MWQA is presenting to the State and how it affects the water quality improvement industry, updates from the National WQA, updates from our various committees, continuing education classes, and a presentation of WQA's new Modular Education Program. We will also host a small vendor fair followed by an evening banquet. WQA exams will be held on the second day of the event, so if you are interested in obtaining certification, order your study guides from WQA now.

For more information on any events at the convention, contact Lori Jansen at [info@mwqa.com](mailto:info@mwqa.com). Watch for registration forms in your mailbox soon.

**Welcome,  
New MWQA  
Members!**



21<sup>st</sup> Century Water Systems, Inc.  
Faribault, Minnesota  
[wefixwater123@gmail.com](mailto:wefixwater123@gmail.com)  
Randy Colgrove and Fred Lehrke

Canature USA, Inc.  
Golden Valley, Minnesota  
[ussupport@canaturena.com](mailto:ussupport@canaturena.com)  
Jamie Modlinski

Kandi Water Conditioning, Inc.  
Spicer, Minnesota  
[kandih2o@charter.net](mailto:kandih2o@charter.net)  
Dale Sweep

# Thank you, MWQA Members!

A big THANK YOU to those MWQA members, and non-members, who have donated to the Association's legal fund. Money donated to the legal fund is being used for expenses associated with the MWQA's monitoring of the proposed changes to the state Plumbing Code. MWQA Board members have spent countless hours meeting with legal counsel, attending Plumbing Board meetings, and talking with legislators and state officials. Our donation list as of this printing includes:

- *aba Water Systems*
- *Arrowhead Water, Cloquet*
- *Better Water Industries, Tyler*
- *Commers Water, Twin Cities*
- *Culligan of Albert Lea*
- *Culligan of Anoka*
- *Culligan of Austin*
- *Culligan of Bemidji*
- *Culligan of Benson*
- *Culligan of Brainerd*
- *Culligan of Buffalo*
- *Culligan of Cloquet*
- *Culligan of Faribault*
- *Culligan of Kasson*
- *Culligan of Minnetonka*
- *Culligan of Montevideo*
- *Culligan of Owatonna*
- *Culligan of Pine City*
- *Culligan of Rochester*
- *Culligan of St. Cloud*
- *Culligan of Stillwater*
- *Culligan of Wadena*
- *Culligan of Waseca*
- *Driessen Water, Northfield*
- *EcoWater of Marshall*
- *Erkens Water, Cold Spring*
- *Frakco, Luverne*
- *Haferman Water, Twin Cities*
- *Hellenbrand Water, Waunakee, Wis.*
- *Hidrocare of Forest Lake*
- *Jahnke Water, Olivia*
- *Mayer Soft Water/Culligan, St. Peter*
- *McGowan Water, Mankato*
- *Northland Water, Rosemount*
- *Robert B. Hill Company, Twin Cities*
- *Sterling Water, Eau Claire, Wisconsin & Sauk Center, Minn.*
- *Water Control, Ramsey*
- *Zachman's Watercare, Twin Cities*

*Donations to MWQA's legal fund are needed.*

*We have currently depleted our legal fund reserves and expect to require an additional*

*\$40,000 to \$50,000 to pursue changes to legislation in Minnesota.*

*Your support is appreciated.*

# MWQA Offers CEU Opportunities for Members

By Scott Schiesser

This year has shown continued focus by MWQA to help members earn Continuing Education credits. The State of Minnesota now requires these credits to ensure proper licensing requirements are being met. Matt Palmersten and myself both conducted 2-hour classes on June 26, discussing UV application and Basic Water Softener fundamentals.

Thank you to John Packard for offering the use of his Minnetonka facility to accommodate these classes. MWQA's role in offering education is two-fold: first to offer the essential CEU credits and secondly, to help members offer exceptional customer service. MWQA is working closely with the Minnesota DOLI, helping to take the lead to ensure our members are always well informed about the licensing requirements. Maintaining a high level of professionalism in our industry for the citizens of Minnesota has, and will always be, a goal for our association.

Call or email us today for more information on why being a member of MWQA will benefit you, your employees, and most importantly your customers.



## Wisconsin, WQA Working To Revise Licensing Program

WQA and the Water Quality Association of Wisconsin (WQAW) are making strides in their efforts to streamline licensing requirements for water treatment installers in Wisconsin. For more than two years, WQAW has pushed for changes to Wisconsin's Journeyman Plumber-Restricted Appliance (JPRA) licensing program, which offered very little in the way of training, resulting in a low success rate among exam takers.

WQAW proposed a solution that would allow third-party organizations such as WQA to develop a new exam, the content of which would have to be approved by the Wisconsin Department of Safety & Professional Services. Educational courses would also be developed by WQA to help prepare water treatment professionals for the new licensing exam.

The new educational program would be based on Wisconsin's plumbing code and would incorporate best practices and new water treatment technologies. The licensing rule will take effect on Sept. 1, 2014, and WQA will move forward with the educational programming soon after. For more information, contact David Loveday, WQA director of government affairs, at [dloveday@wqa.org](mailto:dloveday@wqa.org).

*You can always find MWQA on Facebook, or join the conversations on LinkedIn. Just search for "Minnesota Water Quality Association" and like or join our page.*

