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AUG 11 2009

August 7, 2009

Environmental Quality Board
P.O. Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

Subject: Public Comment
Environmental Quality Board – Proposed Rule Making / July 11, 2009
Ch. 302, Administration of the Water and Wastewater Systems Operators Certification Program
Regulation I.D. #7-433

Dear Board Members:

I am writing you in support of the many objections and concerns raised by the Pennsylvania Water Environment Association (PWEA) and the Eastern Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Operators Association (EPWPCOA) to the subject rule making.

I am a professional certified wastewater operator with thirty years experience and hold strong reservations particularly with the broadening personal liability language contained in these draft regulations for certified operators.

If adopted in its current form, I believe this regulation would encourage “uncertified” operators to avoid liability by remaining unlicensed. It could even possibly result in certified operators leaving the profession. Undoubtedly it would be a significant deterrent in attracting new operators to the industry.

It has been my understanding that over the years, through the NPDES program, permitting has established satisfactory liability and provided the PADEP with sufficient enforcement capabilities to ensure compliance. As such, I fail to see the need to create “additional liabilities” under the Certification program.

Furthermore, while I recognize that we are the regulated community, I have generally regarded our relationship with PADEP as partners having a common cause in protecting our water resources. With this in mind, it disturbs me that DEP declined meeting with our Association to hear our concerns and to receive constructive and invaluable input prior to submission of the proposed regulations to the EQB. Having a good Operator Certification Program is in our mutual interest!

In closing, I would ask the Board not to adopt these regulations in their current form; and urge that the detailed commentary from the interested Operator Associations be considered in any redraft.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,
HATFIELD TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Joseph E. Stammers
Joseph E. Stammers
Plant Manager

Cc: Independent Regulatory Review Commission

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