



ONSITE INFORMER

Five Point Plan Adopted at AGM

AOWMA members unanimously voted to adopt a five-point priority action plan for 2009 at the association's Annual General Meeting in Calgary on January 24.

1. Discourage Homeowner Permits

Work with Municipal Affairs, Safety Codes Council and municipalities to develop a more detailed and province-wide permit form.

Continue to inform municipalities about the dangers of the homeowner permit.

Hold meetings with councils, administrators and homeowner groups.

Publish articles in Alberta rural weekly newspapers regarding the best practices for homeowners.

2. Discourage Designing for Homeowners or Non-Certified Installers

Ensure the designer's name is a required component on all permit and inspection forms.

Continue to inform municipalities and homeowners about the risks of using non-certified installers.

UPDATE

Presentations to Lamont

County (Feb 6) and Westlock and Brazeau County (Feb 18) property owners (Feb 11) underscored dangers of homeowner permits.

Meeting with Safety Codes Council (Feb 11) resulted in agreement to move forward on plans to develop standardized permit form.

3. Improve Inspection Processes

Establish stronger ties with the Safety Codes Council to ensure they retain/acquire needed knowledge of the industry.

Work with the Safety Codes council to lobby the Province to increase permit fees. Promote a variable fee structure to match system complexity.

Develop/improve standardized inspection form that covers off key system and site components.

UPDATE

Feb 11 meeting with Safety codes Council confirmed the need to increase permitting fees. Council is in agreement with our issues and action planning.

4. Increase Stakeholder Accountability

Work with Municipal Affairs and Safety Codes Council to

develop enforceable penalties.

Finalize permit tracking system implementation.

Implement standardized permit forms.

Homeowner to sign off on usage levels

Ensure final system sign-off includes compliance signatures from designer and installer.

Homeowner manual signed for acceptance.

5. Instill Value of Training

Levels of certification should be investigated. More training should equal the ability for more complex projects.

Encourage best practices—municipalities should only accept permits from certified professionals.

Outreach to engineers (APEGGA) to ensure they recognize our value. Certified professionals should be a bigger resource to them.

Over the course of the year, AOWMA administration will provide regular updates on these activities to the membership through newsletters and on our website.

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UPDATE

Preparing to re-release funding proposal for development of Phase II–V training.

Submitted funding proposal to Alberta Environment to

develop and deliver an Alberta septage hauler training program.

Alberta Onsite Wastewater Management Association

AOWMA consulting on implementation of Model Process for Subdivisions

Model Process Pilot Project

The AOWMA has been working with the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) and Alberta Municipal Affairs in implementing a pilot project for the Model Process Reference Document.

The document is a 2004 guide for municipalities to use when considering subdivision developments that incorporate private treatment systems.

While the guide has been in place for nearly five years, it has been little used by most municipalities. Therefore, the AAMDC, with funding

from Municipal Affairs, is launching a pilot project to help select municipalities put the guide into practical use.

The AOWMA became involved in this process recently. It was involved in the pilot project tender process, and provided input on the selection of the successful contractor. The contractor is JW Stantec, a new member with a great deal of municipal experience in assisting municipalities in the U.S. in this regard. This is very good news for our industry because no other contractor

who submitted a bid had nearly as high a level of on-site industry experience.

The pilot project will consist of JW Stantec working with the counties of Lac Ste Anne, Rocky View and Vermilion River in developing internal processes and procedures for subdivision development. The AOWMA will be involved every step of the way in this process.

2009 Standard of Practice Training

It is expected that those who have been trained on the current modules will be required to take a Standard of Practice update training session within one year of the Standard's release in order to retain certification.

Alberta Municipal Affairs has

indicated that the AOWMA should develop and deliver this SOP update training. The Alberta Safety Codes Council (SCC) is developing a code update training program for Alberta inspectors.

In recognition of this, AOWMA administration met

with SCC executive staff on February 11, 2009 to discuss, among other things, an agreement that features an open exchange of all training materials between the two organizations.

TILMA and AIT share the implementation date of April 1, 2009

Jurisprudence Examination for Agreement on Internal Trade and Trade, Investment & Labour Mobility Agreement

The AOWMA has agreed to develop a jurisprudence examination to satisfy regulatory requirements under AIT & TILMA. The exam is required for all out-of-province onsite professionals before receiving certification to work in Alberta. The exam is designed solely to test knowledge of the Alberta Standard of Practice.

The examination will be comprised of a series of questions from each part of the Standard and will be a maximum of four hours in length.

The AOWMA has agreed to take on this project because it solidifies its place as the key onsite training body in Alberta. It also further demonstrates its willingness to work with the Province on

issues pertaining to the industry.

Both TILMA and AIT will be ratified on April 1, 2009. More information on these initiatives is available at www.tilma.ca and www.ait-aci.ca.

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Installer Training Program

The current six-day Installer Training Program is up and running for 2009. Sessions in Calgary and Edmonton for Feb/March have been full with 25 participants in each session. Another session is currently available in

Edmonton for March/April with more sessions being organized on a supply and demand basis.

Once the new SOP is released, the training material for the Installer Training Program will have to be updated

to reflect the changes in the Standard. Work on that initiative has already begun in order to have materials ready for print upon release of the new Standard.

Upcoming Training

Edmonton

March 25, 26 & 27 Days 1–3
April 15, 16 & 17 Days 4–6

Calgary

May 6, 7 & 8 Days 1–3
May 13, 14 & 15 Days 4–6

Training Development—Introductory Training, Phase II—V Training

Introductory Training

Alberta Municipal Affairs has recently indicated to AOWMA administration that industry introductory training is becoming a larger issue for the government. This coincides with association classroom observations that more work needs to be done to better prepare students entering the Phase I training program.

The original training program was designed for those who had already been engaged in the industry for several years. Today, we are seeing several registrants with no

industry background training.

A mentorship or apprenticeship program is not being contemplated at this time. Therefore, the onus is placed on a solid introductory program that can better prepare new industry professionals.

Work on this program is underway now and should be ready for release this year.

Phase II—V Training

The association is reviewing its plans to launch Phases

II—V training. The review is being conducted because it is important to ensure that any future training will match industry trends and new regulations.

Once completed, the review will be incorporated into another funding proposal to Municipal Affairs this Spring to coincide with the release of the new Standard. Given various approval processes that must be followed, the industry should expect to see Phase II—V training modules released no earlier than mid-2010.

2009 Convention Summary

The annual Convention & Trade Show was held in Calgary at the Deerfoot Inn on January 22, 23 & 24 with 389 people attending.

Attendees were comprised of installers, engineers, regulators, municipal planners, government officials, pumpers, suppliers and others.

This year's trade show was extremely well attended with more walk-ups than ever before. Delegates and exhibitors alike attested to the success of the event through positive feedback to AOWMA administration.

Planning for the 2010 convention is already underway. The River Cree in Edmonton has been chosen for next

year's venue due to its location, amenities and the options it provides to choose either a large equipment show or a tabletop show such as the one just held in Calgary.

Mark February 4th, 5th & 6th 2010 on your calendar now!



Municipal Affairs' Tyler Wightman presents on TILMA at AOWMA convention.

Alberta Onsite Wastewater Management Association

Pumper Training & Land Spreading Update

A certification program for haulers may allow more access to current receiving facilities.

A meeting was held with Alberta Environment and other stakeholders on February 4 to discuss a variety of septage issues. One topic concerned itself with pumper training and certification.

Land spreading of sewage is still slated to be banned by 2010. However, it will still be lawful to spread sewage on one's own property after that date. The concern is that once sewage is transported off of one property, it comes under Alberta Environment jurisdiction.

The ban is causing increasing concern among Alberta haulers. There are many receiving facilities that are already at maximum capacities that will be unable to

receive more waste. There are also some municipalities who are banning haulers for dumping waste into their facilities due to concerns of lagoon contamination and poor dumping practices. Once the land spreading ban comes into effect, it will have extreme impacts on the ability to dump waste in a responsible manner.

Alberta Environment is considering that a hauler training and certification program will open more access to current receiving facilities. It will give municipalities increased confidence that haulers are handling septage in a responsible manner.

In order to meet Alberta

Environment budget timelines, the AOWMA submitted a training program development proposal to the department late last month. The proposal is partly based on an agreement the association reached with the U.S.-based National Association of Wastewater Transporters (NAWT). Under the agreement, the AOWMA will be able to make necessary program changes to meet provincial industry and regulatory issues. The association will also deliver and administer the program in Alberta. The agreement will only come into effect if Alberta Environment agrees to fund the Alberta training program.

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Don't forget—it's time to renew your membership for 2009! Member renewal forms are available online at www.aowma.com or call the office at 780.489.7471.