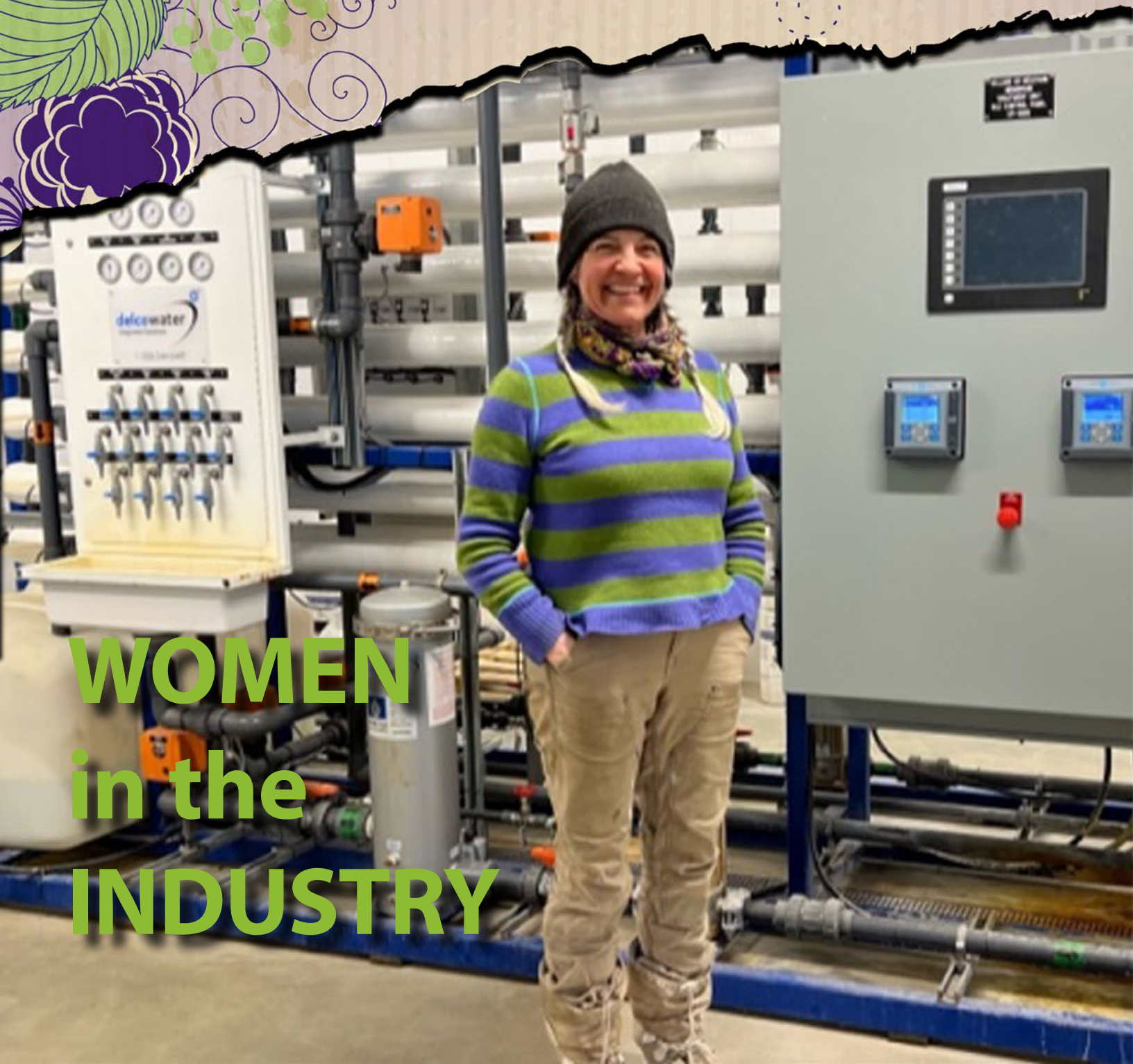


# the pipeline

SPRING 2022 ~ 27th Edition

SASKATCHEWAN WATER AND WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION



**WOMEN  
in the  
INDUSTRY**

# content

March 2022 - Spring

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Town of Meacham

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# calle behnke

SWWA Pipeline Editor

## So this is 40!!

I started my career as the SWWA Office Manager July 10, 2010. I had previously worked with a technical writer who had been contracted to write the Saskatoon Water Treatment Plant manual and it had been my introduction into the world of water and to Susan Dobrowney, Dawn Dierker and Mark Keller. It was also because of them I started with the SWWA.

I will never forget the experience of working at the water plant and putting the manual together or the subsequent SOP's and an Operator in Training Program. Through my work I read so much on the water process, and then followed up with various operators from the plant teaching me the various aspects and giving me tours. Back then the Residuals Handling Facility known as the Sludge facility had a few ups and downs, I remember reading the manuals all six of them to try to understand the process. The reading, the amazing staff of the water plant, and working to help create the manual gave me a new appreciation for what the water industry was about. Up until that point I can honestly say I never really thought about how water got to the tap.

Let's fast forward to 11 years and 8 months later, my appreciation for the industry has grown immensely. I 100% appreciate everything I have learned, every person I have met and the passion for the industry so many have shared. I have met so many incredibly suppliers, operators, lab technicians and the list goes on and every single person is part of the team that helps to do so much for the industry. I have been privileged as part of my position to attend conferences outside of Saskatchewan in both Alberta and Manitoba and have met incredible people from the industry through those organizations too. Attending workshops for the SWWA has taught me so much, I have been taught how to fix pumps, because you can't attend a pump workshop without also participating in the hands on those attending are learning, I have learned the ins and outs of hydrant maintenance, water distribution processes, lagoon systems and various types of water treatment and every time been told the same thing, you cannot just listen you need to do.

The very first conference I attended had only a handful of women operators in attendance and every year I have seen the number grow. I have made incredible friendships with both suppliers and operators, men, and women, and feel very privileged to have made those friendships as they have helped shape me into a better person.

This month is international women's month and Kelly Kish, the regular Pipeline editor has graciously given me his space and allowed me to conduct the article featuring women in the industry. Every woman featured in the main article and the profiles is someone I have enjoyed getting to know. I hope you enjoy reading our latest issue of the pipeline. What better way to kick off World Water Month, International Women's Month, and 40 years of SWWA then to Celebrate the amazing women in the industry.

We have 2 more issues this year, we would love to highlight what the SWWA has meant to you, why you are part of the association and your memories of past events. Reach out to either Kelly (kelly@swwa.ca) or myself, Calle (office@swwa.ca) and send them to us.

Until the next event, Have a wonderful Spring season, check out the workshop/webinars available online and be sure to mark the golf date on your calendar and come out – golf skill is not a skill needed to enjoy our tournament.

Calle Behnke



# dawn dierker

Director of Training  
Advanced Municipal Solutions

The water industry is a wonderful place to work for people who want to contribute daily to the well being of their community. Water and wastewater operators are the silent, unsung heroes of every community and most residents have no idea what an operator does daily to make their home and lives safe and secure. Now, more than ever, there are more and more women working as operators, lab technologists, and management in water and wastewater utilities. It hasn't always been this way.

Twenty years ago, when I started working in this industry there were not a lot of women at conferences or educational events. There were no line-ups to the washroom, in fact frequently you would have the whole room to yourself. The industry was male dominated and that was reflected in the conference activities and conversations. Today that has changed, and you can usually find at least one woman per table at social events, and they are included in conversations.

Women certainly have the capability and expertise to work in the water field. More women are graduating from post-secondary programs in science and engineering than any other time in history. As leaders in the industry, we need to pave the way for females to find their niche and prove their value. This does not mean preferential hiring, but

it does mean hiring and providing a safe, supportive workplace for female staff to thrive.

I have had the opportunity to work with several women over the years that I think have gone above and beyond what is necessary to prove themselves in our industry. They tell stories of having to do more, say less and overall prove themselves over and over to get the credit they deserve. They also tell stories of not fitting in, being left out of the "group" and being passed over for supervisory roles because it was felt that their direct reports would not accept them. We, as leaders in the industry need to do better, we need to lead better, and we need to find ways to level the playing field. Each female that enters our workplace is a sister, mother, daughter, aunt, cousin, girlfriend to some-one. We would not want our family treated as inferior; we would want them to be treated fairly and promoted upon their merit.

As we progress into this decade, I hope looking back at the end of it we can see a drastic change in the numbers of female workers in the water and wastewater industry. We have many very skilled technologists, operators, engineers, and field personnel that can help us navigate our changing world. Let's give them the chance they deserve.

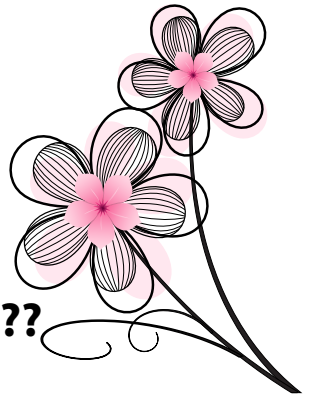
"They tell stories of having to do more, say less and overall prove themselves over and over to get the credit they deserve."



# teresa walker

Inspirational Facilitator

## Spring of 2022 Where are You??



Our Saskatchewan winter has provided us with more snow than we have seen in many, many years.

And it just keeps on coming – even people who live and love outdoor winter play and activities are saying, "enough already!"

### How have you been maneuvering through this year's winter obstacles and challenges?

- Icy roads
- White out conditions
- Temperatures that even a snowman shiver at
- Road closures and blizzard warnings

Ah...the weather. Seems to be the topic of conversation for many. And why not? Our environments have a major impact on us.

- Our sense of well being
- Our productivity
- Our equipment & tools
- Our interactions with others

Knowing what exists NOW and preparing for the future is vital.

All the snow that has accumulated WILL melt ( I promise).

Who else is hoping for a slow spring melt??

Without proper plan and preparations we may be in for a season of some serious flooding.

Ah, bless you Mother Nature! She is so unpredictably predictable.

### Nature has this amazing way of teaching us many things.

Let's use the example of the upcoming spring melt.

#### Spring Melt 2022

##### 1) Reality of what currently exists

- Large amounts of snowfall
- Spring will come increasing temperatures and snow will begin melting

##### 2) Reflect

- What has been done in the past
- Identify pros & cons

##### 3) Devise a detailed plan

- Assign roles/responsibilities and equipment required

##### 4) Assess the situation

- Short & long term

##### 5) Be willing to adjust accordingly

This is a roadmap we can use for many situations within our work and home lives.

ACCEPT the realities, LEARN from the past, CREATE a plan moving forward and be WILLING to ADJUST as required.

**Sounds Simple** – If there is one thing, I have learned from being born and raised Saskatchewan, Mother Nature will usually find a way to surprise (impress) us.

How we react is a very individual thing. Are you full and fed up with the snow before the spring melt even begins...if so, your patience shall be tested.

### How can we become PRO-ACTIVE vs RE-ACTIVE

- It is good practice to be continually checking in with ourselves and with those on our teams
- At work
- At home
- Within our communities

#### Here is your challenge:

Identify a challenge or obstacle that exists for you – work or home.

Go through the 5-step procedure.

If you are willing to share, I would love to hear from you!

We can connect the following ways:

LinkedIn – Teresa Walker

www.teresawalker.com

FB Teresa Walker – Inspirational Facilitator

Instagram Teresa\_makingmoments

\*\*We are not always able to control our environments...what we CAN do is assess the realities and focus on our own strengths and those around us. \*\*

Remember to celebrate the WINS and learn from the challenges.

# A Celebration of Women in Water.....

International Women's Day is celebrated by many countries around the world. March 8, 2022, marks the celebration of the day. What better way to kick off 40 years of SWWA and World Water Month than to showcase some of the amazing women we have in the water industry.

Ladies, thank you so much for agreeing to these interview questions. The diversity of the women in the industry is what I was looking to see and what I found. Each of you has had unique experiences that have shaped you both as a woman and a female in an industry that is male dominated. I remember when I started at the SWWA the very first conference I could count the number of women at the event on one hand and it has been wonderful to see how much that has changed in the past 12 years.

Let's get started by introducing you all to our members and those reading this issue.

**Calle: What is your name, job title and where do you work?**

**Deb:** Deb Schrader, Foreman, Village of Meacham

**Joni:** Joni Brisbin, A.Sc.T., B. Ed. Owner/CEO of Joni Brisbin Consulting  
Education Specialist/Technical Content Developer/Technical Trainer/Water and Wastewater Operator Trainer

**Dawn:** Dawn Dierker, Director of Training, Advanced Municipal Solutions, Inc.

**Tammy:** Tammy MacCormack, Assistant Director of Operations for the City of North Battleford.

**Keesha:** Keesha Dorosz, Western Regional Manager, Smart Water Solutions, KTI Limited / Sensus Canada

**Melissa:** Melissa Cuthill, I am a level 2 soon to be level 3 Water Treatment Operator with the City of Lloydminster.

**Terri:** Terri Kowbel-Nesbitt, Plant Operator, Elk Ridge Utility, the Resort Village of Elk Ridge

**DJ:** DJ Peterson, Waterworks Operator (class 2 h2o treatment/dis, class 1 wastewater collection/treatment)  
Town of Wynyard

**Monica:** Monica McArthur, Level 1 Water Operator, Carry The Kettle Nekota First Nation

The greatest thing about being a part of the water industry is the networking, friendships, learning and ability to roll with the punches. Not every day goes as is expected. That is true for every woman we are interviewing.

**Calle: What would you say is the most challenging part of being a female in an industry that not many women choose?**

**Deb:** Walking into a room of mostly men. Usually these are training situations – conferences, courses – and I always feel some level of intimidation. I am reasonably new to the industry, work alone and don't know many people. This is challenging for me.

**Joni:** This is an extremely difficult question to answer but the greatest challenge has probably been trying to overcome the misogynistic tendencies that are deeply instilled in some men (and it cannot be stressed enough that this is some men and definitely not most men). But this minority, who usually operate covertly, make it a challenge to stay focused on the good that we do in this industry every day and are a barrier to encouraging women to entering or staying in this industry.

**Dawn:** I think the most challenging thing that I have faced has been having to prove myself every time I have taken a job, showed up at a facility or entered a classroom. When a woman shows up to do a job that has been traditionally performed by men people are suspect of their ability.

**Tammy:** I would say that being a part of that is not being readily visible. We don't get to see how visible we seem, or that we can have a say in the something.

... we all start by learning

**Keesha:** There are not enough women on the dance floor during conference banquets! Just kidding. I feel when you have more women around a table you have a different insight where you can bring ethos, pathos, and logos together for more streamlined communications, decision making, and operations for our industry. Women can bring a different perspective to the human considerations of business.

**Melissa:** The most challenging part of being a female in an industry not many women choose would be building confidence in your position. It can be daunting at first. Proving that we're capable especially with outside contractors. I'm very lucky to have the coworkers I have now and in every position beforehand.

**Terri:** I would say I have been fortunate that I have been accepted by my colleagues, however from time to time I feel like they are uncertain in my abilities and understanding of the water and sewer systems.

**DJ:** In my case I have been a trailblazer in my town for working on the public works/waterworks side of things. So having babies, and maternity leave were all new things we had to work around where we never had too before. Not that it was hard, but it was different for all of us.

**Monica:** Nothing, we all start by learning

**Calle:** This month, we celebrate International Women's Day, what words would you offer to women looking to enter the water industry?

**Deb:** I feel that the water-related work that I do is the most important and interesting part of my job. I feel really privileged to do this work. Water is integral to communities; regardless of their size, communities cannot exist without some sort of water service infrastructure, and this will continue to be the case in the future. Being part of providing clean and safe drinking water has been incredibly rewarding for me, as there are so many different aspects to it even in a small town. This creates a lot of opportunity for learning and problem-solving for me daily. These different aspects also mean that there are many different employment opportunities within the water industry.

**Joni:** This is an incredible industry that allows us the opportunity to be part of a solution every day. As a member of the water industry, you are responsible for the health and safety of the public and are very much the reason that communities can and do prosper. Without water communities cannot prosper.

There are also so many different paths that your career can take within the Water Industry, including Operations, Administration, Laboratory, Regulatory, Training, Project Management, etc. The opportunities are endless! Your career path is only limited by your imagination.

The industry is always evolving and there is always something new to learn.

**Dawn:** Join us. This is a wonderful industry with lots of opportunities and areas to advance in. Women are more than capable of becoming operators, technical specialists or whatever they want to be.

**Tammy:** To just do that. The water industry is looking for women all the time.

**Keesha:** You are a powerhouse, and the time is now. What is really holding you back from doing or trying or taking that risk? Break the barrier whatever that may be. Ask for what you want. Also, women need to be advocates of each other. You have advocates all around you.

**Melissa:** The best words I can offer is being teachable and personable goes so far in any position!

**Terri:** Although being a water and sewer operator is challenging it is something that anyone can do. There are many opportunities to enter the industry that range from a relief operator to engineers. The industry is always evolving and there is always something new to learn. In my role as the water operator, I am responsible for ensuring the safety of my community. In a way this appeals to my caring and nurturing nature as a woman and mother.

**DJ:** Just go for it. It truly has been a rewarding job, in my case what I do every day always varies, and there are so many opportunities for all sorts of things.

**Monica** Water is life and Women are powerful.

**Calle:** Having told us about your challenges you have personally faced, what did you do to overcome the challenges?

**Deb:** The water industry is also challenging for any new operator. There is a lot to learn quickly, and much of this learning is done in the field, often during times when things are not running perfectly.

I step out of my comfort zone and introduce myself to people. I've learned to swallow my pride and ask for help. I ask questions a lot, ask people about their experience in similar situations, and listen carefully to them. I have had an incredible amount of support and help from other operators, contractors, suppliers and WSA EPOs. I've found in this job that people have always helped me when I've asked – I just need to gather as much information as I can, drop my defenses, and ask.

**Joni:** Every industry has its challenges and an industry that is male dominated like the water industry presents even more challenges.

You overcome these challenges by:

- 1) Creating a Network of ethical and honest people who want to bring about positive change and you align with these individuals
- 2) Bringing a sense of humor with you. Laughter is the best medicine for your soul and sanity.
- 3) Never deviating from your ethics and morals
- 4) Always Remembering your worth and benefit to this industry

**Dawn:** I have been fortunate to have had some very supportive people in my life while working in this industry. Some of them have even become close friends and mentors. People like Stewart Schafer and Tammy MacCormack at the City of North Battleford have been great champions. And, I have had the opportunity to teach with some fantastic role models like Josh Buniak, Andrew Hickey, Tracy Helmink and Joni Brisbin.

**Tammy:** I've been lucky. My part of the water industry has been one of the areas that hasn't been hit very hard. I've been able to keep running with it.

**Keesha:** Yes, there have been challenges whether this be at in the workplace and on the job or at conferences. Don't be afraid to take up space and make sure your ideas or solutions are heard. During events and conferences sometimes, we are outnumbered or may need to find a trusted buddy or colleague to walk you to and from locations at dark

**Melissa:** The only challenge I really faced is myself. I would go through phases of wondering if I did the right thing when faced with an issue. I have a lot of support through my coworkers and my family. I realized that mistakes are bound to happen, it's what we learn and how we choose to go forward that helps build our character.

**Terri:** would say yes there were challenges early on when I was training and my first few years as an operator. Because I didn't have strong technical background entering the industry I felt as though my voice didn't matter. But over time I proved that I could contribute to the issues and problem solving of plant management. I also continued to advance my knowledge and demonstrate competency in the plant. Once I had proven I could walk the walk, we work together as a team and respect of each other's contribution.

**DJ:** Being the only female in our shop was intimidating to start. I was 19 when I started at the town, with everyone at our shop being 10 my sr. and all males. I was a greenhorn, so I worked hard at learning things I've never really done before, and made sure I got them right.

**Monica** Being female has nothing to do with the challenges for me, if you have a good team you are able to face any challenges together.

**Calle: What are some accomplishments that you have achieved while working for the water industry?**

**Deb:** Our community switched from a green sand filtration system to a reverse osmosis system within my first year of working. We also ended up digging a new well at the time of commissioning the new system.

While our RO system provides excellent water to residents, this transition brought some challenges: for example, financial implications of infrastructure upgrades, shifting residents out of domestic water softening, and line repairs.

- Joni:**
- 1) I was the first female Instructor in the Water Resources Engineering Technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic
  - 2) I was the first female Program Head of the Water Resources, Environmental and Civil Engineering programs at Saskatchewan Polytechnic
  - 3) I was part of the team (of two) that created the Water and Wastewater Technician program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic
  - 4) I created the Civil Technician program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic
  - 5) I was one of the two women who have sat on the Saskatchewan Operator Certification Board
  - 6) I was the Training Lead for the launch of the multi-million-dollar CMMS project at a Saskatchewan Refinery, responsible for training more than 700 people in preparation for the Go-Live
  - 7) I personally trained more than 350 Operators in preparation to write their Water Treatment, Wastewater Treatment, Water Distribution and/or Wastewater Collection Certification exams over the past 2 years
  - 8) I was the only Trainer in Saskatchewan preparing Operators to write their Level 3 and/or Level 4 Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment Certification exams last year
  - 9) I get the pleasure of mentoring women in our industry and encouraging them to enter our industry
  - 10) I get the pleasure of mentoring individuals to train the next generation of individuals entering the workforce

**Dawn:** I have been fortunate to have worked on some very unusual projects and had some amusing situations arise over my 20 plus years working in water and wastewater. I have had the extreme pleasure of working on the Alberta "Closer to Home" initiative that reviewed the curriculum for certification courses in Alberta. We also produced some videos of plant operators performing laboratory tests that were very good. At the City of Saskatoon, I was involved in creating an Operator in Training Program in conjunction with the Operations Manual for the water treatment plant including several hundred standard operating procedures. That was a highlight. I have written, in conjunction with fire officials, emergency response plans for storm and sewer contamination and worked on the industrial monitoring program for the City of Saskatoon which included a bylaw rewrite. My favorite project to date has been creating a Biofiltration workshop for the Saskatchewan First Nations Operators Association and being invited to present it in the huge teepee shaped council chambers at the File Hills Qu'Appelle office in Fort Qu'Appelle.

**Tammy:** In the past few years, I've been able to deal with the water hammer incident, the husky oil spill, and the pandemic.

**Keesha:** For me I have been in the water industry on the technology side that went from the irrigation sector to the water metering industry. I am honored to have worked with some incredible leaders and industry professionals on key technology projects or on boards and committees.

**Melissa:** Achieving my level 3 Water Treatment, level 3 Water Distribution, and level 1 Wastewater Collection.

**Terri:** Just being a certified water, wastewater operator is a huge accomplishment for me. Coming into this industry as a middle-aged woman it had been years since I had been in a classroom setting. But with a little hard work and study, I received my certification and I continue to keep in touch with the innovations in the water industry. However, one of my biggest accomplishments was helping another operator, in a nearby community, train and study to receive her certification.

**DJ:** DJ Peterson, Waterworks Operator (class 2 h2o treatment/dis, class 1 wastewater collection/treatment) Town of Wynyard

I am honored to have worked with some incredible leaders and industry professionals on key technology projects or on boards and committees.



**Calle: What is something you would like to see the industry do better at? Scholarships, Training, Recruitment?**

**Deb:** A female operator group of some sort would be good. Even just a meet-up at the conference. I think that some organized group(s) that could meet virtually or in person to support each other technically or emotionally could be beneficial. I work in a very small community and am the only public works staff other than weekend water testing relief staff (who I am very thankful to have). Sometimes my job is a huge weight on me, and it would be great to be able to talk about that with others who may be in a similar situation. Or at least understand the implications of working in public service, in water.

Training scholarships would provide advantages to people who need them. I don't think that many staff in my sort of position make a lot of money. If I had to pay for all my training that would take a big bite out of my earnings (my employer currently pays).

**Joni:** As an industry we need to work on removing the barriers that deter women from entering the field. As one CEO told me several years ago, "the reason women do not enter our industry is that we do not make women feel welcome in our industry". Until women are made to feel welcome and truly appreciated for what they bring to the table, the industry dynamics will not change. There is a lot of "talk the talk, but very little of walk the walk" by organizations regarding gender equity. Even if women are entering the industry, the chances of them staying are not great in this atmosphere.

Educating our leaders would be a great place to start. We cannot begin to change this narrative until everyone understands what gender equality means and lives that meaning.

Scholarships will encourage women to enter the industry and a strong mentoring program would help keep them there.

**Dawn:** I always think we can improve training with new courses, new approaches and different learning opportunities. I would like to see more exposure of high school students to our industry so that it is on their radar when they are thinking about careers. We still have a long way to go when it comes to selling the water and wastewater industry as a career of choice.

**Tammy:** I would say that present at the Water and Wastewater show would be a good start. The outreach from there would be awesome.

**Keesha:** I would like to see our associations have more partnerships with organizations that can assist with more water bursaries and scholarships. There seems to be a high retirement rate in our industry and not enough knowledge transfer. Mentorship would be another area I would love to see grow because I worry that all that knowledge will be lost from our long-term industry leaders.

**Melissa:** Recognizing the tragedies faced by First Nations when it comes to their water sources and treatment. If we could create more scholarships and more programs to train First Nations and funding for more essential infrastructure.

**Terri:** Showcasing the industry and profession in schools would be a good way to get students interested in the science of water and wastewater treatment. Lots of smaller communities don't have funding to train new operators, so a scholarship program through the provincial training institution would be helpful.

**DJ:** I would love to see more scholarships, and more advertisements for the industry. This is something I didn't even know I could choose as a job until I was in it.

**Monica:** We need to expand the training time four days in class is not enough time to be prepared for what an operator will face. It needs to be easier to apply to become an operator and we need to see the pay grid increase for operators.

**Calle: What do you see looking ahead 5, 10, 20, years for the industry?**

**Deb:** Providing safe and clean drinking water to communities is only going to get more important and more challenging as time goes on. Water is life for people, plants, animals, any sort of community. I think that even as a less-densely populated province, Saskatchewan currently experiences water-related issues such as being downstream watershed consumers, run off contamination of surface and groundwaters, and balancing domestic, industrial, and agricultural use. If local water sources become more problematic (obtaining both adequate quantities and quality) we will have continuous and changing challenges to deal within the water industry. And even if we have secure local water sources, if water becomes scarcer worldwide and global population continues to grow, there will be implications for us.

**Joni:** The industry is going to grow in importance in the coming years. Less than 3% of the world's water is freshwater that is available for our use. As our population increases and climate change continues to occur, the need for fresh water and potable water will grow.

We are on the cusp of change in this industry. Technology is evolving at greater speed than ever before and with it comes a demand for highly educated individuals to run this technology and deliver the high-quality product that is being demanded by our clients.

What this industry looks like today will be nothing like it will look in 20 years. We are going to see new treatment methods, more gray water recycling, more rainwater capture systems, green roofs and so on. It is an exciting time to be in the industry or to enter the industry.

**Dawn:** I think we are going to see rapid technology changes, much like what we have seen in the past 15 years. Water and wastewater operators are going to have to be lifelong learners to keep up with changes in technology and how information is relayed to them. Keeping up with technology will be a large part of role of the water professional.

**Tammy:** I think that the pandemic will keep us on our toes for the next few years. I would want to us be in the public eye more, we need to see us as being part of solution.

**Keesha:** With the recent reality check of our supply chain issues, I see our manufacturers becoming more self-sufficient when developing and producing products and services. Also, the Internet of things and technology is a game changer and seems to be advancing at a very rapid pace. There are so many possibilities in our industry to repair, identify, track, communicate, monitor, alarm and more. The transparency of data has increased so imagine what may come of this? It's happening in lightning speed. What I see is more knowledge sharing globally versus nationally.

**Melissa:** I see a lot of turnovers and retirements. I hope to see much needed repairs, upgrades and new infrastructure.

**Terri:** We already see the challenges of climate change and the effects it has on the operators and overall, in the industry. I look forward to new advancements and technology, as well as educating the new and experienced operators for these challenges.

**DJ:** I 100% see more females getting into this work, every year that I have attended the SWWA conference there is always more and more women in attendance. I think breaking down that barrier is huge. I don't think I could sit still at an office job, or do paper work all the time, I really love that every day my job is different.

**Monica:** I would like to see better water for all First Nations and up to date facilities.

We need to see us as being part of solution.

**Calle: The water industry is not one many think of when it comes to careers – how do you see this changing?**

**Deb:** A career that provides a good income is important to many people. I don't think that small town water plant staff make a good income. I honestly don't know how much money other water plant staff make, regardless of the size of the municipality.

I think that if people understood what goes into providing safe and clean drinking water to their community and they saw that with this "trade" they could get jobs anywhere in the world (well, North America at least with our certification) they might consider the water industry as a career. Also, if people saw the diversity in work – suppliers, government ministry staff, infrastructure contractors, educators, operators – perhaps they would consider it. And the potential for a good income. (:

**Joni:** As awareness grows of the needs and opportunities so will the sexiness (the term used often for high demand careers) of the industry grow. The Millennials are leading the demand for change and in doing so will lead the change in how this as a career choice is viewed. The Millennials are done sitting back and watching the world around them deteriorate and are demanding change. Their demands for change will bring about how the world views the water treatment and wastewater treatment industries and how we will use these resources. I am extremely excited to see how they drive where we go next and how we get there.

**Dawn:** I think we need to do a better job of highlighting the water industry as a career option. Exposure in high school, technical schools and other post-secondary institutions will bring people to the industry. There has been some work done at the Associations level and with Western Canada Water to organize this but there is still more work to be done.

**Tammy:** This is something that I think of a lot. To be able to change, it would take a lot. This is something that would take time and a few years to make some headway in.

**Keesha:** The change is only going to happen when we all take responsibility to help it grow. Planting seeds, and watering the roots to share our knowledge, recruiting others into the industry, and encouraging them that their skills are transferable with limitless opportunity. We need to be advocates each one of us and share our experiences with all of those around us. How many of you have children, family and friends that don't even know what you do on a day-to-day basis? Let's start there.

**Melissa:** I think the training programs have surely evolved since I've finished my certification at NAIT. There is more interest and class sizes are large enough to have two separate classes. This industry will be permanent, but most people need to recognize that there is more need abroad especially in isolated communities

**Monica :** It won't change until wages increase and training becomes more important, and the qualifications are not as tough. If people think they can do it they will be more likely to look at it as a career choice.

**Calle: It can be challenging at times for water to be seen as an essential important service until there is a water main break or boil water advisory, how can we change public perception of the industry?**

**Deb:** I don't know. What I've learned in my job, in a small town, is that people don't voice anything about public infrastructure in general unless something is wrong for them. Most people don't question where our water comes from, how it is processed and treated, and/or where it goes to as wastewater.

**Joni:** Education is the key to changing public perception. The Water and Wastewater personnel should be inviting the Mayors, City Councilors', and City Managers out to tour their facilities and getting to see firsthand what it is that it entails and how it works. After that Public Utilities should host Open Houses to the Public for Q and A and demonstrations. And finally – invite all the school children for tours. Look at the success of the Home Fire Safety program hosted by all our Fire Departments. The Fire Departments taught the children about Fire Safety and in turn the children taught their parents. If we teach the children about the importance of safe water and how to care for the systems, they will in turn teach their parents.

**Dawn:** I think that, like other industries, we need to bring attention to the public the value that water and wastewater professionals bring to their community. There is no community without the water and wastewater utilities. Some media campaigns and exposure to the public would help to bring attention to the importance of these roles. We have seen great success and interest in hosting open houses at the water treatment plants to show the public what is involved in delivering safe, clean water to their homes. Security concerns have made this more difficult in recent years.

**Tammy:** This can be a little challenging. No one wants the public perception to be them. We need to see the public understanding more of what we do and the services we offer rather than just when it's in their face.

**Keesha:** Turn peoples taps off for a few days in reference my answer above!

**Melissa:** Being transparent and keeping our residents informed and up to date! My current aim is to have more detailed information on our city's website.

**Terri:** While posting a community's water quality reports online is essential to helping consumers feel their water is safe. It is important that community leaders show recognition and appreciation for the value of clean, healthy drinking water in their community. This means municipalities should be taking a lead on showcasing the facilities and people who are keeping their community safe. This could include open houses at treatment facilities, working with local schools to showcase the "science" of water treatment or communicating the importance of protecting water sources and the environment.

**DJ:** My favorite promotion has been "no operator, no water"; I think that's one that really gets people thinking that every time they turn on the tap or buy a product there has been water used or prepared and somebody made that a reality. Someone over saw the process, made sure it was safe and potable and got the water where it needed to go.

**Monica** You can't change their perceptions, you just got to show patience.

Turn peoples taps off for a few days. . .



**Calle: What are some lessons or observations you have learned in the past few years of working in the industry during a pandemic?**

**Deb:** Not much changed for me in my work life. I primarily work alone and the jobs that I do regularly still need to be done regardless of the pandemic. I did have to consider a replacement for me in the case that I contracted Covid-19. This also highlighted the importance of Standard Operating Procedures.

We had to educate the public quickly to stop people from flushing wipes (a note in the quarterly water & sewer bill, text message, website that explained the cost of replacing a sewer pump). That worked!

Water and sewer service increased as people stayed home. Normally we have very little water usage throughout the day as people leave town – that, of course, changed when everyone worked and went to school from home. Uninterrupted water service became more important.

**Joni:** During the pandemic it became very clear that this industry is essential and without it our cities and towns would not exist for long. Every day of the pandemic, our Public Service personnel went to work to ensure we had potable water when we turned on our taps and that when a toilet was flushed that black water was removed from our homes and treated in such a way as to ensure it did not contaminate our water ways and water sources. Without the dedication of these individuals, we would not have made it through this pandemic with fully functioning communities. Thank you to every Public Service personnel who made this happen. Your dedication and hard work were and is noticed and very much appreciated.

**Dawn:** I think one of the things that we have learned from working throughout the pandemic was that we can change the way that we do things. For example, we moved all our training on-line in a matter of a few months. This was not something that we were prepared for or that we were expecting and yet we did it. Operators figured out how to navigate a multitude of on-line training formats and were able to carry on. The other thing that I think we learned was that if we work together, we can overcome huge obstacles. Teamwork was essential, not only to get operators trained and get their ceus, but for communities to keep functioning during the lock-down phase of the pandemic. We are still seeing challenges with parts shortages and, during the Omicron wave, operator shortages; communities are working together to help each other. I think that is the biggest lesson that we have all learned – that we are stronger working as a team.

**Tammy:** In the last few I have learned a lot. I have learned that is important to take time for yourself and to talk to others. At some point, I would love to be able to discuss this some more.

**Keesha:** That people have interesting lives outside of their workdays and we are all dealing with different personal challenges and need to take care of each other. During the pandemic people were living in silos and it was critical to communicate with each other and learn from one another. We may not be able to meet in person, but you can always pick up the phone and connect utilizing technology. We also need to understand our risks within our jobs and our industry and how to reduce risks, navigate and pivot when needed and look at planning with a 360-degree view!

Other observations? The supply chain challenges demonstrated that we should not put all our eggs all in one basket.

**Melissa:** The biggest observation is how dedicated our team was keeping each other safe, masking up and keeping distance as much as possible, separating shifts and isolating our field crew, using different entrances, cleaning, and sanitizing, to how willing we were to bunker in the plant if needed. We even cross trained our lab technician and our managers. I'm blessed to be a part of the team we have. When faced with such adversity we banded together and kept going.

**Terri:** One observation was that the pandemic was an additional layer of stress on small system operations everywhere. If the operator becomes sick maintaining water quality becomes difficult as communities would have to scramble to find relief support. In a pandemic, having multiple operators out sick at the same time is a real possibility. I always felt the need to be extra cautious because I felt like the community was depending on me.

**DJ:** My job itself never really changed much over the course of the pandemic, so it can just go to show you how in a small town how much we tend to work alone at things.

**Monica:** Work still had to go on, you got used to wearing a mask and gloves, keeping other safe that I worked with and those at home was of utmost importance to me.

Someone once said, "you will never know the value of water till the well runs dry". Many outside the industry have seen glimpses of what would happen without water. Water that supplies our hospitals, keeps people hydrated and helps with sanitation and the health of or province, country, and those around the world.

The world needs water, the world needs Women and Men who work in the water industry in all aspects.

Thank you to all the women above who opened themselves up and let us see things from their points of view. I personally, have learned so much from your responses and from being allowed to see things from your perspectives.

Thank you for being authentic, honest, and open to sharing.

Thank you for being part of this industry and thank you for supporting the SWWA through your contribution to this issue of the pipeline, attending workshops, conferences, tradeshow, and golf tournaments.

# awards 2021 lifetime members



dale heshka  
SaskWater

Dale Heshka started his career working for the City of Melville in 1976 as an Assistant Water Treatment Plant Superintendent. By 1977, he climbed the ladder to the Superintendent role. Dale then became a Manager of District Operations with SaskWater on July 1, 2016.

He has extensive experience in operations, maintenance, and management in the water & wastewater industry. Dale has delivered water and wastewater classroom instruction to municipal, industrial and First Nations operators throughout the province. His experience is in both surface and well water treatment processes including Canada's first municipal desalination water treatment plant. Dale currently has valid certification in the following Saskatchewan Operator Certification Board levels: Water Treatment Class 4, Water Distribution Class 2, Wastewater Treatment Class 2, and Wastewater Collection Class 2. Dale has been a Saskatchewan Water & Wastewater Association (SWWA) member from its inception.

Through the years, Dale has been a mentor to many and has taught several courses for the SWWA through the years. Dale is a supporter of the SWWA and is a familiar face at the annual golf tournament and conference

A couple highlights of other parts of Dale's career over the last 45 years include but are not limited to:

- Establishing the Saskatchewan Water and Wastewater Association board
- Being appointed to the Operator Certification Board in 2020
- The transition of the water treatment plant in Melville to SaskWater, decommissioning the old plant and leading the Operations team for the design, build and the commissioning of the new water treatment plant.

Congratulations Dale on your retirement and receiving the SWWA Lifetime Member Award. The SWWA appreciates all that you have done for the association and the many members in sharing your passion for the industry and the association and its members.



karlis van caeseele  
Town of Langenburg

Karlis Van Caeseele joined the Town of Langenburg on April 15, 1996 as a Public Works Operator, he worked his way up to foreman. Karlis spent 25 years with the Town serving his community. He was an upstanding citizen and was always there to help insure the best for his community for community events to an active member of the local Lions Club. Karlis is a member of the Langenburg and District Fire Department joining in 1993 and is still serving the department today. He was a participant in the PARTY Program which was put on for students over the years. He was an involved parent and coached Minor hockey for 12 years and helped the local dance club with preparation for the yearly recital. Karlis has also been a very active volunteer with the SWWA for 20 plus year with him most recently holding the position of treasurer.

## THE DAVE operator OF THE CLARK, year award

dave dariechuk  
The Village of Theodore

Dave Dariechuk this past year's recipient has been in the water and wastewater industry for the past 32 years. The Village of Theodore is very grateful to have Dave working for them, he is very knowledgeable of all things and although he has retired a few times he has been back every time his replacement has chosen to move on. He has been a mentor to many in the area through the years and helped several communities with their water through the years in the area surrounding Theodore.

(Dave was unable to attend the awards banquet and he was given the award in December)

## supplier OF THE year award



**FLOCOR**  
The Piping Products People

# THE DALE operator OF THE HESHKA, year award

The 2021 Recipient of the award was Brian Hoppenreyes. Brian was originally hired into an Operator/Maintenance position in May of 1985 and worked in both Maintenance and Operations. Brian graduated from Saskatchewan Technical Institute and is an Instrumentation Journeyman. He has served as a Regen Operator, Senior Maintenance Person, Instrumentation Tech and has been a Class 4 Operator in the Senior Operator role since March of 1999.

brian  
hoppenreyes  
Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant



Brian has always been an excellent employee ensuring Operational parameters as per our Permit to Operate are met. His attention to detail and doing the right thing are qualities that he has always possessed knowing that the quality of water leaving the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment plant must be the best it can be. Brian has always gone above and beyond with our records management from developing and setting up many recording systems to ensure that our documentation of water quality data, chemical inventory and operational data is easily recorded by all operators. Brian has always been actively involved in Standard Operating Procedure development and will always put Safety at the fore front with and work that is going on. Brian is more than happy to take new Operators under his wing and not only showing them how to operate the plant, but he really follows through and makes sure the new employees truly understand the process. With his operational experience and instrumentation background when issues come about, he will normally be able to help the maintenance staff with any trouble shooting and solutions.

Brian has dedicated 36 ½ years to the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant and is planning to retire in late 2021. His dedication and passion to ensure we continue to produce safe drinking water is the same today as it always has been, He has mentored many of our new and upcoming Operators as well as managers, instilling that same desire to do the job the best you can.

## SWWA PIPELINE PROFILE: OPERATOR

# terri kowbel-nesbitt

**1. What is your name, employer company/community and current position?**

Terri Kowbel-Nesbitt, Plant Operator, Elk Ridge Utility, the Resort Village of Elk Ridge

**2. What led you into your current field?**

I was approached by members of the community; I have lived at Elk Ridge for over 20 years.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

I have had experiences with reservoir cleaning to pulling pumps I also ensure that OHS is applied for a safe workplace. From releasing the lagoon to helping repair a water main break. There is never a dull moment in the life of a water, wastewater operator.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

Do your research, reach out to other operators if you can and see if this industry is for you. In some smaller communities it offers part time job with flexible hours, this can be a great opportunity for women.

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**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

You are never too old to try something new or continue your education. Always keep an open mind and learn from others.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

Behind every great woman there is a good man! My husband has been my number one support. However, for the industry there have been three people who made a difference. My current manager who has been key to continued learning and development, as a past operator who asked for my help and got me curious. Also Janelle Franc, another woman operator who helped mentor me through the certification process.

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

The water industry can be challenging for so many communities, we are fortunate that we have a great team and can back each other up when personal time is needed.

**8. What are your hopes for the future of water?**

I hope communities see the importance of clean water and I hope more women see water treatment as a career opportunity.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

Being a certified water and wastewater operator is a huge accomplishment for me. Coming into this industry as a middle-aged woman it had been years since I had been in a classroom setting. But with a little hard work

and study, I received my certification and I continue to keep in touch with the innovations in the water industry.

However, one of my biggest accomplishments was helping another operator, in a nearby community, train and study to receive her certification.

**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

I believe in having a strong work ethic, I will always continue to upgrade my skills, and by being dependable I hope is a good example in the workplace. An operator that is dedicated and continues to improve their skills will be an asset to any community.



# joni brisbin

**1. What is your name, employer company/community and current position?**

Joni Brisbin, A.Sc.T., B. Ed.

Owner/CEO of Joni Brisbin Consulting

Education Specialist/Technical Content Developer/Technical Trainer/Water and Wastewater Operator Trainer

**2. What led you into your current field?**

The desire to put my skills to use in providing positive change.

Also the ability to branch into so many different areas within the industry and the chance to work in the field and/or in an office.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

1) Training more than 350 Operators over the course of the past 2 years has given me such great insight into how our communities operate and an appreciation of the amazing people who work in this industry. Thank you to each of you for all that you have shared with me and taught me.

2) Developing training materials and then delivering those materials to the next generation of individuals entering the workforce is so rewarding and satisfying.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

This is an exciting industry that is evolving and provides non-stop opportunities to grow your career however you wish. It is fun and it is rewarding and no two days will be alike.

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**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

Bring a sense of humor to work everyday and learn to laugh at yourself. Laughter is good for the soul and sanity and is a great way to alleviate stress in the workplace.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

J. Christine Kimball, my Paternal Grandmother  
 Meme Bevans, my Maternal Grandmother  
 K. Irene Kimball, my Mother  
 Elden Kimball, my Father  
 Bill Allen, Retired Program Head for Water Resources Engineering Technology  
 Richard Egroff, Retired Instructor, A.Sc.T.  
 Art Skibinsky, P. Eng.  
 Warren Brisbin, my Husband  
 Dawn Dierker, Friend  
 Tracy Helmink, Friend  
 And so many more....

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

I am the wrong person to ask this question.....next question please.

**8. What are your hopes for the future of water?**

I hope that the world begins to truly understand how valuable this resource is and how truly limited our access to freshwater is. As our population grows and climate change continues, access to freshwater is going to become even more limited. We need to protect this resource for our children and their children and so on. We are just visitors here and we should leave this place better than we found it.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

Watching students be successful!

**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

Strengths:

Ethics

Sense of humor

Compassion

Empathy

The most valuable asset is all of the above!

I make a difference by being present in the moment, by assisting in finding solutions, by being compassionate, kind and having empathy for those around me. We all have value and we all should be treated as such.



# melissa cuthill

**1. What is your name, employer company/community and current position?**

My name is Melissa Cuthill, I work for the City of Lloydminster in Treaty 6 Territory and currently a level 2 Water Treatment Operator, with level 3 Distribution and level 1 Collection.

**2. What led you into your current field?**

I was a single mother that worked in a lot of front-end service jobs and after a conversation with my high school friend who happens to be in treatment, she piqued my curiosity about her career. I then looked into the Water and Wastewater Technician program offered by NAIT.

I joined a course through Alberta Works and it involved doing a report including interviews with operators about their careers. I was captivated by the passion expressed by each person I had talked to. After completion of that work course, I received a student grant for the NAIT program.

During the job training term at NAIT, I worked in Spruce Grove as a Distribution Operator. I loved every minute of it. It was completely hands on and my supervisors and coworkers were patient and just so informative sharing that same passion. I soon experienced my first water break and then took part in the repair. Tasks ranged from sewer flushing, hydrant maintenance, unidirectional flushing, Parkland transmission line and reservoir inspections and even helped the roads crew for spring clean up. Every day was different and I was content with my path.

Near the end of the NAIT program I decided to apply for the Waste Water Source Control position in Lloydminster. During that interview I was offered 2 other positions, Waste Water Treatment and Water Distribution. I then spent four years as an operator in Distribution before moving to the treatment plant in 2017.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

The best experience I've had, well, it's in the process at this moment. Our lovely plant is going through a very much needed HMI, PLC and SCADA upgrade! Having to run the plant in manual and sometimes blind, it's exhilarating and it's special to see the time warp from what we have! The best is yet to come when the plant phase of the project is completed.



**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

Be teachable and personable. Everyone brings a different outlook to a task or situation, it can make the job more efficient and most importantly safe, so don't be afraid to speak up.

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**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

Patience is truly a virtue. Not everything will happen at once, especially when it comes to learning. It was a huge learning curve from distribution to treatment. Just when you think you have the hang of it, there will always be more to learn.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

My family, most definitely! Blair Brandenburg and Brett Henkel from Spruce Grove. Mike Roppo and Crystal Eggert from NAIT. My General Manager Ken Urban, my supervisor Jamie Hopko and my beautiful friend, Nikki Houda. All these people have had an integral role in the position I am in today!

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

Being able to unplug and take time off to our lake hideaway during the summer for sure. My usual days off are spent with my boys and seeing family when we can.

**8. What are your hopes for the future of water?**

My overall hopes is seeing safe water for all First Nation reserves in the nearest future.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

Achieving the level 3 treatment exam!

**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

Having a background in Distribution and the willingness to go above and beyond for my role as a treatment plant operator would be my best strengths.

The most valuable asset a person can have is a strong work ethic and dependability

# keesha dorosz

**1. What is your name, company Name and current position?**

Keesha Dorosz  
KTI Limited / Sensus Canada

Western Regional Manager, Smart Water Solutions

**2. What led you into your current field?**

That's a great question. The real answer is that I opened the door to opportunities that presented themselves and it led me down the path to the water industry. It started with sales, communications, and software.

I was in weather based irrigation control systems before I went into water metering, network infrastructure and smart solutions.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

My current role is never dull and always exciting. It can be very busy in a good way however I love to work with many diverse individuals within municipalities, with manufacturers, developers, colleagues, team members, distributors, product managers, technical service specialists, engineers, and consultants.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

That water and wastewater is a very big world with many facets.

A journey down one road may lead you to a branch to another. Take the risk and explore. You will be amazed at what you may find that will open more doors. This industry will always keep you on your toes if you're willing to learn, share and listen. You will always have many mentors in your court.

**HELP US GET TO KNOW YOU.**

**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

That we have many mentors around us so take the time to have a coffee meeting, pick their brain. Also try new skills even if you make a mistake you will learn from them. If there is conflict, lean in. Not out.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

My mother, my big sister, my brother, my dear friends, industry mentors and I often learn a lot from observing nature.

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

That's a great question because I still struggle with this sometimes. I've learned that sometimes you must close that laptop and recharge your own batteries. For me it's limiting screen time in the evenings, embracing the forest, Golfing, taking photos and writing. Podcasts and audible are my favorites because you can learn and exercise at the same time! Try having a meeting while hiking!

**8. What are your hopes for the future? Besides world peace?**

I would love to see more young people and especially women get involved in the water industry.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

There are so many it's hard to count but one that sticks out is when I spoke up powerfully to make a change when I felt I couldn't. There was resistance but it turned out for the best. Decide what you need to say to whom and plan for it. Be your authentic self with kindness.

**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

My strength: I leave someone better than you found them. I enjoy people and communication and find joy in helping others with solutions. If you look at the shore of a rocky or Sandy beach; very closely there are so many colors and shapes of rocks and sand that fit together as a shade where the tide rises. From a distance it is depicted as the most beautiful picture. BE that beach. That's exactly like a team we all lift each other up by working together with our strengths and weaknesses. Like a roller coaster just never be down at the same time.



# dj peterson

**1. What is your name, employer company/community and current position?**

DJ Peterson, Town of Wynyard, Waterworks Operator

**2. What led you into your current field?**

I started out as a summer student with the recreation department, moved into public works when the rec. job was over, I picked garbage for about 8 months, and then I was moved into the water department where I have now been for 8 years.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

Dealing with the public on their bad days (when the water is running into their basement for example) are some of the days that stick out. But being able to go to trainings, and conferences is something that I really like about this job. When you go you get to meet so many new people and hear different ideas and I always really enjoy that.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

You may not have a clue what you're diving into, but it is worth it. Every second.



**HELP US GET TO KNOW YOU.**

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

I have a lot of people that I look up too in this industry, I'm not even sure I could list them all. Everyone that I have formed a relationship with has taught me something, had a listening ear, or will try and help as best they can if I have a problem. This industry of amazing people has become a second family to me.

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

I always make a little bit of time for myself and try my best to not think about work when I get home, which can be difficult leaving the water plant some days, we have all been there!

**8. What are your hopes for the future of water?**

That we keep striving for sustainability and manage our water well, it truly is a precious resource.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

Getting to join the SWWA Board has been great. I wanted to join from the first time I was at conference. I am so happy to be here to help plan events and trainings and make sure that small towns have a voice.

# dawn dierker

**1. What is your name, company Name and current position?**

Dawn Dierker  
Advanced Municipal Solutions, Inc.  
Director of Training

**2. What led you into your current field?**

I had been working for SaskPower for 12 years as a labourer and then as a Lab Tech in coal fired power plants. My permanent position was in Coronach and I was commuting 4 hours there Sunday night and 4 hours back every Friday to see my husband. The economy was slow and there weren't a lot of jobs in Saskatoon so I took a chance and applied for a job at the City of Saskatoon as a labourer at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. I was hired in January of 2004 and spent 8 years with the Water and Sewer Branch.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

Transitioning to a business owner from an employee has been an eye opening experience. I think my favourite experience so far has been creating our website with Andrew Hickey. He did all of the graphics and building of the site and I did the writing. It was something that I would never have been involved in if we weren't building our own company.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

I would say to make sure that you are doing work that you love. There are so many areas in water and wastewater to work in you should never be bored. I think the number one piece of advice I would give is to always be curious and to keep on learning – you will never know everything there is to know. The breadth of knowledge in this industry is huge.

**HELP US GET TO KNOW YOU.**

**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

I think the most important thing that I have learned is to stay aligned with my values. If a situation or place does not align with my core values, then it is not a place that I am going to thrive. When we around people that we are in sync with we will accomplish much more; so for me knowing that is key to my productivity.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

I have had some fantastic mentors in the past 30 years. Mark Keller was my first supervisor at the City of Saskatoon and I learned so much from the opportunities that he gave me. I am forever grateful to him for his leadership. Tim Jansen and Glen Gillis at SaskWater were also great mentors. Tim's sense of humor and Glen's ability to manage large projects is inspiring. I have also had the pleasure of teaching with Joni Brisbin in the past two years and am thankful for the wisdom she has imparted.

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

I am not going to pretend that I have it all together. There are weekends when I am catching up a mountain of laundry and we order pizza a couple of times a month. Some days are easier than others as are some seasons. As a mom to two active girls, it has been difficult to try to keep all the balls in the air at times. When my girls were young, we were blessed with a wonderful caregiver that made things much easier for me. She was completely dependable and without her I could not have done the work that I was doing. Over the years I have read the Harry Potter books over the phone to

my girls when they were little and even missed a birthday or two when on the road. My husband has been a great partner in keeping the house, kids, and life on track – we couldn't have survived without him. The important thing is that I try to remember that when things are really busy that this will not last forever, it is only for right now. As my kids get older, I am finding that I have more time to pursue things that I didn't have time for when they were little.

**8. What are your hopes for the future?**

This is a great question! I have so many hopes and dreams right now. I am very excited about starting this new company and phase of my life with my business partner, Andrew Hickey. So, that hope has already become a reality. We are creating new and exciting workshops for our clients and have many ideas for services that we would like to offer in the future. I am hoping to do more work with First Nations communities and operators – that was one of our dreams when we set out to set up our company. And, I am hoping to find more time to write and create technical publications.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

I think all the greatest moments of my professional life have been seeing my students overcome huge hurdles and obstacles. One operator that I am still connected to, even though he retired several years ago, was denied Level 4 certification because of his education. He was devastated and completely distraught. We wrote a letter of appeal to the Operator Certification Board highlighting his trades experience (he was a Red Seal Journeyman in two trades) and he was granted certification. It was the best moment of my career when he showed me his certificate. He was so proud.

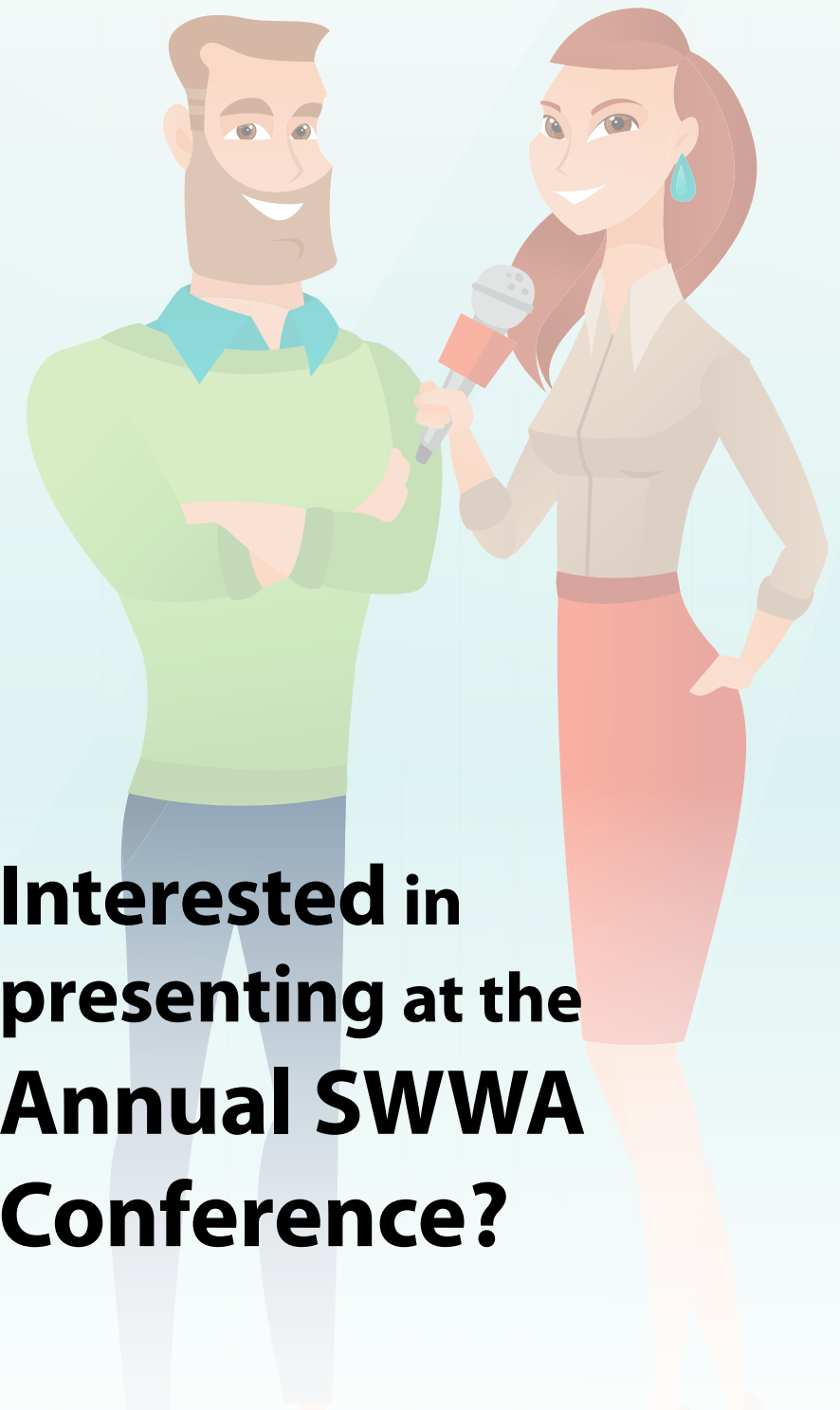


**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

I think the best way to make a difference in your professional world is to leave your ego at the door and to care. That is all that it takes to be successful. Is it easy to do – no, but if you want to make a difference in the world that is how you do it.

I think the most valuable asset a person can have is to show to another that they care – plain and simple. The rest will be easy.

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS



### Interested in presenting at the Annual SWWA Conference?

**Contact the office for more information on what you need to submit. Deadline is April 15.**

# monica mcArthur

**1. What is your name, employer company/community and current position?**

Monica McArthur, Level 1 Water Treatment, Carry the Kettle, Nekota First Nation

**2. What led you into your current field?**

I had been asked to put some files on the computer and then was asked if I would like to learn.

**3. Tell us about some of the experiences you have had in your current role.**

My first plant, I was partnered up with a very kind, patient, knowledgeable gentleman who made the work enjoyable. We then went through an upgrade and had to relearn the new system. My second plant was completely different, there were so many things to learn and then had a fire which caused us to lose everything. After long hours worked by both me and my co-workers and the help of many communities to get water running for the community. We have just finished the completion of a new plant and couldn't be happier.

**4. What advice would you give someone looking to get into the industry?**

Give it a try!! It's a great job and you get to meet so many great people along the way. It will challenge you. I love my job!

**HELP US GET TO KNOW YOU.**

**5. What is something that you have learned that has helped you become the person you are today?**

Don't be afraid to ask for help.

**6. Who would you say were the key influencers and influences in your life so far?**

In this industry, I would like to make note of Ira Aisaican, Deon Hassler and from the Sapphire/Delco Water crew Tim Struck and Rowena Adams. These are and continue to be my go-to group to help when I need it.

**7. How do you keep a work/life balance?**

I am thankful for my family and home and at work and how we have each other's backs.

**8. What are your hopes for the future of water?**

Better facilities and better running drinkable water.

**9. What would you say has been one of the best moments of your professional life to date?**

Getting my certification and getting to work in a brand-new facility after a few years in a temporary one where water had to be hauled in for us.

**10. How do you make a difference in your role, what are your strengths? What do you think is the most valuable asset a person can have?**

The best asset is to always be willing to learn. You can learn something every day if you are open. Always learn with your team.



# Tradeshow 2022

## November 2 & 3

### TCU Place Saskatoon

Sponsors get first choice of Booths and remaining booths go on sale May 1, 2022

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Don't miss out  
on being a part of the  
**BEST SHOW**  
in  
**SASKATCHEWAN**  
for the  
**WATER INDUSTRY.**

## SUPPLIER TRADESHOW WRAP UP

Well, another SWWA conference and trade show completed! It was great to see suppliers and members again after a year hiatus. The mood at the show was slightly subdued from years past with people adjusting to the reopening of social events. However, those in attendance shared much of the same enthusiasm, it's good to be out and see people again. Over the last two years web-based communication (Zoom) has been a tool that was needed but I think the feeling at the conference was in person social interaction can never be fully replaced and will still be needed. I would like to thank all the suppliers, sponsors, members, and board members who attended our 2021 conference without everyone's involvement this event could not happen.

Now, with 2021 behind us let's talk 2022. We have the SWWA annual golf tournament scheduled for June 2022 and our conference and trade show scheduled for November 2022. We are calling on suppliers who wish to be a part to register or take us up on one of the many different sponsorship opportunities available. Please keep in mind attending or sponsoring helps the association continue to provide training and tools to keep our industry healthy and looking to the future. Looking forward to seeing you at both events!

Regards,  
Jordan Webb  
SWWA Supplier Representative

# Golf

The SWWA golf tournament will be held at the **Jackfish Golf Course** **JUNE 10 2022**

More information to come in the new year WATCH THE WEBSITE FOR MORE UPDATES.

Can't golf no problem - not all of us can, just sign up and give it a whirl from never before golfers to advanced we all have a great time out on the course with laughter flowing frequently.



# SWWA GOLF

## Sponsorship

### THE COURSE



Date: June 10, 2022  
Shotgun Start at 10am - please arrive for a half hour prior.  
Where: Jackfish Golf Course

### SPONSORSHIP

Hole Sponsorships are \$300.00 plus GST if you have not been a sponsor prior to this event the sign cost is \$150.00 plus GST on top of the hole sponsorship. 5 holes remain available



### LUNCH SPONSOR



The lunch sponsor will have their sponsorship sign prominently displayed at the beginning of the course.

Burger lunch, with chips & dessert

Price: \$1200.00

\*burger will not look as great as this photo\*



### Specialty Holes

**Closest to Pin** - \$500.00 plus GST (sign extra) **SOLD**  
**Longest Drive** - \$600.00 plus GST (sign extra)  
**Longest Putt** - \$600.00 plus GST (sign extra)



# Sold

### PUTTING GAME

A putting game has been set up with 1/2 of proceeds to go to WaterAid. Sponsor to supply someone to sit at the hole.

Price: \$500.00 plus GST

### SUPPER SPONSOR

The day finishes off with a steak supper with the fixings.  
As the sponsor you will send everyone home with a happy, full, content feeling.

Price: \$2000.00







# Enter to WIN MOM a PRIZE for Mothers Day!!

Email the colouring page back to the SWWA Office and get entered in a draw to receive a Mothers day basket that includes: a gift certificate from DeeAnna's Boutique in Delisle & a surprise from Life's Little Luxuries just for Mom along with a SWWA mug & the lucky winner will receive a SWWA Tshirt in their size.

Must submit to office@swwa.ca by May 1.

## WATCH NOW! The Girl Who Built A Rocket | WaterAid



# SWWA

## From the SWWA Office

Welcome to the updated SWWA website. We have really upgraded some features and we hope you are finding it easier to use.

EVERY MEMBER REQUIRES AN EMAIL – no email no membership, everyone with a phone has an email. Need help setting it up let me know I can walk you through it.

Every member requires an email to be in the database. You cannot share emails because each email assigned to a member is connected to that member email.

**NEW** – EVERY MEMBER NOW HAS A MEMBER NUMBER

### What YOU need to know:

1. Membership is in the name of the individual and is required to be renewed yearly
2. If you were sharing an email with someone or you had not renewed before the upgrades were implemented and IF you have not renewed yet you will need to register a profile and buy a membership
3. KNOW your member number – if anyone is registering you for events, they will need it
4. Your membership follows you – if you retire or move jobs update your profile by logging in and making changes

### IMPORTANT!!!

If your admin registers, you for SWWA events they will need to have a profile – no membership is required but they will need a profile to register you.

Have them set it up prior to the busy conference season

### STAY CONNECTED:

**NEWSLETTERS** – if you unsubscribe you are responsible for staying up to date on what is happening with SWWA

Follow us on FB or LinkedIn to stay in the know

Coming soon Fall 2021 – upgraded SWWA APP for all things SWWA

# SWWA

# CONFERENCE

# 2022

## November 2, 3, 4 in Saskatoon at TCU Place

CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS  
AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

Don't miss out on celebrating the

# Big 40<sup>of</sup> SWWA

## The Saskatchewan Operator Certification Board Your Certification Renewal and Continuing Education Units

### How do I know when to renew my certification?

Renewal forms are mailed to operators, usually 2 to 3 months before the renewal date. If your renewal date is approaching and you have not received your notice, you can download the renewal form from our website: <https://saskocb.ca/wp-content/uploads/Renewal-Application-August-16-2018-1.pdf>

### What do I need to renew my certification?

You will need a renewal application, \$150.00 renewal fee and one (1) Continuing Education Unit (CEU) every two (2) year renewal period. You cannot repeat the same CEU's for two consecutive renewals

(i.e. – if you took First Aid for your last renewal, you cannot repeat this course and use it for this one).

### How do I obtain CEU credits if there are no in person courses or conferences available?

There are several courses now available through internet webinars, video conferences and online registrations. You can refer to our CEU approved list on our website for more information and options. Some courses will be noted as "online", "webinar", etc if it has been approved as such. You can check out the course facilitator websites for further details or contact them directly.

### I have extra CEU credits from my last renewal, can I use them for this one?

CEUs must be earned during your current certification period (i.e. – May 2019 – May 2021) so any CEUs earned prior to that date will not be accepted.

### I want to take a course for my CEU credit but it is not listed on the approved list. What can I do?

You can complete a CEU Evaluation Form for the course, including an agenda and detailed timeline and submit to our office. The Board will review it at the next Board meeting and, if approved, it will be added to our approved list and uploaded to our website.

The form can be found on our website - <https://saskocb.ca/wp-content/uploads/CEU-Evaluation-Form-June-10-2020-1.pdf>

### I do not have access to the internet and online learning options, can I get an extension on my renewal?

At this time, we are not able to extend renewal obligations for anyone not able to obtain their CEU credits. If you cannot obtain CEUs you can contact our office or the EPO in your area for further instruction. EPOs can be found on the Facility Classification List on our website under the Operator Certification tab - <https://saskocb.ca/certification/>

### Where do I find the Board meeting dates and submission deadlines?

All meeting dates and deadlines are listed on the home page of our website – [www.saskocb.ca](http://www.saskocb.ca)

### How do I submit my documents to the OCB office?

Email, fax or Canada Post mail are all accepted ways to submit your documents to the OCB.

You can always call or email us with your questions:

Email – [info@saskocb.ca](mailto:info@saskocb.ca)

Phone – 306-789-3430

Fax – 306-789-3429

Website – [www.saskocb.ca](http://www.saskocb.ca)



**SaskOCB**  
Operator Certification Board

for sale

The Town of Foam Lake is offering for sale the following items:

1. NEW 2016 Flygt Submersible Pump

5.0 HP, Model # NP-3102, 1745 RPM, MT IMP 462 Vol. 4" c/w FLS Adaptive N Flush Valve Ready - 25' of cable \$8,000



2. Used 2017 Flygt Submersible Pump

5.0 HP, Model # NP-3102, 1745 RPM, MT IMP 462 Vol. 4" c/w FLS Adaptive N Flush Valve Ready - 25' of cable \$3,000



3. Used 2010 Flygt Submersible Pump

5.0 HP, Model # NP-3102, 1745 RPM, MT IMP 462 Vol. 4" c/w FLS Adaptive N Flush Valve Ready - 25' of cable \$1,000



4. NEW Goulds Submersible Sewage Pump

20HP Model #4N512N3EF, 4" Discharge, 230 Volt, 52 amp, 1750 RPM, IMP diameter 9.75" - 25' of cable \$10,000

Please contact

Foreman Bob Reynolds at 306-272-7082 or Assistant Foreman Kevin Beatty at 306-272-8018.



5. 2012 Vulcan 1/2 Ton Hoist

Model # LIA1422, single phase, 115 volts \$2,000



2022 - 2023 CALENDAR  
Call for photos

submit your best pics to office@swwa.ca

for sale New!

Looking to buy or sell used equipment?  
Advertise here -

Contact: Calle Behnke  
SWWA Office Manager  
Box 7831 Stn Mn | Saskatoon | SK. |S7K 4R5  
E: office@swwa.ca  
P: (306)668-1278

Office hours are Monday to Thursday 8am to 4pm. We are closed on all Statutory holidays.



# Advanced

## MUNICIPAL SOLUTIONS

### UPCOMING SPRING/SUMMER 2022 CEU WORKSHOPS

- OPERATION & MAINTAINANCE OF WASTEWATER LAGOONS - ONLINE
- LEAD AND COPPER / CHLORAMINATION BASICS
- UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS
- REVERSE OSMOSIS TREATMENT - ONLINE

### UPCOMING SPRING/SUMMER 2022 CERTIFICATION PREP COURSES AND EXAM SESSIONS

- LEVEL 1 WATER TREATMENT AND WATER DISTRIBUTION, MAY 16 – 20
- LEVEL 1 WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND COLLECTION, JUNE 13 – 17
- LEVEL 2 WATER TREATMENT AND DISTRIBUTION, JUNE 20 – 24

REGISTER ONLINE @

[www.amssk.ca](http://www.amssk.ca)

**CONTACT US:**

**Email [info@amssk.ca](mailto:info@amssk.ca) or**

**Call 306 381 4766**