

Know Before You Go

EPA-ASDWA National Capacity Development & Operator Certification Workshop



We look forward to seeing you in Madison, Wisconsin at our 7th National Capacity Development & Operator Certification Workshop! This biennial event is co-hosted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA). The theme for this year's Workshop is "50 Years of SDWA: Taking Lessons Learned to Build Towards the Future." In addition, we want to take this opportunity to discuss how to use the unprecedented funding and Federal technical assistance under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support public water systems. To help you get the most out of your Workshop experience, here are some things you may want to know before you go!

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About The Workshop

The purpose of the Workshop is for State and EPA Capacity Development and Operator Certification program staff to interactively discuss experiences and challenges in supporting public water systems and share program implementation best practices and successes. This is also an opportunity to interact with partners from other States, EPA Regions, and Technical Assistance Providers to learn about their work and resources for helping drinking water systems build technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity.

How Can I Make the Most of the Workshop?

In light of this year's theme – "50 Years of SDWA: Taking Lessons Learned to Build Towards the Future" – we encourage all attendees to be active participants in sharing your knowledge about implementing capacity-building and operator programs and the approaches you have found successful. We have developed the [Workshop agenda](#) with this theme in mind, and most of the sessions will be interactive to foster closer collaboration and engagement. Therefore, all attendees should give some forethought on what program insights they would like to share, or ask, about these session topics:

BIL Breakdown (Activity): Tabletop exercise to better understand the range of funding and technical assistance under BIL. Determine how you would resolve specific case studies utilizing capacity building principles, technical assistance, and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding.

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Capacity Development (Roundtable Discussion): Discuss new initiatives and resources being developed and/or implemented by the state's capacity development program and hear from attendees who have found creative ways to support water system capacity overcome challenges.

Operator Certification (Roundtable Discussion): Discuss key strategic components that make an effective state program and hear from attendees who are leveraging resources to build up their operator certification and workforce development program.

Succession Planning (Activity): Interactive polling to share best practices for succession planning with attendees on how you would resolve specific case studies.

Assessing TMF Capacity (Roundtable Discussion): Small groups will discuss how States are assessing TMF capacity and how other drinking water programs and resources can be leveraged to assist those systems that lack capacity.

Engagement Catch-All (Activity): Attendees will be split into four groups to exchange effective strategies for engaging different audiences on lead service line inventories and replacements.

Operator Training (Activity): Interactive polling to learn how states are incorporating drinking water "hot topics" such as emerging contaminants, cybersecurity, and emergency response in their training programs.

What If I'm Relatively New to My Program?

Welcome! We are looking forward to meeting you in Madison. Here are some EPA and ASDWA resources to help you learn more about these topics and better prepare you for your first Workshop:

[Building the Capacity of Drinking Water Systems.](#) This EPA webpage is great resource for learning about the capacity-building programs, concepts, and tools that help drinking water systems provide safe drinking water and protect public health. These resources cover capacity development, operator certification, asset management, water system partnerships, and funding for small systems.

[Water Technical Assistance \(WaterTA\).](#) This webpage describes how EPA's free WaterTA services support communities to identify water challenges, develop plans, build capacity, and develop application materials to access water infrastructure funding.

[Drinking Water Training Webinars.](#) This EPA webpage includes several recorded webinars on a variety of capacity-building topics such as asset management, water system partnerships, and WaterTA.

[ASDWA's Newsroom Subscription.](#) Sign up to receive deliver the drinking water updates directly to your inbox. Choose between Daily or Weekly delivery for your update, or combine your subscriptions to get the content you want in the frequency that best suits your needs.

[Pressed for time?](#)

Attend our upcoming Capacity Development and Operator Certification 101 Webinar

EPA will host a 101 webinar on **July 23rd at 12:30 p.m.** (EST) and will introduce the goals of the Capacity Development and Operator Certification programs and the federal program requirements enacted under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This webinar will be an introduction to those who are new to the program, and a good refresher for those who have been in the program for a while.

[Click here to register.](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to Alison Flenniken (Flenniken.Alison@epa.gov)

General Information

Hotel Information

The [Madison Concourse Hotel](#) is located at 1 W Dayton St, Madison, WI 53703. To speak to the hotel, call 800-356-8293.

Transportation & Parking



Flying? The hotel is 15 minutes south of Dane County Regional Airport. The Madison Concourse Hotel offers a complimentary airport shuttle for all overnight guests. From the airport, simply call the hotel when you are ready for pick-up. The shuttle pick-up area is across the street from baggage claim Door 5.

The shuttle runs between 4:30 AM and 11 PM. If you arrive after 11PM, taxis are available at the airport outside Door 7. Rideshare vehicles such as Uber and Lyft pick up to the right of Door 6.



Driving? The Madison Concourse Hotel offers overnight parking to all guests (\$18 per night). The parking entrance is located on Dayton Street, just before the doors to the main lobby. The parking ramp has a clearance of 6 feet. Additional parking is available nearby, at the city's Carroll Street Parking ramp, and can accommodate larger vehicles.

What Should I Bring?

Pack clothes that are professional yet comfortable as attendees will primarily be sitting throughout the workshop. Although the workshop is taking place in August, we recommend bringing a sweater or light jacket in case the conference spaces are chilly. Bring supplies for notetaking and don't forget to bring your business cards! We encourage attendees to stay in touch to continue collaboration and share information with one another.

What is the TA Expo?

The Technical Assistance Exposition (TA Expo) will take place on the first day of the Workshop, August 7th, during a 1-hour block in the morning as well as a 30-minute break in the afternoon. The goal of the TA Expo is to provide an opportunity for Workshop attendees to network with technical assistance providers and learn about their individual experiences and first-hand program knowledge. Therefore, introduce yourself to them. Ask about their services. Connect with them about the capacity-building challenges you encounter in your work. The full agenda includes a conversation starter fun fact about each of the providers as well as a link to their organization's website to learn more.

Will there be other networking opportunities?

Yes! We have some after-workshop events that everyone is invited to including an ASDWA sponsored reception at the hotel on our first day of the workshop (August 7th at 5:15 pm) where we will have a cash bar and light hours d'oeuvres. For those who are interested, attendees are welcome to come along for an evening walk and dinner (on your own) at [Memorial Union at UW-Madison](#) on our second day (August 8th at 5:45 pm).