



VOWRA NEWS

December , 2011
Volume 5, Issue 4

“Elevating Professionalism of the Onsite Wastewater Industry in Virginia”

In This Issue

Board of Directors

Pam Pruett
President

Cody Vigil
Vice President

Curtis Moore
Past President

Ken May
Treasurer

Trapper Davis
Secretary

Barbie Dawson
Marcia Degen
Sandra Gentry
Jim Hawes
David Hogan
Terry Inboden
Bob Mayer

Ben Morrell
Executive Director

Page 3 — Upcoming Conferences

Page 4 — VOWRA Board of Directors

Page 5 — Sewage Handling and
Disposal Review Board

Page 6 — Who is the Designer?

Page 7 — SVCC Exam Prep Class

Upcoming Board of Directors Meetings

January 5, 2012 Conference Call
February 2, 2012 Conference Call
March 1, 2012 Face to Face

**If you would like to attend a meeting
contact VOWRA for more information.**

President's Message

2011 has been a very successful year for VOWRA. Education classes around the Commonwealth were well attended and the Conference was a great success. The Board of Directors is currently in the process of completing Education and Conference plans for 2012. We will be moving our Conference to Williamsburg in 2012, so mark your calendars for this opportunity, see page 3. In addition, the education schedule will be out shortly. As you can see we will be participating with SVCC with a preparation class for the DPOR exam, see pages 6 and 7. In closing, the VOWRA Board wishes all a happy holiday season and a prosperous 2012.

Pam Pruett
VOWRA President

New Group Members

Inboden Environmental Services, Inc.
Miller's Septic Service, Inc.

New Members

Dylon Stewart	Stewart's Septic Service
Steve Gooch	Gooch Engineering & Testing
Roy L. Farmer, III	Farmer's Septic Service, Inc.
Jim Pumphrey	Lowe's Plumbing & Water Treatment
David Maciolek	Aqua Nova Engineering, PLC
Earl Thompson, P.E.	Infiltrator Systems, Inc.
Bernard Epperson	Stiff Septic Service, Inc.
Jeffery Stiff	Stiff Septic Service, Inc.
Oliver O. Stiff	Stiff Septic Service, Inc.

Brian Mitchell	Mitchell's Septic
David Day	Cedar Run Construction
Ron Merzlak	Rising Sun Construction Company
Thomas W. Jackson	Triple R Construction Co., Inc.
Eric Debrosky	Eric D's Design, LLC
William J. Loth, IV	Afton Soil Consulting
John R. Crombie	R & K Septic, Inc.
Joshua Weaver	Seal's Septic Service, Inc.
Mark Overstreet	CMC Supply, Inc.
Damon Hunley	Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.

Thanks to those VAMAC and all those companies participating in the 2011 Give Back Program.

Give Back With **VAMAC** INC. *"The Difference"*



VAMAC, Inc. and our participating vendors will donate 1% of sales generated from onsite product sales from September 1, 2011 through September 30, 2011 to the Virginia Wastewater Recycling Association (VOWRA).

Donations support VOWRA's efforts in continuing education, communication and training for professionals within the Virginia Onsite Industry.



NOWRA Training at the 2012 Pumper Show

As we have done in the past, NOWRA will offer a full day training program for installers at the 2012 Pumper Show. Well-known and respected trainers Sara Heger and Tom Fritts will again conduct the training sessions, which will be held February 27 in Indianapolis. For a list of topics they plan to cover visit www.nowra.org.

NOWRA Technical Conference

Mark your calendars! **NOWRA's Annual Technical Education Conference & 4th Northeast Onsite Wastewater Short Course -- April 2-5, 2012, Providence Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI** You won't want to miss this conference. Put this must-attend event on your schedule and visit www.nowra.org. More details coming shortly.

VOWRA Announces New Venue for it's 2012 Conference

The 2012 VOWRA Conference & Trade Show will be moving to Williamsburg, Virginia. We have had great Conferences in Richmond for the past three years and hope the response will be as good in this great location.

Watch www.vowra.org for more information as it becomes available.

VOWRA FALL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW OCTOBER 8 AND 9, 2012

SAVE THE DATE

**The 2012 VOWRA Conference & Trade Show will be at the Williamsburg
Marriott
50 Kingsmill Road
Williamsburg, Virginia**

**VOWRA Contact Information:
Ph: 540-465-9623 – Fax: 540-465-9627
Email: vowra@shentel.net**

VOWRA 2012 Board of Directors

At the Annual Meeting on October 4th, Damon Hunley, Danna Revis, and Danny Hylton, were elected to the Board for the first time and Jim Hawes, Ken May, and Bob Mayer were re-elected. Thanks to all who support the Association by serving on the Board and as officers. Bios of the new members are below.

Damon Hunley

Damon is the current Onsite Specialist in Virginia for Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc. He has worked for ADS for 3 years and is based out of Chesterfield, Virginia. His first 2 years with ADS was on the Pipe and Storm Water side of the business. In May of this year he joined the Onsite group and is responsible for Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware. Damon's education includes a B.S. degree in Industrial Technology from East Tennessee State University and an MBA from Middle Tennessee State University.

Danny Hylton

Danny is retired from his position as Operations Superintendent for Campbell County Utilities & Service Authority (CCUSA) where he oversaw all operational aspects of the water and wastewater departments for the Authority. He directly supervised a large staff of employees and handled a wide variety of administrative duties. He was involved in short- and long-range strategic planning for facility upgrades and expansion. Mr. Hylton served as primary liaison for CCUSA in close collaboration with developers, engineers, contractors, and other professionals with regards to water, sewer, and other major construction projects. His work with the Authority was multi-faceted and of a professional nature.

Mr. Hylton launched a private consulting firm registered as, *D. R. Hylton & Associates, Inc.*, to provide a broad spectrum of training and support services to the water and wastewater industry. Diverse services offered include construction quality assurance and administration (treatment facilities, water and sewer lines, and related construction); evaluations of water and wastewater facilities; design and review of construction specifications; initial startup and training for wastewater treatment facilities; development of O&M manuals for water and wastewater treatment plant systems; instructing State certification preparation training courses throughout Virginia; and assistance with water utility management.

Dana Revis

While attending the College of William and Mary and majoring in geology, Danna began working part-time for a hydrogeological consulting firm in Newport News that also did soils consulting for onsite sewage systems. She did the firm's soil consulting until graduating from college in 1986. In 1987, Danna went to work for Prince William Health district in Manassas, VA, where she worked as an Environmental Health Specialist Senior specializing in onsite sewage systems and wells for 14 years. She took a brief hiatus from VDH to spend a year working for HealthSpace, the company that provides the data system for VDH's environmental health programs. Danna returned to VDH in 2002 as the Training Coordinator for the Office of Environmental Health.

Governor McDonnell Proposes to Eliminate the Sewage Handling and Disposal Appeal Review Board.

The State Health Department Sewage Handling and Disposal Appeal Review Board (ARB) consists of seven members, appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The members include one member who is a soil scientist; one member who is a professional engineer in private practice; one member who is a residential builder; one member who is an academic professional engaged in research and teaching in a soils-related discipline; one member who has had experience in the field of enforcement of onsite sewage disposal regulations; one member who is engaged in private soils analysis work related to the installation of onsite sewage systems; and one member from the public at large who may have experience in the installation of onsite sewage systems. The members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The ARB hears the appeals of denials of onsite sewage permits and certification letters, Betterment Loan Eligibility Letters, and requests for reimbursement from the Onsite Sewage Indemnification Fund.

The ARB is unique among state agencies in that its decisions constitute final agency decisions and cannot be challenged by the agency, even if an error of fact or law occurs. In the absence of the ARB, citizens could appeal adverse decisions to circuit court in accordance with the Administrative Process Act. The agency, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General, has an option to appeal an adverse decision in circuit court. Eliminating the ARB would reduce expenses for the agency (travel reimbursement, time, materials, etc.) and realign VDH with more —normal processes for making agency decisions (case decisions).

Eliminating the Board would remove a step and would streamline the judicial process. While this recommendation does remove the Health Department from this appeal process, it does not remove the right to an appeal away from those seeking a different decision. It is believed that this recommended process will reduce the burden put on the Department and would again streamline the process for those seeking an appeal. This was

SUPPORT VOWRA

BY BECOMING A MEMBER OR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT VOWRA AT

USPS: P. O. BOX 155, STAR TANNERY, VIRGINIA 22654

EMAIL: VOWRA@SHENTEL.NET

WEB: WWW.VOWRA.ORG

PH: (540) 465-9623

FAX: (540) 465-9627

Who is the Designer?

Virginia has come a long ways in modernizing their onsite program in the last decade. NOWRA and VOWRA have both promoted “Onsite” as a part of the national wastewater infrastructure for a long time now. Virginia has developed one of the most, if not “the Most” comprehensive program of practitioner licensing and certification for the private sector in the nation. VOWRA has provided considerable leadership in this area and continues to do so.

One area that seems to have some uncertainty however is the aspect of the designer and design authority. The problem arises from the fact that it takes so many professional groups to create a successful onsite Permit, design, installation and long term performing facility. The site evaluator (licensed Onsite Evaluator-OSE) must call the site and inform the designer of the appropriate location and application of effluent to the site. The installation contractor makes many decisions on system layout that are typically not laid out in detail on the plans. The O&M provider must modify operating functions to service the wide range of consumers that will inhabit the facility.

Engineers are designers of course. Most onsite engineers come out of the Civil Engineering discipline where they are taught how to “cut and fill”, that is to move dirt from point “A” to point “B”. They are taught to evaluate the soil for optimum moisture then beat the heck out of it to compact it as much as possible then build something on it. Few are trained to move water through the soil while it is being treated. Most engineers are therefore very dependent on a qualified site evaluator that can communicate the suitability and capacity of a given site.

Virginia currently provides for a wide range of design authority to provide for the needs of the citizen. Some health departments provide design services for conventional and some alternative systems. Many contractors do considerable design work particularly with repairs to modify and extend existing designs to service a particular site. The OSE has design authority for both conventional and some specified alternatives. Engineers have full design authority for all systems provided for in the regulation plus may administer to permits outside the regulation if they use “accepted engineering practices” and do not encroach on certain separation distances.

Is there a problem then with design authority in Virginia...YES! Design authority is authorized in the code of Virginia by exempting qualified individuals from the license requirement for the practice of engineering. Section 54.1-402.A.11 allows systems “designed by a licensed onsite soil evaluator, which utilize packaged equipment” for limited alternative systems. The problem is certain pump systems cannot be designed by the OSE which raises questions for most alternative system design. It is easier just to say engineers should design all alternative systems.

Most people questioning who can design are asking the wrong question about what systems are exempt from licensing. The question should be what is the OSE qualified to design? DPOR expects certain skills and abilities for the OSE to become licensed. They are not yet fully defined due to the young age of the program, but they do exist. Manufacturers of packaged equipment should be “designing” their systems to be used within this skill set if they want to have their systems designed by the OSE. The OSE should be authorized to design them accordingly. If we take this approach then we don’t need to change the code every time a new technology becomes available.

NOWRA is starting a program for designer training. We don’t want to teach soil science or engineering, there are many schools better qualified to do that. We don’t want to teach design of specific manufacturers products since this is inherently unfair to other manufacturers. We do want to teach how to select the appropriate system for a given site and what is contained in a good design. We want to teach design guidance for those technologies where we have consensus. We need to teach how to make the best “economic” recommendation to the owner for his site for long-term sustainability.

The Virginia Legislature is evaluating a bill to privatize all designs. This would provide the appropriate separation of regulators and enforcers with practitioners doing the work. There are challenges to developing a completely private sector design community due to the traditional long term involvement of the regulatory community in design. How are low income people serviced and how do we keep the public sector sufficiently experienced in the technical aspects of onsite so they can provide the appropriate oversight? Virginia is positioned the best to do this compared to other states due to our comprehensive licensing program.

Each designer must rely on the skill of the specialty practitioners for input for specific sites, be it a surveyor, site evaluator or a pre-engineered product manufacturer. The liability of being responsible for the overall coordination of the products and services “designed” into a specific site is helped by the licensing and certification programs now used in Virginia. The line between requiring an engineers’ involvement or a non-engineer designer still needs to be developed for the benefit of the citizens and the clarity of the practitioners.

Robert B. Mayer, MSPE
American Manufacturing Company, Inc.

Licensing Preparation Exam

Did you know that DPOR requires all onsite system installers to be licensed? Do you have your Onsite Sewage System Installer license from DPOR? If not, the law provides for criminal prosecution for installing systems without a license. Fortunately, DPOR has not started to aggressively enforce this law but sooner or later it's likely that they will.

If you've been waiting for a training class to help you prepare for the DPOR exam, your wait will soon be over. On February 6, 2012, SVCC will offer an onsite wastewater system installer exam preparation class.

The DPOR test is a timed open book exam consisting of questions drawn from 10 subject areas. The new SVCC class will follow this format. Each of the first ten weeks of class will be devoted to one subject area. Students will have access to all of the source materials identified by DPOR that were used to create the exam. In addition, there will be a discussion board where questions can be raised and discussed. There will be video material and Power Point presentations to support a few of the topics such as math and OSHA rules.

The class will be offered online and there are no regular meetings like in a traditional classroom course. You will need a computer, internet access (preferably with high speed access) and you will need to schedule about 4 hours each week, at your convenience, to study the assigned material, take *practice* tests, and participate in online discussions. The final two weeks of the class will consist of review and time to practice for the DPOR exam.

Because the class will be offered online, you will not need to take time off to attend training. You will save the time and expenses associated with traveling to Blackstone (or another location). However, successfully completing the class will require discipline on your part every week to read, study the material and to participate in the online classroom.

Since the test is timed, you will need to be very familiar with the material to complete the exam within the allowed time. The good news though, is the exam is an open book exam and you won't need to memorize everything to pass. For the material you are not certain about, knowing where to find an answer is as important as knowing the answer. Students who complete each weekly assignment will be able to answer most of the questions and will know where to *quickly* find answers they may not have committed to memory.

Each week there will be a "practice exam" covering the questions taken from the material covered. You can take the practice tests as often as you like. Your score on the exam does NOT represent your grade for the class. What it is intended to do is let you know how well you know the material and where you need to focus your studies.

Your grade for the class (pass or fail) will be based on *participation* every week and demonstrating a working understanding of the material. Students who complete all assignments will receive a passing grade. Does this mean they will pass the DPOR exam? SVCC cannot promise that you will pass the exam but we can promise you will have an opportunity to study all of the materials that the exam was based on. The more time an installer spends studying the materials and taking the practice tests, the better the contractor will do on the DPOR exam.

Finally, SVCC is working with VOWRA to see that optional one-day short courses are offered around the state that will supplement the online training in this class. To be clear however, Southside Community College is offering this class as a stand-alone class that will cover all ten subject areas. To register for the class, call Lydia Shepherd at 434-292-3101. VOWRA will announce and register students for their classes when they become available.

Prepare for the

DPOR Contractor License Test

Starting February 6, 2012 Southside Virginia Community College will be offering a class to prepare you to take the DPOR test. This 12 week class will cover all ten areas of the exam. You will receive the study materials DPOR lists, have practice tests to see how well you know the material, and receive other study materials to help you study for the test.

The core course will be offered online and weekly participation is required. You will be expected to discuss the material being studied and take the practice tests. Supplementary classes may be offered by VOWRA at locations to be announced around the state.

Cost for this 3 credit class is \$364.50.

Thanks to Don Alexander for this Article



P. O. Box 155
Star Tannery, VA 22654

Contact VOWRA:

Phone: 540-465-9623

Fax: 540-465-9627

E-mail: vowra@shentel.net

We're on the Web!

Find us at www.vowra.org

***“ELEVATING PROFESSIONALISM IN THE ONSITE WASTE WATER INDUSTRY
IN VIRGINIA”***