

Florida AWOP Report Out
R4 Remote Quarterly Meeting
(for Knoxville, Tennessee Mtg)
August 11-13, 2020

Maintaining the Program

Internal Support

The program continues to receive necessary support within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Division of Water Resource Management (DWRM). Management understands the importance AWOP for compliance assistance and optimization with the current number of health-based violations in Florida.

Identify & Address Institutional Challenges

Our challenge is still dissemination of the AWOP information and tools to some of the regulatory office staff and the water systems. DEP's Source and Drinking Water Program will continue to host trainings to inform primacy office staff of the benefits of the program. However, notifying the water systems of the importance has been challenging (i.e. training) as implementation moves forward. The plan for implementation and maintenance of the program is to have it be included with the day to day compliance duties of the regulatory office staff as well as the water systems that will be participating.

Drinking Water Program AWOP Team

Several employees that will include FDEP Division Source & Drinking Water and regulatory office staff for 'Core Team'. Currently working on the idea of creating small, centralized AWOP teams at the 13 regulatory offices.

TPI Implementation

List of Activities

- January 2020 – Focus on Change (FOC) FL Statewide Conferences
- February 2020 – Focus on Change (FOC) FL Statewide Conferences
- March 2020 – R4 AWOP Meeting and Workshop in Winston-Salem, NC
- July 2020 – Florida AWOP Kick-Off Training Workshop (Zoom Meeting)
- August 2020 – R4 AWOP Remote Meeting and Workshop (Knoxville, TN)
- September 2020 – Program Evaluations of several FL regulatory offices (Remote)

Building Awareness

Florida is continuing to build awareness by providing AWOP information and tools received from each regional meeting and workshop. Currently working on the idea of having centralized AWOP teams at the regulatory offices. Also, working towards having quarterly conference calls (i.e. Microsoft Teams) with the regulatory staff to provide updates from the quarterly R4 AWOP meetings. These meetings will also provide a way for staff to ask questions, discuss ideas for participating water systems with compliance issues, and any future ideas to move the program forward.

With the creation of the FL AWOP Directory, the regulatory offices and Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) have direct access to all the AWOP materials gathered thus far. This directory will be moved to SharePoint for the regulatory office AWOP teams to have better access to information and the ability for direct contact with the other regulatory offices. The directory will be updated on a quarterly basis with an email sent to the offices once an update has been completed. A list of ideas will be provided to management for updates, and for the program to continue to move forward.

The AWOP Remote Kick-Off training workshop scheduled for July 2020 assisted with providing excellent ideas and information for helping FL move forward with the program. Though they were not able to participate, we have officially gained the support of FRWA to assist with building awareness and applying the tools at the water systems.

AWOP Impacts

The ability for additional regulatory staff to attend the R4 AWOP and national meetings has granted FL the opportunity to frequently provide information on proactive approaches instead of reactive approaches to the issues our water systems are experiencing. FL has been able to continually host training workshops for regulatory staff and offer access to the material available. We are excited that we can provide technical assistance along with our Rural Water Association for the water systems that are working on compliance and towards optimization. The AWOP tools will provide support with increasing compliance of Florida's water systems.

Lessons Learned

FDEP's Source and Drinking Water program attendance at each meeting offers excellent concepts to relay to the regulatory staff and share with FRWA. Those concepts can be extended to the water systems that need technical assistance, especially the systems with health-based violation issues. Attending meetings and providing training workshops with the help of EPA and PAI continue to present ways to expand our knowledge to protect Florida's water quality.