**AWOP Small Group Discussion Workshop Template**

**2021 National Meeting**

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| **Topic or Issue: Turbidity Status Component and Awards Program Implementation**Participants: Aaron Pickens, Taroon Bidar, Fatima Shaikh, Jami Delmore, Nate Karp, Shawna Laderach, Jackie Logsdon, José Lugo-Figueroa, Filina Poonolly, Rachel Brookins, Roy Robertson, Krista Schultz, Virgiline Ongkingco, Dominique Smith |
| **Topic Description and Objectives:**Provide background on the Turbidity Status Component and Awards Program Implementation. Dis­cuss potential challenges that states may face in developing an awards program and brainstorm solutions.* Fourteen participants (Presenter, Facilitator, and twelve State Participants)
* Jackie Logsdon (KY DOW AWOP Coordinator) presented on Kentucky’s Status Component, Maintenance and Targeted Performance Improvement:
	+ Kentucky annually ranks all surface water treatment plants based on CFE turbidity received via MOR data. OAS spreadsheet collects raw, IFE, and CFE data, but Kentucky only used CFE data to rank systems, since additional information was not consistently provided. A report pulls MOR data from SDWIS and transfers 4-hour turbidity data to an *Excel* document. Kentucky calcu­lates system rankings based on number of times 4-hour turbidity readings are over AWOP goals and federal requirements. They then conduct CPEs with systems that rank highest.
	+ IFE data is not required to be submitted on MORs, so the collection of this data was a chal­lenge historically. Kentucky included an optional sheet on the MOR to collect IFE data from systems, but not all systems completed the sheet. To address this, in 2011, Kentucky updated their program to require systems to join AWOP to then be eligible for certificates and awards. AWOP participation included mandatory submission of CFE and IFE data. This solved the issue of not receiving all desired data and reduced time spent manually entering data.
	+ The awards program has been an excellent motivator for systems to meet AWOP goals and pro­vide additional information. Currently 50% of surface water treatment plants have joined the AWOP.
	+ Kentucky Awards:
		- Microbial AWOP Certificate – Meet all Microbial Optimization Goals for year.
		- Microbial AWOP Champion Award – No SDWA violation for three-year evaluation timeframe, meet Microbial optimization criteria for three consecutive years.
		- Gold Seal Recognition – Meet all goals in 100% of readings.
		- One system gives operators a bonus if they get an AWOP award, and a bigger bonus is given if they receive the Gold Seal Recognition Award.
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| **Status (could also be formatted as *“Challenges”*):** |
| 1. Rachel Brookins (Oklahoma) – How have other states reached out to more systems to get them to participate? Has targeted outreach been used? Oklahoma started an awards program initially, but it is on hold for now due to COVID. They initially stated AWOP goals and data submission requirements in a brochure that was sent to all systems. They are currently planning to reduce the amount of data needed to be submitted monthly, so participation isn’t such a time strain for sys­tems. Changes include only asking for maximum turbidity reading instead of all.
2. Aaron asked for a copy of Oklahoma’s brochure – Rachel will share with the group.
3. Aaron (Iowa) – Aaron mentioned that the hardest part of continuing participation is getting data. He likes Kentucky’s idea to recognize systems that submit OAS monthly. He asked, “What are some incentives that states use to get info from systems?”
4. Encouraging systems to complete the OAS sheet independently.
5. Resources are a big limitation; not enough staff to crunch numbers.
6. Jami asked has anyone thought to have Governors present awards.
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| **Solutions:** |
| 1. Kentucky has used targeted outreach by completing the OAS sheets for systems and letting them know if they are close to meeting goals. Oklahoma has developed a brochure to inform systems of AWOP for outreach.
2. Send Oklahoma’s brochure to the group.
3. Texas and Alabama give out an AWOP flag to optimized systems. The group discussed Aaron’s idea of potentially offering CEUs for operators who provide OAS documents monthly. Rachel sug­gested sharing the AWOP logo with systems so they can post the logo on social media.
4. Krista mentioned that New Mexico has new customizable MORs and has systems fill out the OAS sheets and then discusses the responses with systems to encourage participation.
5. Retaining staff has been an issue for states and water treatment plants nationwide. There was dis­cussion on hiring new staff and retaining said staff. Krista mentioned that New Mexico collabo­rated with a local college to have students trained in drinking water operation, with job opportuni­ties for them after graduation.
6. There was discussion on incentives to get systems to join. Kentucky had a branch manager pre­sent awards, but that is as high profile of a person they have gotten. Potentially, they can get oth­ers to present to get the word out.
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| **Action Steps:** |
| 1. Rachel will share Oklahoma’s AWOP brochure.
2. Jackie will share Kentucky’s OAS worksheet.
3. Dominique will share small group participants’ emails with Jackie and Rachel.
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