



OPERATOR TRAINING COMMITTEE OF OHIO, INC
-OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING CENTER-

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September 1, 2005

Steve Morrison, OWEA President
Public Utilities Department
City of Miamisburg
600 N. Main St.
Miamisburg, OH 45342

Dear Steve:

At the August 26th OTCO Board meeting, I was asked by the OTCO trustees to address recently published OWEA articles about the termination of the contact hour agreement between OTCO and OWEA. The OTCO Board wishes to clarify the details of this termination.

In late 2004, OWEA approached OTCO with a request that an agreement be entered into to track contact hours. The OTCO Board hesitated to contract with OWEA because several years ago OWEA abruptly ended a services contract with OTCO and refused to pay outstanding bills for services rendered. OTCO did, however, decide to consider entering into a new agreement as it was felt it could benefit those we serve who are members of OWEA.

At the April OTCO board meeting OTCO trustees discussed such a contract with OWEA representatives. The OTCO Board made it clear during the meeting that payment of past due invoices would be a requirement of further cooperative agreements. The OWEA representatives indicated that they could not authorize this payment but that they wanted the contract signed before leaving the meeting. The OTCO Board signed the agreement and gave the Executive Director the responsibility and authority to manage the contract including assuring payment was made prior to data entry.

Both OTCO and OWEA agreed that Curtis Truss, the Executive Director of OTCO, and Mark Livengood of OWEA would be the only contacts and representatives in implementing the agreement. However, current and past officers of OWEA soon attempted to change the conditions of the agreement by contacting OTCO board members. This conflicted with the agreement that only Mr. Truss should be contacted about the contract. Instead, Mr. Truss initiated the only meeting with Mark Livengood, on June 2, to receive the contact-hour data, to confirm the prerequisite of payment of past due invoices, and to provide "not-to-exceed" estimates.

As of June 27, 2005, OTCO still had not received payment for the outstanding invoice or the signed "not to exceed estimates". It was also observed that the forms used at the OWEA Annual Conference did not meet the requirements of the new contract. Finally, OWEA personnel continued

to try to deal with board members rather than with the Executive Director. Based on these breaches, the Executive Director with Board support decided to terminate the agreement in accordance to the contract. The contact hour data was returned to OWEA representative, Mark Livengood on the 27th along with a letter outlining the reasons for its return. On the 28th, payment was rendered by OWEA after the data had already been returned. Official notice of termination was provided to the OWEA Executive Board on June 29th.

The OTCO Board believes that the articles published by OWEA, and OWEA's efforts to bypass Curtis Truss have shown disrespect to both our organization and our Executive Director. The Board therefore has resolved that the following actions need to occur:

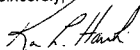
1. A retraction be printed by OWEA in the Buckeye Bulletin and the Section Newsletters of the articles in question.
2. This letter be printed for the OWEA membership to see.
3. An apology be made to both the OTCO Board and the Executive Director of OTCO.
4. Negative rhetoric against the Board and the Executive Director shall cease and desist.

OWEA stated in their articles that they "remain committed to support OTCO through the strong leadership of our five trustees that serve on the OTCO Board of Trustees." Now is the time for OWEA to demonstrate the sincerity of this statement by taking the above actions.

To preclude misunderstandings by the other organizations that we interact with, the Board has also directed that this letter be forwarded to the Ohio Section of the American Water Works Association, the Ohio Rural Water Association, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

OTCO, under the direction of our very capable and dedicated Executive Director, will continue to focus on our mission statement: "The primary focus of the Operator Training Committee of Ohio is to design, develop, and deliver various types of training programs for individuals in water and wastewater utility occupations in business, industry, and government."

Sincerely,



Karen L. Hawkins,
President
OTCO Board of Trustees

c: Curtis Truss, Executive Director OTCO
OTCO Board of Trustees
Rick Schantz, Chair OAWWA
Kevin Strang, Executive Director ORWA
Dave Bornino, OEPA
OWEA Executive Committee
Sarah Guy, Executive Administrator OWEA



Ohio Water Environment Association

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owea@ohiowater.org

**80th Annual
Meeting
Hyatt Regency
Columbus, Ohio
June 19 - 22, 2008**

October 19, 2005

In regards to: 9/01/2005 OTCO Letter

Karen Hawkins
President, OTCO Board of Trustees
c/o City of Fairborn
44 West Hebble Avenue
Fairborn Ohio 45324-4999

President
Steve Morrison

Dear Karen,

President-Elect
Sheree Gossett-Johnson

During the past month or so, I have had an opportunity to review and reflect upon your letter dated September 1, 2005, and to discuss it with the OWEA Executive Committee. Given the tenor of your letter, I did not wish to respond in haste, but rather wanted to give it thoughtful consideration.

Vice-President
Phil Anderson

It is my sincere hope that we can move beyond our misunderstandings and enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship. Both of our organizations have much to contribute in protecting Ohio's water environment, and together we can be a leading example to other states. Without this unity, both organizations are diminished. I believe we had this unity in the past and that together we can accomplish it once again.

Past President
Deborah Houdeshell

Secretary-Treasurer
Jane Winkler

The misunderstanding surrounding enacting the contact hour agreement is unfortunately a continuation of earlier poor communication between our organizations. Because of the time that has elapsed and the fallibility of human memory, it is difficult, if not impossible; to understand what events and communications brought us to this point. No doubt there were statements made by some in our ranks that were uninformed, inaccurate or not conducive to achieving the unity of purpose we want for both of our organizations. However, I also believe that this was from a very small number of people and not reflective of the high regard in which OWEA holds OTCO, and I trust that OTCO holds OWEA. As you know, OWEA has paid the invoice in question, and we apologize for any misunderstandings or miscommunications that may have occurred during the transition period.

Directors
Keith Riley
Gary W. Johnson

Northwest Delegate
Doug Clark

Northeast Delegate
Dianne Surnego

Southwest Delegate
Mark Livengood

Southeast Delegate
Dale Kocarek

Executive Administrator
Sarah Guy

Moreover, in an effort to move forward and effectuate once again a unity of purpose, let me apologize for any statements by members of OWEA that may have been inaccurate or uninformed. Certainly, OWEA has never intended any disrespect toward OTCO or its Executive Director. I am hopeful we can now move forward into the future with any misunderstandings behind us.

You have requested that OTCO's September 1, 2005 letter be printed in the Buckeye Bulletin. However, I believe positive narratives are paramount in order to begin changing any negative perception of the relationship between OWEA and OTCO. With this in mind, I propose that in lieu of that request, OWEA and OTCO collaborate on articles about the OTCO organization be printed in the Buckeye Bulletin and possibly an "OTCO Corner". Please contact me if you believe this to be a suitable direction so that we may begin collaborating with Curtis Truss on these articles.

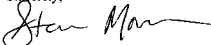
With respect to your request for a "retraction" I suggest the following be printed in the Buckeye Bulletin, and Section newsletters. Again, please contact me if this approach is suitable to you.

Dear Ohio Water Environment Association members:

I am very pleased that our Sections have taken the initiative to foster interest in OWEA, the Section, training and improving the environment by starting Section newsletters. In some recent Section newsletters, a document was printed pertaining to the termination of the contact hour tracking agreement between OWEA and OTCO. I had not intended that this document be published, since I had not collaborated with OTCO to confirm several facts. I should have informed the Sections of my intentions. I apologize for any ill-feelings or misinterpretations this document may have caused.

OWEA applauds OTCO for its many accomplishments in the area of operator education, and agree with your request to support the efforts and accomplishments of OTCO. Indeed, I would go one step further and appeal to OTCO that together we make an extra effort to speak well of each other as fellow professionals in the common mission of protecting our water environment. OWEA sincerely hopes that this response addresses your September 1, 2005 letter, and also looks forward to future endeavors with OTCO.

Sincerely,



Steve Morrison, President
Ohio Water Environment Association

Copy to: OWEA Executive Committee
OWEA Section Presidents
Curtis Truss, OTCO Executive Director
Tony Kohler, Ohio AWWA Chair
Kevin Strang, Ohio Rural Water Executive Director
Dave Bornino, Ohio EPA