

March Meeting Recap

By John Downey, MAWEA Board

March's gathering at Devens Commons provided wide-ranging, engaging topics, with five speakers and a lot of audience interaction making this a very worthwhile event for members.

The day's theme was making connections. Our program, prepared and delivered by Fuss & O'Neill, included Asset Management, Drinking Water Sources of Headworks Pollutants, Maintaining Master Data Files, and Seasonal Impacts of Temperature on Process. All of these require recognizing data that is or can be available to you, so that it can be applied to understand problems, identify needs and predict outcomes, by

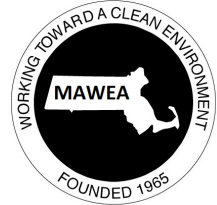
- Organizing the info you have
- Applying the info others have
- Exploring that data you have
- Solving with what's in front of you

Mike Nelson began our morning with co-presenter Nick Bates of EJ Prescott. They discussed applying GIS as a tool for program maintenance, showing how an Asset Inventory can support Condition Assessment, Life Cycle Cost Analysis, Operational and Financial Planning.

Julia Gardow followed with a practical example of how understanding another utility's process can lead to better management of our own. In this case, it involved the drinking water facility's Corrosion Inhibitor program and its impact on the headworks of the wastewater treatment facility, including its implications for meeting the NPDES.

Adelaide Keoppel demonstrated how the creation of a master

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Adelaide Keoppel presenting "The Importance of Maintaining a Master Data File"

data file, trendlines, and evaluations allowed one facility to pinpoint the cause of its phosphorous removal issues, and allowed another to evaluate the nitrogen removal impacts caused by WAS overflows to its headworks.

Laura Marcolini led the final discussion, focused on meeting the challenges of wide ranging flows and loads under extreme wastewater temperatures. Facilities are tasked with modifying operations to minimize operating costs, to minimize odor impacts and to ensure compliance. Two examples of plant issues and operational modifications were reviewed: 1) a facility that experiences peak loading and maximum wastewater temperature during Summer/beach season and 2) a facility that experiences nitrogen removal and sludge settling

issues with minimum Winter wastewater temperatures. Adding in the fluctuations of seasonal/tourist populations, these perennial challenges require an understanding of which parameters are being affected by which conditions, derived from data in front of us that we may not worry about in more stable conditions.

These topics generated good discussions, and if anyone would like to pursue any of these, MAWEA is happy to put you in touch with the presenters.

We'd also like to thank NEWEA Past President Deb Mahoney for her continued participation in MAWEA programs, board members John Murphy and Daphne Short for updates on license renewals and opportunities with NEIWPC, and Nominations Committee Chair Charlie Tyler for inviting your participation in the nomination of new directors, whose election will be at the Annual Trade Show on May 29th. Please see the Nominations article in this issue for more information.

Nick Bates and Mike Nelson presenting "Practical Applications of Asset Management"





SPRING TRADE SHOW & BBQ

Friday, May 29, 2026

Wachusett Mountain - Princeton, MA

Come and network with wastewater professionals at MAWEA’s Annual Trade Show at Wachusett Mountain! The event will feature 40+ vendors, who will be on hand to display the latest products and services to over 150 attendees. Enjoy a BBQ lunch, earn 2.5 TCHs, learn about the latest wastewater topics, take advantage of the raffles and watch an Operation Challenge demonstration.

Representatives from New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) and the MASSDEP will be onsite to answer your questions about training and certification.

REGISTER TO ATTEND

The exhibit hall is open from 8:30AM-12:00Noon with the optional BBQ lunch being served from 12-1:30PM. Earn 2.5 TCHs

MAWEA Member Registration Rates

Exhibit w/lunch \$50pp*
Exhibit Only \$0

Non Member Registration Rates

Exhibit w/lunch \$65pp*
Exhibit Only \$20

REGISTER ONLINE TO ATTEND

VENDOR OPPORTUNITY

Reserve an exhibit table-top display for this one-day event. Registration includes a table and one luncheon ticket. Sponsorships Opportunities Available.

Set-up begins at 7:00AM and breakdown is not allowed before 12:00PM.

RESERVE YOUR EXHIBIT SPACE



REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Register by May 13th to receive the pre-registration rates. Rates increase \$20 after May 13, 2026.



CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

Request for cancellation/refund must be submitted IN WRITING prior to the event. A 25% cancellation fee will be applied for cancellation/refund requests received prior to May 13, 2026. No refunds will be issued for cancellations requested after May 13, 2026. Due to agreements and guarantees, fees are forfeited if you are not able to attend the event.

WWW.MAWEA.ORG

NEIWPCCC Learning Opportunities

By Daphne Short, NEIWPCCC

New Self-Paced Courses - Free!

NEIWPCCC has developed two new self-paced courses now available on our website:

- [Basic Municipal Wastewater Treatment - 20 TCHs \(https://bit.ly/basic-municipal\)](https://bit.ly/basic-municipal)
- [Wastewater Process, Troubleshooting, and Optimization - 8 TCHs \(https://bit.ly/48JAF6S\)](https://bit.ly/48JAF6S)

Courses are designed to present an overview of a general wastewater treatment plant from collection system to discharge and aid in recognizing, troubleshooting, and resolving process problems that can lead to non-compliance.

These courses are being offered free of charge under NEIWPCCC's Training and Technical Assistance Program, supported by EPA Grant TW84064801.

Upcoming In-Person Opportunities

Level Metering 101: <https://bit.ly/level-metering>

Date(s): Tuesday, June, 16, 2026

Time: 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM Eastern

Location: NEIWPCCC Lowell Office, 650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410 Lowell, MA 01854

Instructor(s): Scott Neesen, ADS Environmental Services

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, June 9, 2026

Wastewater Laboratory Demo Day: <https://bit.ly/lab-demo-day>

Date(s): Tuesday, July, 8, 2026

Time: 8:30 AM-3:30 PM (Registration 8:00 AM) Eastern

Location: Chelmsford-Lowell Elks Lodge, 300 Littleton Rd, Chelmsford, MA 01824

Instructor(s): Various Vendors

Registration Deadline: Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Visit Our Website for Our Full Live-Virtual Calendar: <https://payments.neiwpc.org/>.

Operator Certification Exams

All **Massachusetts Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator (WWTPO) exams** are administered through **PSI/AMP**. Before scheduling your exam:

- Review PSI's handbook (<https://bit.ly/maww-handbook>) and scheduling procedures (<https://bit.ly/maww-scheduling>).
- Explore PSI's resource page for practice exams, educational books, and training materials: www.psonlinestore.com/.

Additional Training & Resources

- WaterOperator.org – Free webinars, training materials, and a calendar of local training events.
- US EPA's SCOWT – A searchable clearinghouse of wastewater technologies to keep professionals up to date (<https://bit.ly/3QSJvck>).

Stay informed and set yourself up for success!

MAWEA members automatically receive 2 TCHs just for being members and can earn additional hours by attending quarterly meetings.

For details on renewal requirements, visit: <https://bit.ly/op-exam>.

NEIWPCCC offers an online searchable database of wastewater operators (<https://bit.ly/3YUJJku>) along with other resources for Massachusetts wastewater professionals.

Wastewater Operator License Renewals – Important Update

The 2025 wastewater operator license renewal period has now concluded. Thank you to the many operators who completed their renewals on time.

Operators who have not yet renewed should be aware that revocation notices will be issued shortly.

For questions about certification or renewal, please email Michelle Jenkins at mjenkins@neiwpc.org.

For more information or questions about NEIWPC or the MWOT program, please contact us at training@neiwpc.org or (978) 323-7929.

We're Hiring!

Environmental Analyst or Engineer – Training and Technical Assistance Specialist

NEIWPC is seeking an experienced wastewater professional to coordinate, develop, and deliver high quality training while providing technical assistance to wastewater treatment facilities throughout the region. This full-time position is based in the NEIWPC headquarters office in Lowell, Massachusetts. The anticipated annual salary range for this position is \$75,000 to \$90,000. NEIWPC offers an outstanding comprehensive benefits package for eligible employees.

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DC Fly-In Recap

By Daphne Short, NEIWPC

Representing the Massachusetts Water Environment Association as a member of the Board of Directors and NEIWPC, I had the opportunity to meet with the offices of Representatives Lori Trahan, Katherine Clark, and James McGovern for Water Week's National Water Policy Fly-In.



From left to right: Paul Ferland, Peter Garvey, John Digiaco, Congressman James McGovern, Colin O'Brien, Daphne Short, and Chris Brainard.

The National Water Policy Fly-In sets the stage for water professionals to engage their

representatives in critical issues across the water industry. At the top of the Massachusetts priority list, we communicated issues related to SRF funding and infrastructure, PFAS costs and liability, workforce development, and wipes impacting collection systems.

Considering NEIWPC handles the wastewater operator licensing in Massachusetts, I shared renewal trends and the need for workforce development programs targeting veterans, women, and underrepresented groups. Additionally, given the average age of wastewater operators around the country, the United States Environmental Protection Agency expects 30-50% of water professionals to be eligible for retirement within the next five to ten years, leaving a tremendous gap in the industry. I spoke to NEIWPC's efforts in workforce development with our Youth and the Environment Program and Emerging Water Professional Internship Program and the importance of what the programs share with the community.

This two-day event also consists of a conference portion of where EPA Directors from the offices of Wastewater Management, Ground Water and Drinking Water, Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, and Water Emergency Response and

Cybersecurity discuss water priorities. Another session focused on Data Centers and AI: Federal, Local, and Industry Perspectives with speakers from the US EPA, WSSC Water, Columbus Water and Power, and Amazon Web Services.

Given that we are facing so many water challenges, congregations like these are so impactful as my New England colleagues and I are able to vocalize our issues to enable change from a national level that trickles down to a state level.

The Massachusetts Delegation was comprised of members from the Massachusetts Water Environment Association, the Massachusetts Water Works Association, and MA Coalition for Water Resources Stewardship along with regional partners like New England Water Environment Association, New England Water Works Association, and New England American Water Works Association.

Overall, it was an honor to represent MAWEA at this event. Connecting with people from all over the country is always a great opportunity and the chance to share our stories with the MA representatives is invaluable to our shared clean water mission.



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Five Year Update: How a One-Person Virtual Training Operation is Finding Its Niche

By Mike Jennings, Utiliency Services

Last year I shared my journey from New England clean water advocate to Florida wastewater trainee, then operator—all while trying to keep a virtual training business alive on zero advertising budget. This year, I'm happy to report that the business is proving fruitful.

The Five-Year Mark

2026 marks over five years of virtual operator training through Utiliency Services. In 2025 alone, 15 evening courses were delivered —10 single-session topics in the first half, five multi-session programs in the second half. 60 hours of training delivered – while maintaining a 9-5 job doing regional phosphorous accounting, with a 100-mile daily commute – joy!

But the real breakthrough? Multi-session evening training sessions seem to work. 2025 proved it, but that was the end of a Massachusetts renewal year. Then, the February 2026 Clarifiers, Sedimentation, & Filtration Science Refresher set the highest registration yet. Operators commit to 2-3 evening sessions over consecutive weeks if the content helps them.

Turns out I've been developing a niche market too: small, remote facilities. Too disruptive to send operators to conferences, too remote to access regional training easily, operating on frugal budgets. Virtual evening delivery solves their problem. Operators log in from home after shift. No travel costs. No hotels. No vacation days burned.

One chief running a two-person facility in western New York has the same access as someone at a large municipal plant near Boston. That's what virtual should do—level the playing field.

Synchronous vs. Asynchronous: Why Live Instruction Matters

The online training world has two paths: asynchronous (self-paced videos, recorded content) and synchronous (live, instructor-led sessions). Both have value. But here's another thing I've learned over five years: operators

appreciate asking questions during virtual training.

Synchronous training—live sessions at scheduled times—creates accountability. You show up. An operator who has been in the trenches is there teaching. You engage in real time and can ask questions and get immediate answers from someone who has run the equipment and dealt with similar problems.

I utilize and reference Tennessee and North Carolina free asynchronous training materials frequently. These materials add to the strength of a blended approach. Both states offer high-quality, free online resources—self-paced videos, manuals, and other resources—that give hungry operators convenient access to foundational knowledge and technical guidelines. These materials are invaluable for flexible learning and allow operators to study at their own pace and revisit concepts as needed. What elevates operator training, however, is the addition of live, interactive instruction from an experienced instructor.

That's what the new 10-Hour Immersion program provides. It doesn't replace those free materials—it complements them. The program, Municipal Wastewater Process & Operations 10-Hour Immersion, meets four Thursday evenings in June.

This program is designed as a comprehensive foundation for prospective and new operators with less experience seeking to gain a complete picture, including new hires, OITs, career changers, military transitions, and support staff seeking advancement. Structured into four 2.5-hour sessions:

1. Collection systems, wastewater sources, and flow patterns
2. Preliminary and primary treatment, sampling, and laboratory basics
3. Secondary biological treatment, microbiology, and relevant regulations

4. Disinfection, effluent discharge, and solids management

The sessions incorporate interactive elements such as polls, quizzes, videos, and practical exercises. The instruction is provided by an experienced operator and draws on over 50 hours of regionally approved well-received content, focusing on essential information for growth-oriented staff.

What I've learned in five years running a one-person virtual training operation:

Operators appreciate peer-to-peer instruction. No fluff, no sales pitches. Just information from someone who has done the work.

Evening delivery works. Synchronous sessions at scheduled times create accountability that self-paced content can't match.

Small and remote facilities appreciate options. Virtual evening training democratizes professional development.

Niche markets find you. I didn't set-out to serve small and remote facilities. They seem to have found what worked for them.

I am happy to answer all questions regarding these upcoming opportunities. Still a one-person operation. Still answering every email myself. Still figuring it out.

If you want to see how all this is being offered visit www.utiliency.com for details on the remaining spring/summer 2026 courses:

- **May:** Secondary Treatment Process Control & BNR (6 hours)
- **June:** Municipal Wastewater Process & Operations 10-Hour Immersion (NEW)

All virtual. All 6:00 PM Eastern. Utiliency Services Wastewater Night School!



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Pictured: Fields Point WWTF



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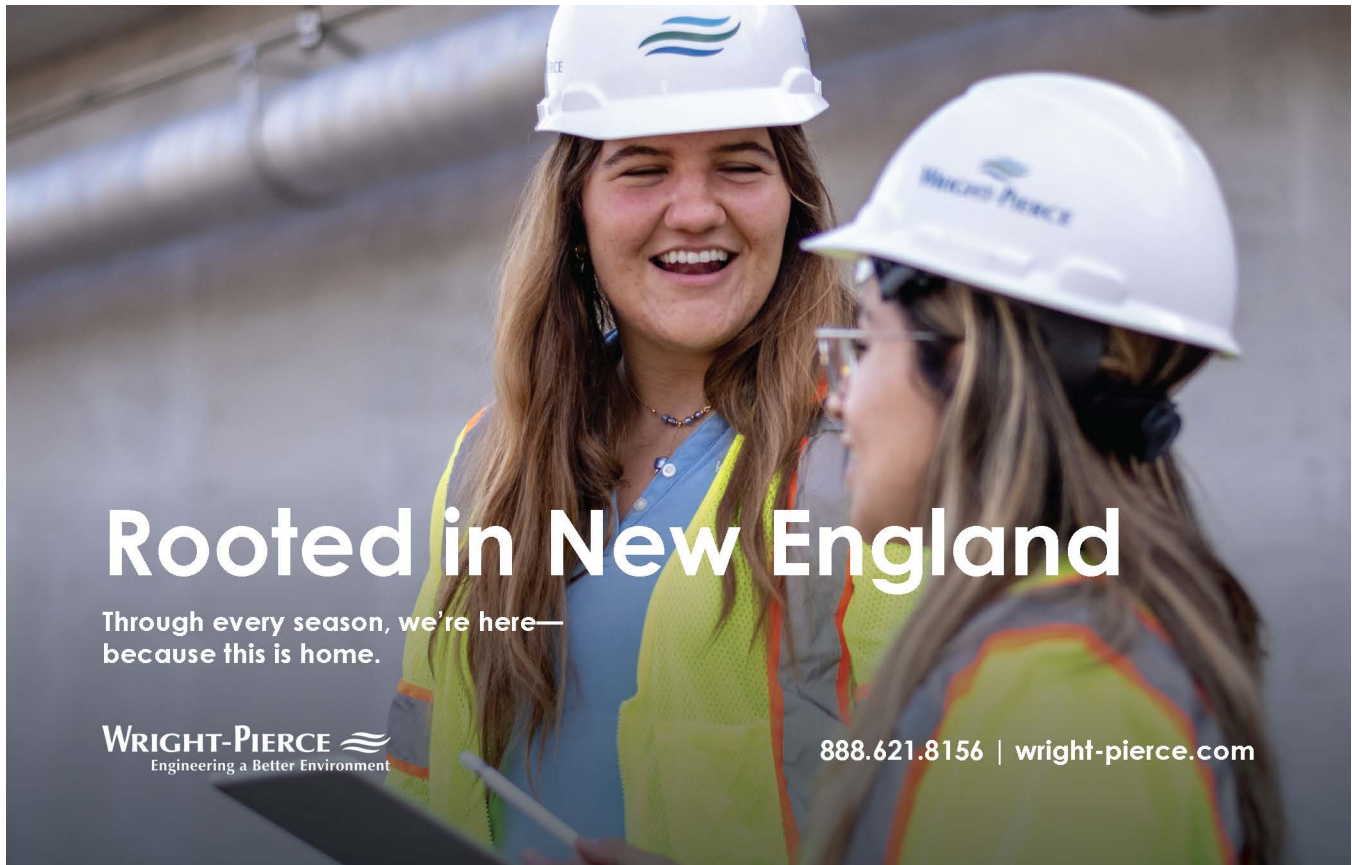
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MAWEA Election Announcement

By MAWEA Nominating Committee

Our next Quarterly Meeting, to be held on May 29th during our annual tradeshow at Wachusett Mountain, is also our Elections meeting.

The directors whose terms will expire on June 30, 2026 are:

- **Benjamin Smith**, EOSi, Past President, incumbent
- **Robert Delgado**, Town of Barnstable, incumbent
- **John Digiaco**, Town of Natick, incumbent
- **Denise Descheneau**, Upper Blackstone Clean Water, President, incumbent

The bylaws do not require a member who is serving concurrently as a director and in the executive cycle (Vice President, President-Elect, President, Past President) to stand for reelection during that cycle. Therefore, President Denise Descheneau shall continue to serve as director and President. Ben Smith will continue to serve as Past President.

This board-approved slate of candidates is hereby transmitted to the MAWEA membership as provided in the bylaws.

- **Robert Delgado**, Town of Barnstable, incumbent
- **John Digiaco**, Town of Natick, incumbent
- **Eric Smith**, Williamson Pump, nominee
- **Jay Waddington**, Woodard & Curran, currently serving as Vice President, nominee

At the Election Meeting on May 29, members in attendance will be asked to consider the recommended slate, and any further nominations will be entertained, followed by a vote for a final slate of four nominees. The slate will be elected by simple majority of the members in attendance. Terms for the four newly elected or returning Directors shall commence on July 1, 2026.

The Nominating Committee thanks all of you for your participation in this process, and we look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at

upcoming events.

The remaining Board seats are held as follows:

Directors now serving whose terms will expire in June 2027 are:

- Robert Greene, Delta
- Tracy Santoro, Xylem
- Landon Kendricks, Black and Veatch
- Chris Hayward, Pare Corporation

Directors now serving whose terms will expire in June 2028 are:

- Daphne Short, NEIWPCC
- John Downey, Veolia
- Larry Scola, Williamson Pump
- Peter Lyons, Woodard & Curran

Per article VI, Section 5 of the MAWEA Bylaws:

Executive Officers and other appointments shall be made as indicated in the bylaws at the first meeting of the Board of Directors following this Election Meeting.

Submit Content to MASS Waters

MAWEA is seeking members to submit articles on their experiences in operations, lab testing, maintenance, and engineering to our quarterly newsletter.

Photos and/or graphics of your subject are welcome.

Email info@mawea.org to learn more and submit!



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Water Day at the State House

By John Downey, MAWEA Board

The American Council of Engineering Companies has once again graciously included us in their annual visit to the State House, which this year occurs on Thursday, May 28th. This visit began as Engineers and Land Surveyors' Day, an opportunity for the state's engineering community to bring concerns and request legislative support to our representatives. The focus is infrastructure—the underpinnings that make community, commerce, and progress possible. Water resource management belongs in this discussion, and so once again we are supporting this day with our presence (and perhaps yours too?).



The objective here for us is to bring our concerns to the people we elected to hear them and to respond. We do that most effectively by visiting with the representatives and senators from our own districts, the people we actually vote for. Those people may or may not be directly involved in a specific bill that will affect us (and their constituents), but they will eventually vote on them, and we need them to understand the implications of their votes. Meetings with your senator's and representative's office are arranged for you, materials on specific legislation are provided, and others will accompany you on the visits, so you can focus on addressing the issues that are impacting your ratepayers. Legislation of particular concern include these bills summarized by Mickey Nowak in our last issue:

"H. 4870 and S.1504, each entitled "An Act to protect Massachusetts public health from PFAS" and H.4853 and S.2802, "An Act protecting our soil and farms from PFAS contamination" have both

had their initial hearings - H.4870/S.1504 before the Joint Committee on Public Health and H.4853/S.2802 before the Joint Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries. Both bills would have the effect of stopping the land application of biosolids or biosolid products in Massachusetts. H.4853 and S.2802, "An Act protecting our soil and farms from PFAS contamination" at least provide some financial protections to wastewater facilities. MAWEA and MCWRS (MA Coalition for Water Resource Stewardship) have sent written testimony on both bills opposing the banning of land application in Massachusetts. Both bills will now probably have some edits, additions, and subtractions as they take into account oral and written testimony. H.4853 and S.2802 will be headed to the Healthcare Financing Committee, and H.4870 and S.1504 will be headed to the Committee on Ways and Means. There is a good chance that one or both of these efforts will pass, and will have a profoundly negative effect on biosolids disposal for Massachusetts wastewater facilities. Please consider writing to your local legislator about these bills."

S.1504 have since been revised as S 3034, and was referred to the Ways and Means Committee on

April 2. A link to the new language is here: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/S3034>

We need you to call, to write, to consider a visit to the people you vote for, so they can understand the impacts these bills will have on treatment options and ratepayer costs.

This is what Thursday, May 28th will look like:

9:00: State House opens.

9:30 AM – 9:50 AM: Registration/Breakfast (continental) and receive materials, Hall of Flags, Massachusetts State House, 2nd Floor.

9:50 AM – 10:30 AM: Issue Briefing and Briefing with a Legislator (TBA), Hall of Flags, Massachusetts State House, 2nd Floor.

10:45 AM (Senate) and 11:30 AM (House), Scheduled meetings with your state legislators in offices in the Massachusetts State House

12:15 PM – Return your post-meeting summary forms to outside Hall of Flags, Massachusetts State

2nd Floor.

Registration to participate in this event is open now through May 13th. There will be three advanced briefing sessions held via Zoom: Friday, May 22, 10:30 – 11:30 AM; Monday May 25, 4 – 5 PM; and Tuesday, May 26, 1 – 2 PM. These sessions are optional, and you will be given a link to attend once you register.

Please consider joining us if you can. You are the subject matter experts here, and your voices carry weight. And if you cannot come into Boston, you can still visit with your legislators during their district office hours. You vote for them, and they are in office to listen to you. So find out when they'll be in town, and drop in!

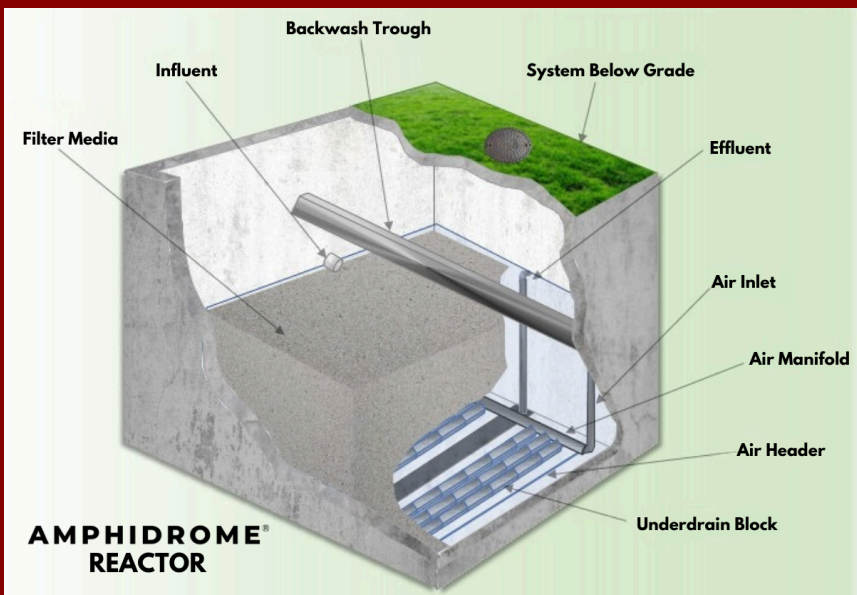
Please let us know if you have any questions at info@mawea.org, with State House in the subject line. Thanks!

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MASS CHAOS Competes at Regionals, May 17-20, N. Falmouth, MA

It's that time again- Qualifying Time! Every spring, Operations Challenge teams from around New England gather at the NEWEA Spring Meeting and compete for the chance to represent us at WEFTEC. The top three teams overall will have the honor of competing on the national stage.

Not familiar with Operations Challenge? Operations Challenge, our "Wastewater Olympics", allows teams of 4 members to demonstrate their excellence in operations, maintenance, laboratory, safety, and collection systems tasks. This is not an event for a few "specialists"; this is an opportunity for any operator to develop and improve skills, practice teamwork, and build their professional network. Operations Challenge is for operators who are serious about making the job a rewarding career. If you want to see what this looks like, consider visiting North Falmouth this May!

The Spring Meeting is a great chance to meet your peers, and discuss the latest water quality practices, technologies, solutions, and regulations. This four day event features the annual golf outing, technical sessions that include Training Contact Hours (TCH), and networking receptions, as well as the chance to support the Operations Challenge teams. NEWEA's Spring Meeting & Exhibit will take place May 17-20, 2026 at the Sea Crest Resort 350 Quaker Road, N. Falmouth, MA. Learn more: www.newea.org/spring-meeting/

Can't make the meeting? Check out Operations Challenge Training Day (<https://bit.ly/ops-training-day>) on the NEWEA website. This event is the practice run for the regionals, and was hosted again this year by Westborough Wastewater.