



OPERATOR

November 2003 Edition

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Editorial



Although the "value" of water has been generally accepted by those in the country the larger urban cities have not always had the same appreciation. There have been times however when the severity of drought has resulted in the larger cities feeling the effects of low water resources, eg water restrictions.

In the past the impact on the larger urban cities and any improvements to better water use has usually been minimal compared to that in the country.

It is interesting to notice then the attention and "value" Water has received in more recent times.

For example there has been the release of the Victorian Governments Green paper, a scientific study on the Murray River, level 2 water restrictions announced for Melbourne, the importance and profile that has been given to reuse projects etc. The Melbourne restrictions for example have resulted in a wide media campaign that in addition to press and radio announcements has had television adverts showing our Premier flying over water storage's in a helicopter and promoting better water use.

It is anticipated that as our urban (City) based population continues to grow and the availability of traditional water resources becomes limited that water will truly take on the value of gold. It has even been predicted that water will become the future currency in world trade..

THE EDITOR

President's Prattle

Our annual conference has come and gone and we can safely say this year has been the most successful ever. The event continues to get bigger and better each year thanks to the efforts of some key people. This year, each of the WIOA Committee members were allocated a number of specific tasks to perform and they all did a magnificent job completing all that was requested. The trade exhibition had 62 sites filled, a record number, and we still had to turn people away due to a lack of space. Hats off and thanks to Ron Bergmeier and staff for the work they do organizing the trade exhibition. The tradies themselves entered into the spirit of the event, participated in the competitions, were all friendly and easy to talk to and we're sure made some friends into the bargain. We look forward to seeing them all again next year. As for the delegates, this year we had over 225 registered, with a number of day visitors as well looking over the trade sites. We must say a big thank you to all the employers out there for allowing and encouraging people to attend.

It was also pleasing to sit back and listen during the technical paper sessions. The presentations were first class and outlined the efforts, experiences and ingenuity of people employed in our industry. Again, the "operators" were well represented in the mix and this is really pleasing to see. The challenge is out there for more operators to have a go at doing a technical paper next year. The poster paper competition was also well supported with 8 posters on display. The standard is getting higher each year and I'm glad I don't have to judge a winner. Congratulations to all who participated in either the technical or poster sessions.

Congratulations also to our colleagues in NSW who have just staged a successful conference at Penrith Panthers Club, home of the Rugby League premiers. It was attended by Actizyme Prize winner from the Victorian conference John Day, and a couple of WIOA Committee people as well. The reports were that they all gained from the experience.

The Charity golf day has been held at Trafalgar on Sunday the 2nd of November. This event presents itself as a great social day where you can get out and have a hack around the golf course for a good cause. Also, our weekend seminar and AGM will be held in Ballarat on 20 & 21 March 2004 so keep this weekend free.

"Happy Operating"
John Harris.
WIOA President.

Vale Leon Henry

Leon Henry passed away suddenly in Queensland on the 17th of September 2003.

Leon will always be remembered for his tireless work in promoting national recognition of training needs in the water industry, and for setting up the national training body back in 1991. Leon played a major role on the water division of QUSITAB and was the first President of the Water Industry Education and Training Association of Australia (WIETAA).

Leon's enthusiasm, motivation and commitment to training in the water industry will be sorely missed and we thank him for his support of our industry.

John Harris.
President of WIETAA



Around the Traps South East

East Gippsland Water, Gippsland Water,
South Gippsland Water & Western Port
Water

Gippsland Water, Land and Waste Treatment

Update on Resource Recovery Facility (RRF) and Dutson Downs

In addition to regular operations there has been an increase in activity over recent times at the Resource Recovery Facility and Dutson Downs. A brief description of the larger projects and events are summarised below:

Composting Facility: A composting pad, of more than 12,000 square metres, and associated roadworks, drainage control and amenities has been constructed.

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Group photo of some of the recipients who were presented their Certificate in Water Industry Operation certificates at the Shepparton conference. **see page 5 for details.**

Secretary's Scrawl

2003 Conference

As mentioned in the Presidents Prattle, our 2003 annual conference in Shepparton was a huge success. Thanks again to our Committee, Ron and team, all the sponsors, trade exhibitors, delegates and all other people who helped out in any way.



The award winners as presented this year were:

Hepburn Prize (best Paper overall):

John Day, Norske-Skog Albury.

Actizyme Prizes (best Paper by an Operator)

1st Place: John Day, Norske-Skog Albury.
R/Up Actizyme Prize: Mike Naughton, Barwon Water.
Third Prize Actizyme Prize: Neil Healey, Goulburn Valley Water.

Water Industry Training Centre Prizes (Best Operator Poster Papers)

1st Place :Gerard Kavenagh, Barwon Water
R/Up WITC Prize: Jamie Madgwick, Goulburn Valley Water
3rd WITC Prize : Peter Huggins, Goulburn Valley Water

The AWA sponsored "Wal Whiteside Operator of the Year Award" was awarded to:

Mr Gerrard Barry from Western Water.

Conference 2004

The venue for the 2004 conference is yet to be finalised. We hope to get this all sorted out soon and will advise of the location in the next edition of Operator (in the New Year).

Memberships

The 2003 year is fast coming to a close meaning that membership fees for the 2004 year (\$15) are almost due. We will be sending out a reminder and a Tax Invoice to everyone soon and if you don't wish to remain a Member, please let us know and we'll take you off the mailing list.

Charity Golf Day

The 5th Charity Golf Day was staged on 2 November at Trafalgar. The winners and all the gossip from the day will appear in the next newsletter, but a big thank you to all the sponsors, players and helpers.

New Members



Welcome to the following people and companies who have recently joined our Association as a Member or Corporate Supporter :

Robert McAlister, Leo Kelly, Gwyn

Hatton, Ryan Hargreaves, Warren Best, Gary Kimbell, Sarah Diamond, Michelle Mondido, Mark Peters, Liam Clarke, Ben Harris, Malcolm Hill, Bendall Chisholm, Julian Kinder, Justin Archibald, John Bourke, Gary Winter, John de Boer, Mary-Jane Crosby (again), Barry Mann.

New Corporate Supporters : Piping and Automation Systems, Westernport Water.

George Wall
WIOA Secretary



Around the Traps
Private Industry

PROFILE OF AN OPERATOR

Welcome to the eighth edition of 'Profile of an Operator'. Last edition we introduced you to David Tickner a new member to the private water industry and also new to the WIOA committee. Have you ever wondered what happened to some of the past committee members? In this article we interview Chris Andrew, who assisted on the AWWOA committee for three years.

Profile: Chris Andrew

- > Works for Nestlé Australia at the Tongala plant..
- > Job title - Treatment Plant Operator.
- > Main role - Operation of treatment plant.
- > Lives in - Kyvalley with wife Alexandra and their two dogs.
- > Hobbies - clay bird shooter, field shooter, camping and relaxing with a good red wine.

Tell us a little about your background at Nestlé.



I've worked at this plant since I was 17. For two years I worked in other parts of the factory, I've been a line worker, maintenance and storeman, greaser or what I like to call a 'lubricologist' worked with the fitters and turners and then one day a job came up in the boiler house. I was given two months training from the head operator then he left, thrown in the deep end, I took over the job and here I am now 20 years down the track. Other roles I play around the site are: Level 3 first aider, environment rep, and forklift driver.

Describe Nestlé main business activities at this site.



Firstly Tongala is a small town about three hours north of Melbourne near Kyabram. We are part of the dairy capital of Australia. The site employes about 275 people. Nestlé is the

worlds leading food company and at this site we process milk for dietetic powders, full cream milk powders, sweetened condensed milk, growing up milks, and reduced creams.

Tell us a little about your treatment plant?

The plant was built in 1978, it has seen many upgrades since then. I've assisted in five refits now. The plant now operates as a biological removal plant. It was an activated sludge plant with extended aeration. We run aerobic digesters and produce sludge which is used as land fertilizer or soil enhancer under our Environmental Improvement plan. The sludge is applied to dry land only, which grows crops, which in turn the cows eat and it comes back to us as the milk we process. I also look after the condensate diversion around the plant where condensate or clear water is bypassed around the plant and reused.

What are the main projects are you working on?

We are installing a new 260ML dam for reuse. We hope this will be up and running within the next 6-8 months.

The major challenges you face in your role?

I've always enjoyed biology and environmental science when I was at school. It is good to relate the environmental sciences back to what I do today. I've been at the site for a long time now and basically deal with whatever comes.

**Cynthia Lim and WIOA would like to thank
Chris Andrew and Nestlé.**

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NEXT EDITION

**Article Contribution Deadline
For the February Edition
January 16, 2004**



North East - North East Water, Goulburn Valley Water and Coliban Water

Roland Passuello - Ph 03 5754 4117 fax 03 5754 4290, mobile 0417 368029, email: rpassuello@nerwa.vic.gov.au

South East - East Gippsland Water, Gippsland Water, South Gippsland Water and Westernport Water

Russell Mack - Ph 5177 4659, fax 5177 4690, mobile 0427 331 586, email: mackr@gippswater.com.au

South West - Glenelg Water, South West Water and Portland Coast Water

Anthony Evans - Ph 5562 9275, fax 5562 9262, mobile 0419 103 885, email: aeva@swwa.com.au

North West - Central Highlands Water, Grampians Water and Lower Murray Water

To be advised article to The Editor

Central - Barwon Water, Western Water and Metropolitan Water Companies

Graham Thomson - ph 5226 9109, fax 5226 9140 mobile 0408 993 756, email: graham.thomson@barwonwater.vic.gov.au

Private Industry

Cynthia Lim - fax 9548 7060, mobile 0409 403237

email: Cynthia.Lim@fluids.ittind.com

Articles can be forwarded to area contacts or directly to The Editor Ph 2526 9109, fax 5226 9140, mobile 0408 993 756, email: graham.thomson@barwonwater.vic.gov.au

Around the Traps South East

cont from page 2.

The purpose of the composting facility is to allow biosolids from wastewater treatment plants to be recycled and re-used rather than disposal to landfill. The finished compost will be applied to farmland and will greatly improve crop yield in an environmentally sustainable manner. Composting trials are underway and it is expected full production will commence within a few months.

Desludging of Wastewater Treatment Ponds:

Every six years, Pond A at Dutson needs to be desludged to ensure efficient treatment of the incoming wastewater streams (approximately 35 ML/day). In May 2003, a contractor was engaged to desludge Pond A. After significant earthworks, the construction of a desludging lagoon with supernatant return, and dredging, the contractor is 90% complete in the desludging of 180,000 m³ of 6% solids.

Soil Recycling and Treatment Facility: Planning and design are 90% complete with the final specifics being assessed before a works approval is submitted to the EPA.

Bush Fire at Dutson Downs: Approximately three weeks ago there was a bushfire in the southern and southwestern section of Dutson Downs. Approximately 1500 hectares, including 190 hectares of plantation, of Gippsland Water land was burnt. It was rumoured our little furry friend, the New Holland Mouse, was seen scurrying away from burnt areas. Well done to those from Gippsland Water and the CFA who helped get the fire under control and limit the damage.

Photo Shoots: Extensive aerial and ground photography has been undertaken to form the basis of upcoming promotions of the area to help alleviate incorrect perceptions of activities at the site.

These works have been very much a group effort from many at Gippsland Water. In addition to support staff in business services, finance, IT etc. special acknowledgment for recent projects and events is given to the following:

The Farm Crew: Michael Bannon, Ricky Morgan, Rick's whip, and associated photogenic work dogs and horses.

The RRF crew: Darren Key, Tom Tripp, Ashley Birch.

The Environment and Planning Crew: David Evans, Jenny Jelbart, Peter Mosse, Ross.

New Products

Luminescent Dissolved Oxygen Probe

Biolab (Aust) Limited, a division of Environmental Technologies, has announced the release of the Hach LDO™ Probe.

The Hach LDO™ Probe allows for major advantages in Dissolved Oxygen monitoring.

New Luminescence technology offers reduced maintenance, while increasing accuracy, stability and speed.

The new Hach LDO™ Luminescent Dissolved Oxygen Probe is a revolutionary breakthrough in the measurement of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) in the water and wastewater treatment plant process.

By applying completely new technology to the measurement of DO, Hach has virtually eliminated the numerous problems inherent to older DO measurement technologies.

No membranes - membrane cleaning and replacement is a thing of the past!

- No electrolyte solution to replenish or replace.
- No anode or cathode to clean or replace.
- Simple maintenance - all you do is periodically wipe the sensor tip clean.
- Reduced calibration frequency - eliminates down time, saves money!!

The Hach LDO™ probe can be used in many places throughout the wastewater treatment process, such as aeration basins, aerobic and anaerobic digesters and nitrification and denitrification tanks.

The Hach LDO™ Probe utilises a sensor coated with a luminescent material. Blue light from an LED is transmitted to the sensor surface and excites the luminescent material, which emits red light as it relaxes. The time from when the blue light was sent to when the red light is emitted is measured. The more oxygen that is present the shorter the time it takes for the red light to be emitted. This time is measured and correlated to the oxygen concentration.

The Hach LDO™ Luminescent Dissolved Oxygen Probe is simple to operate and offers users reduced maintenance and infrequent calibration while increasing the accuracy, stability and speed of DO measurement.



For further information, please contact:
Environmental Technologies Division of BIOLAB
Phone: 1300 735 295 Fax: 1800 067 639
Email: environmental@aus.biolabgroup.com



Around the Traps Central

Barwon Water, Western Water, & Metropolitan Water Companies.

Colac plant upgrade on track.

An \$11 million upgrade of the Colac sewage treatment plant is on track for completion by the middle of next year.

Construction and testing of tanks, pipelines, pump stations, buildings and roads is scheduled for completion by September. Mechanical and electrical equipment should be installed by December to allow commissioning of the plant to take place early in 2004.

The new facility will use a natural biological process and ultraviolet disinfection to treat six megalitres of sewage a day. The plant will be able to treat up to 19 megalitres a day for short periods during wet weather.

Barwon Water Executive Manager Water Systems Carl Bicknell said the plant would not only cater for industrial development and growth in the city, but also improve the quality of water leaving the plant. "Recent industrial discharges have stressed the current plant and it doesn't have the capacity to cope with growth in Colac," Mr. Bicknell said.

"The upgrade will provide Colac with a first-class sewage treatment facility, producing water suitable for re-use and meeting strict environmental standards and safeguards set by EPA Victoria."

Barwon Water Board Member and Chairman of the Lake Colac Co-ordinating Committee Helen Paatsch said the project demonstrated the authority's commitment to Colac and the environment. "It is vital for the region's future prosperity that essential services such as sewage treatment keep pace with industrial growth and population increases," Ms Paatsch said. "The new treatment process will also ensure higher quality water enters Lake Colac which will complement other environmental initiatives proposed under the Colac Otway Shire's long-term plan to ensure the lake's preservation."



The photo above is a "cavity" in a 600 diameter sewer main.



Around the Traps North East

North East Water, Goulburn Valley Water, & Western Port Water Coliban Water.

Training at Goulburn Valley Water

Goulburn Valley Water has recently completed a review and update of its training policy for field staff. A working group comprising field staff from each of the key function groups of water treatment, maintenance and wastewater treatment was established and met regularly over a six month period.

The aim of the training project, as determined by the group, was the development of a training strategy that defined:

- > Current status of staff training;
- > Prioritised training needs, including OH&S and career development, and recognised different needs in different Districts and in different disciplines;
- > The availability of training resources, both internal and external, covering those required and available;
- > A balance between training and continuance of day to day duties in all work groups;
- > A balance between costs and available budget;
- Benefits of the training scheme for both Goulburn Valley Water and employees; and
- > Succession planning (in part).

Although there are still some outstanding issues to be resolved, the team produced a report, a list of recommendations and budget costs that has since been approved and adopted by the Board of Goulburn Valley Water.

The Authority now has a well structured training plan that has been developed to ensure that the work force is safe, competent and is trained to an appropriate level in a reasonable period of time. The results of this revised policy were on show to all in the water industry at the recent WIOA conference where the presentation of 20 Certificates occurred.

An additional presentation BBQ was held by Goulburn Valley Water where the Water Certificates, as well as a number of Front Line Management Certificates, were presented again with all field staff and trainers present.

**Tim Tanner
GV Water**



Group Photo of Certificates recipients at Goulburn Valley Water presentation ceremony.

Work began on the HACCP Plan in February 2003. A team of operators, engineers and trades staff were trained in the HACCP Principles and implementation.

The HACCP Team met for three hours each week and worked through each of the HACCP Principles from Codex Alimentarius Alinorm 97/13A.

An intranet based Plant Operations Manual was developed in conjunction with the HACCP Plan.

The Plan was implemented in June 2003 and was reviewed after two months in operation.

NCSI HACCP Auditor, Jim Gerrard, praised the efforts of the HACCP team, especially their detailed risk analysis.

"Operating the treatment plant using HACCP principles has made the operators more aware of each step in the water treatment process and more conscious of the critical steps," said Water Quality Coordinator, John Harris. "The detailed risk analysis conducted has also highlighted a number of improvements we can make at the plant."

"The key to successfully implementing any management system is involvement from all stakeholders and of course, support from Senior Management," said Systems Coordinator, Leon de Villiers.

South West Water Authority plan to implement HACCP at all their water treatment plants and throughout their water distribution system.



South West Water Authority CEO, Russell Worland (right) handing over the HACCP plan to water quality coordinator, John Harris at the launch in June 2003.



**Around the Traps
South West**

Glenelg Water, South West Water, & Portland Coast Water

HACCP Implementation at South West Water Authority

South West Water Authority, based in Warrnambool Victoria, recently received HACCP Certification of their Warrnambool Water Treatment Plant.

Certificate in Water Industry Training

Congratulations to all the people who were presented their Certificate in Water Industry Operations at the Shepparton conference. Three RTO's participated in the ceremony and the Certificate recipients were:

Water Industry Training Centre.

Certificate II. Paul Barry, Roger Pakham, Phil Powell, Jamie Madgwick, David Heritage, Stuart Evans, Leo Kelly, Adam Glasson, Doug Musgrove, David Dickson, Kylie Turnbull, Karen Weatherill, Liam Sherwood.

Certificate II and Certificate III. Robert Edward McAlister, John Pearson, Jeff Roscoe, Mark Welsh, Len Ablett, Mark Collins, Grant Woolley, Peter Jackson, Tim Tanner, Michael McShane, Darryl Johnston.

Goulburn Murray Water Training Services.

Certificate II. Luke Mc Cormick, Ryan Hargreaves, Danny Botheras.

Chisholm Institute of TAFE.

Certificate II. Timothy Beech, Robert Dickins.

It was pleasing to have the three Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) attend the award ceremony and the number of Certificates presented shows that the Water Authorities and their staff are committed to increasing their skill levels through training.

This is a positive sign for the future of our Industry.

Interesting Snippet

According to the scientific study on how much water should be returned to the Murray River it has identified that at least 12.5% or 1500 gegaliters of all water diverted for irrigation should go back to the river in order to save the River Murray (The Age 16 Oct 2003).

**WIOA
2003 - 04 OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE**

President

John Harris
ph (03) 5562 9275
Mobile 0417 338 688

Secretary/Treasurer

George Wall
ph (03) 5832 0718
Mobile 0407 846 001

Vice President

Cynthia Lim
ph (03) 95534555
Mobile 0409 403237

Committee

Barry Waddell
ph (03) 5152 4221
Mobile 0419 878 085

Peter Tolsher
ph (02) 60591569
Mobile 0419 337 151

Roland Passuello
ph (03) 5754 4117
Mobile 0417 368 029

Graham Thomson
ph (03) 5226 9109
Mobile 0408 993 756

Stephen Wilson
ph (03) 5244 0800

David Tickner
ph (03) 5398 1850
Mobile 0419 551 459

Russell Mack
ph (03) 5177 4659
Mobile 0427 331 586

Anthony Evans
ph (03) 5562 9275
Mobile 0419 103 885

**All correspondence should be addressed to:
The Secretary
64 Brauman Street,
SHEPPARTON, VIC. 3630**

**Website: www.wioa.org.au
Email: info@wioa.org.au**

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CHEMISTRY OF WATER

Silica

When we look at silica (SiO₂, silicon dioxide) in water, we firstly need to distinguish this extremely abundant material from its parent element Silicon (Si) which does not exist in any uncombined form.

We know silica as sand, with the white beach variety a nuisance in sewers. It is also common in water main sediments originating from clay inputs, and any breakdown of cement products.

Soluble forms of silica do exist, generally as silicates, but reactions with reagents and colloidal states often provide confusion in measurement and reporting.

In a very common soluble state, silica forms an easy measurable yellow colour with ammonium molybdate, hence its designation as molybdate-reactive silica. With most surface water, this result would include 90-100% of soluble silica present - and is generally sufficient and suitable, for most monitoring purposes.

An additional, but time consuming step is to pre-digest the sample with a mild alkali (sodium bicarbonate) prior to colour development.

If an increased result is obtained, the difference is non-reactive silica i.e. the alkali treatment may convert other silica forms present to "reactive". It does not convert insoluble to soluble or colloidal to non-colloidal - it is simply a reflection of its reaction with molybdate. Clients requesting silica content of sediments etc, would generally receive a % result - obtained after acid treatment and final gravimetric measurement. The following should be followed for waters: -

Total molybdate-reactive silica would include the alkali pre-digestion, and be a single mg/L result.

'Silica' alone would be 'molybdate-reactive' silica.

Silica plus 'non-reactive' silica would normally show a 'silica' value with an expected much lower 'non-reactive' presence.

Requests for Si (silicon) are totally confusing, and need to be clarified. Silica varies considerably in concentration and significance; from 0-10 mg/L for major city supplies to 20-100 mg/L in ground waters.

In large storage reservoirs, seasonal variations may indicate diatom (algal) activity, whilst potential for hard scale formation with calcium and magnesium salts remains the major concern for silica in water.

If anyone has any questions regarding water or wastewater analysis, please contact or Nick Bray, Manager of Client Services (nbray@wsl.com.au) or Owen Calvert, Senior Chemist (reports@wsl.com.au).

Wanted.

Any articles, news snippets, information on improved work practices, etc as contributions your magazine.



OPERATOR OF THE YEAR.

On September 30 a special presentation was undertaken at Western Water. The presentation was to Gerrard Barry for the AWA sponsored "Wal Whiteside Operator of Year Award" as Gerrard was not present when the result was announced at the Shepparton conference.

The award was presented on behalf of the AWA by John Park and WIOA was represented by President John Harris. There was about 50 Western Water staff, including chairman Terry Larkins and CEO John Wilkinson, in attendance at the morning tea presentation.



Wal Whiteside Operator of Year Award presentation, l to r John Wilkson, John Harris, John Park, Gerrard Barry, Terry Larkins.



**Around the Traps
Private Industry**

PROFILE OF A CORPORATE MEMBER

Specialist Water Division within Biolab.

Biolab (Aust) Ltd has set up a specialist division to focus on the delivery of a range of high quality products, application support and instrument servicing for the water quality analysis, monitoring and treatment markets.

The new division, named Environmental Technologies, was set up as a separate trans-Tasman division of Biolab on the 1st of July 2003.

This area of the Biolab business has represented the Hach brand in Australia and New Zealand for over 39 years. It also represents GLI instruments for process and on-line applications plus a range of plant and equipment that addresses many requirements in the treatment of municipal and industrial wastewater.

The Australasian Manager of Environmental Technologies, Rohan Latham, explained that Environmental Technologies recognised that for instrument warranty support and ongoing servicing, customers require rapid response times and local, personalised service.

To facilitate this rapid response and personal service Environmental Technologies has a dedicated staff of over 20 Technical Service Engineers and Water Quality Sales Specialists based in Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Customer service call centres and Technical support for laboratory, on-line monitoring and waste treatment are based in Melbourne and Auckland. Additionally distribution facilities throughout Australia and New Zealand allow rapid delivery of supporting consumables and reagents.

"The scope of offering to our customers in Potable, Wastewater and Industrial processes includes supply, instrument applications support, installation, calibration, operator training, maintenance contracts and repair", Rohan Latham said.

"Our training of operators and laboratory technicians on methods and applications for our products is proving very popular. In affiliation with nationally recognised training organisations, we can offer instrument specific training accreditation".

"Environmental Technologies would like to congratulate WIOA on an outstanding conference in Shepparton and we look forward to continuing our involvement and support of the Association".

Editors Note.

For some time Biolab has provided us the use of their conference facility in Clayton to hold our WIOA Committee meetings.

When you compare the wide geographic spread of home bases of our Committee members, this site is more central for all of us. We would like to extend our thanks to Biolab for their ongoing support and hospitality.



There are some parts of the water industry run on democratic principles. The photo above is an example of this.