



Mississippi Rural Water Association  
5400 N Midway Road  
Raymond, MS 39154-8202  
PH: 601.857.2433/800.343.2520  
FAX: 601.857.2434  
Email: [msrwa@msrwa.org](mailto:msrwa@msrwa.org)

TO: All Municipal Clerks and Water/Wastewater System Office Personnel

FROM: Cecilia Garris, MsRWA

The Mississippi Rural Water Association is excited to bring you the 2011 schedule for the "Office Professional Certification Program" (OPCP). The OPCP is a volunteer training program designed for municipal clerks, billing clerks, and all water and/or wastewater office personnel. This is the program that will give you the recognition that you deserve.

Full details of the program are enclosed. Also enclosed is a list of eight different agendas. These eight agendas will be offered at six different training locations around the state over a three year period. This is the second year into the program.

The six locations will be: Hattiesburg, Louisville, McComb, Raymond, Tunica and Tupelo.

The registration will be \$75.00 per person per session. This will include lunch and training materials.

We are really excited to be able to offer this type of training to a well deserving group of people. Please fill out the enclosed survey concerning the program and let us know if you need additional information.

Members of committee are: Cathy McCurley from the Town of Woodville; Misty Cole from Culkin Water District; Shelly Ellard from the Central Water Association; Cheryl Van Norman from the Fisher Ferry Water District; Kathy Johnson from the City of Lucedale; Christi Brantley from MSDH and Cecilia Garris from MsRWA.

**Office Professional Certification Program  
For Water/Wastewater Systems & Municipalities  
Survey Form**

1) Would you be interested in teaching any of the topics listed on the agenda page?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No

**If you are used as an instructor, you will not have to pay a registration fee.**

If yes, what topic(s)?

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2) Are there any additional topics that you would like to see covered in these classes?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, what topic(s)?

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3) Are there any topics that you would like to see removed from these classes?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, what topic(s)?

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4) Please list any suggestions/comments that you may have about the program.

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Please fax completed survey to: 601.857.2434

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

System: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

# Office Professional Certification Program For Water/Wastewater Systems & Municipalities Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

System: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

C/S/Z: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Location you are registering to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2011 Schedule

Training will begin with registration at 7:30 AM and conclude around 4:00 PM.

### Location: McComb

Date	Agenda #
Feb 10	#1
May 26	#6
Aug 30	#4

### Location: H'Burg

Date	Agenda #
May 5	#8
Jul 19	#3
Sep 20	#5

### Location: Louisville

Date	Agenda #
Jan 27	#7
May 17	#4
Jul 28	#1
Oct 25	#2

### Location: Raymond

Date	Agenda #
Jan 12	#5
Apr 7	#7
Jun 21	#4
Aug 4	#1
Oct 11	#6

### Location: Tunica

Date	Agenda #
Apr 14	#2
Jun 28	#6
Nov 15	#3

### Location: Tupelo

Date	Agenda #
Feb 17	#8
Jul 26	#1
Sep 13	#6

**Please register at least one week in advance of training.**

Registration fee is \$75.00 per person. There will be a \$25.00 processing fee for all cancellations. Please return fee with registration form to:  
MsRWA, 5400 N Midway Road, Raymond, MS 39154-8202

Phone: 601.857.2433, Watts: 1.800.343.2520, Fax: 601.857.2434

## Agenda 1

Customer Service

Purchasing

Budgeting

ERP/SVA

Water System - SOP

## Agenda 3

Recordkeeping for GWR

State Tax

Job Descriptions

Board Meetings

## Agenda 5

Team Building

Employee Handbook

Employee Evaluations

## Agenda 7

Grammar/Letter Writing

Internal Controls

Open Meeting/Open Records

Ethics

MSDH/MDEQ Regulations

## Agenda 2

Computer Shortcuts

Understanding Financial Reports

Financial Audit/Insurance Audit

Basic Water/Wastewater Operations

## Agenda 4

Office Organization

Time Management

Outsource vs In-house Payroll

Maintaining Mental & Physical Health

Wage/Hour Regulations

## Agenda 6

Phone/email etiquette

Record Retention

Payroll Records

Policy & Procedures/  
Ordinances/By-Laws

## Agenda 8

Grant Writing

Funding Sources

Loan Reporting Requirements

Source Water Protection

Hiring/Firing Procedures



# Office Professional Certification Program

Mississippi Rural Water Association

As developed by

Office Professional Certification Program Committee

January 2011

Mississippi Rural Water Association  
Office Professional Certification Program

I. Intent

It is the intent of Mississippi Rural Water Association (MsRWA) to promote and develop professionalism among municipal and water/sewer system office professionals. In order to provide recognition and guidance towards professionalism, MsRWA is working with a committee of member office professionals to develop a comprehensive training and professionalism recognition program for administrative staff. This program shall be referred to as the Office Professional Certification Program.

It should be kept in mind that MsRWA's intention is to develop and promote this program with the initial purpose of evaluating its performance and value. MsRWA reserves the right to end this program should it be found necessary.

II. Definitions

- a. Clerk—official custodian of records.
- b. Collector—the official that is responsible for the collection of service fees and customer payments.
- c. Office Manager—any person that oversees the office operation of a municipality, water/sewer district, or privately-owned public water or sewer system.
- d. Office Professional—any person employed by a municipality, water/sewer district, or privately-owned public water or sewer system to perform those functions involving the operation of the office.
- e. Treasurer/Financial Officer—official responsible for accounting and finance.

III. Requirements

- a. Educational Course Requirements
  - i. Applicant must complete twenty-four (24) hours of course work formally acquired through MsRWA's Office Professional Certification Seminar, Conferences, or applicable one-day courses.

**The core subjects shall be identified as follows:**

**1. Office Management – (3 Hours)**

- 1-1. Customer Service/Relations – Website Development & Newsletter

- 1-2. Record Retention – Sample Results
- 1-3. Record Keeping for Groundwater Rule & Capacity Development
- 1-4. Team Building
- 1-5. Grammar/Letter Writing
- 1-6. Computer Shortcuts- (Quick-books, Excel(spreadsheet examples), Word)
- 1-7. Office Organization
- 1-8. Phone/Email Etiquette
- 1-9. Grant Writing – (equipment, auto, wells, MEMA, etc.)

## **2. Financial – (6 Hours)**

- 2-1. Purchasing
- 2-2. Internal Controls
- 2-3. Understanding Financial Reports
- 2-4. Budgeting
- 2-5. Financial Audit/Insurance Audit
- 2-6. State Tax
- 2-7. Outsource vs In-house Payroll
- 2-8. Funding Sources – “Finding Grants”
- 2-9. Loan Reporting Requirements
- 2-10. Payroll Records

## **3. Water/Wastewater Operations – (3 Hours)**

- 3-1. Basic water/wastewater operations
- 3-2. Standard Operation Procedures for water
- 3-3. Source Water Protection
- 3-4. MSDH Regulations
- 3-5. MDEQ Regulations - DMR
- 3-6. Emergency Response Plans (ERP) & Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA)
- 3-7. Identity Theft, Red Flag, Internet Security

## **4. Legal Issues – (6 Hours)**

- 4-1. Policy & Procedures/Ordinances/By-laws
- 4-2. State Tax
- 4-3. Board Meetings- (Minutes, Exe. Session, Notices, Agenda)

4-4. Open Meetings/Open Records Acts

**5. Personnel Issues – (3 Hours)**

5-1. Job Descriptions

5-2. Wage/Hour – (Exempt/Non, FLSA, ADA, EEOC)

5-3. Hiring/Firing Procedures

5-4. Employee Handbook

5-5. Employee Evaluations

5-6. Ethics

**6. Personal Development – (3 Hours)**

6-1. Ethics

6-2. Teambuilding – (Board, Council/Employee Relations)

6-3. Time Management

6-4. Maintaining Mental and Physical Health

- ii. The course work may be achieved in no particular time frame as long as the prescribed number of hours in each category is achieved.
- iii. If you are required to attend the full twenty-four (24) hours, the following hours are required under each subject:
  - 1. Office Management (3 Hours)
  - 2. Financial (6 Hours)
  - 3. Water/Wastewater Operations (3 Hours)
  - 4. Legal Issues (6 Hours)
  - 5. Personnel Issues (3 Hours)
  - 6. Personal Development (3 Hours)
- iv. If you are required to attend eighteen (18) hours, the following hours are required under each subject:
  - 1. Office Management (3 Hours)
  - 2. Financial (4 Hours)
  - 3. Water/Wastewater Operations (2 Hours)
  - 4. Legal Issues (4 Hours)
  - 5. Personnel Issues (3 Hours)
  - 6. Personal Development (2 Hours)

- v. If you are required to attend twelve (12) hours, the following hours are required under each subject:
  - 1. Office Management (2 Hours)
  - 2. Financial (3 Hours)
  - 3. Water/Wastewater Operations (1 Hour)
  - 4. Legal Issues (3 Hours)
  - 5. Personnel Issues (2 Hours)
  - 6. Personal Development (1Hour)
- vi. If attendance at any given MsRWA Office Professional Seminar is used as coursework credit, then that year's seminar can not be used again as coursework credit.
- vii. Applicants will track their own course work achievements and document such upon application.
- viii. MsRWA maintains final decision as to whether course work documented will be accepted as credit.
- ix. There will be a \$75.00 registration fee for each class to cover materials, facility, trainers and lunch.

b. Work Experience

- i. Applicant must demonstrate at least six (6) months of work experience in an office professional position preferably with a municipality or water/sewer district.
- ii. Experience may be used to obtain the hours:
  - 10 + years of experience = 12 hours
  - 5 years of experience = 6 hours

Example: If you have worked in water and/or wastewater for 10 or more years, you only have to attend 12 hours of training before you can take the test to become a Certified Office Professional.

c. Application

- i. Applicant must submit a copy of Application Form OPCP-1 to MsRWA along with a \$50 application fee.
- ii. Applications must be received no later than 30 days before the applied for examination date.
- iii. Applications must be completed entirely documenting course work attended and work experience.

d. Examination

- i. Applicant must pass a written examination provided by MsRWA. The exam shall consist of questions covering the course subjects.

- ii. Examinations shall be given twice a year. A full day will be scheduled which will include ½ day of review and ½ day for the test.
- iii. A passing grade on the exam is a score of 70% or higher.
- iv. Examinations will be graded by at least two members of the committee.
- v. Applicants will be notified by mail or e-mail, if e-mail address is given during application, regarding examination status.
- vi. Examination Appeals
  - 1. If an applicant feels that a grade is given in error, the applicant's examination will be re-graded.
  - 2. If an applicant feels that any provided exam question is incorrect, invalid, or out of date, then the applicant may submit notice in writing to MsRWA for evaluation of the question.
  - 3. All decisions made by the Office Professional Certification Program committee are final.

#### IV. Certification Process and Renewal

- a. Upon demonstrating completion of all items in Section III, MsRWA will issue the applicant a certificate.
- b. The certifications shall be issued for a three-year period.
- c. The certification shall be maintained by obtaining at least 24 renewal hours of training on course topics relating to the subjects outlined in Section III, Part A, Subsection i.
- d. Applicant shall submit a renewal fee of \$50.
- e. If a Certified Office Professional fails to acquire the 24 hours of renewal training, or submit their renewal before the noted due date, then the individual must retake the exam. Hours received through the Mississippi Clerks Association will be honored for recertification.



## Application for Certification

### Certified Office Professional

This application is for: \_\_\_\_\_ New Application \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal of Certification

NOTE: If application is for certification renewal, then only Section 7, Course work, must be filled out. It is not necessary to fill out Section 8, Work Experience.

**BE SURE TO RETURN ALL 5 PAGES OF THIS APPLICATION**

This application must be submitted for consideration of applicant for Certified Office Professional. Please submit this document with your payment of \$50 for processing. (Includes lunch and certification plaque)

Please mail application and fee to:

Office Professional Certification Program  
Mississippi Rural Water Association  
5400 N Midway Road  
Raymond, MS 39154

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. System: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Address: \_\_\_\_\_
4. City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_
6. E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Date you wish to take the exam.

- 1) April 12, 2011      2) October 12, 2011

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. COURSE WORK

Please outline any Office Professional training you have attended. Please include the date, training provider, course name, and number of in-classroom hours. Please refer to pages 3-4 of the manual for required number in each subject.

### Required hours of Office Management

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### Required hours of Financial Administration

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

### Required hours of Water and Wastewater Operations

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Required hours of Legal Issues

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Required hours of Personnel Issues

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Required hours of Personal Development

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional comments regarding course work:

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8. WORK EXPERIENCE

Please outline your work history, beginning with the most recent.

A.

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employed from Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_ to Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe duties: \_\_\_\_\_

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B.

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employed from Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_ to Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe duties: \_\_\_\_\_

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C.

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employed from Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_ to Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe duties: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any additional comments regarding work history:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 9. SIGNATURE BLOCK

I hereby declare that the aforementioned information is correct and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_