

NEED-TO-KNOW CRITERIA FOR THE TRIBAL UTILITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION LEVEL 1

Revised August 2013

The Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 was developed under a sub-award agreement between ITCA and the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAP) as an activity that was funded as part of the EPA / RCAP Training / Technical Assistance to Tribally-Owned Systems Project.

This publication was developed under Assistance Agreement No. X7-83535701-0 awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has not been formally reviewed by EPA. The views expressed in this document are solely those of ITCA and EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned in this publication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. would like to thank the members of the volunteer Tribal subject-matter expert panel for their effort in supporting ITCA's Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 Program. The following is an alphabetical listing of the panel members.

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Special thanks to:

Tiffany Castellvi, Professional Testing Inc.

Rachel Ehrlich, Professional Testing, Inc.

Eric Matson, Phoenix Area Indian Health Service, Phoenix, Arizona

Deborah Patton, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Phoenix, Arizona

Introduction

In the 2012-2013 federal fiscal year, the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) network partnered to conduct meeting forums and trainings regarding water utility management for Tribes. The purpose of this work is to improve the managerial and financial capacity of Tribal drinking water systems in order to sustainably deliver safe drinking water for their communities. As part of this U.S. EPA grant funded project, and with leveraged funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the ITCA developed the *Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1* (TUMC-1) professional certification. This new professional certification is intended to create a standardized pathway for Tribal water professionals to advance into and ascend through the field of water utility management. Just like water operator professional certification, utility management professional certification will be based on set eligibility criteria of training, work experience, and written examination.

To ensure the TUMC-1 professional certification is scientifically valid and legally defensible, ITCA enlisted the technical guidance of Ph.D.-level Psychometricians from Professional Testing Inc. to facilitate the development process of the new professional certification. There were several steps involved in the development process that required direct input from experienced Tribal water utility professionals that volunteered as subject-matter experts. These steps included the following events.

- o Job-Task Analysis Workshop, January 10-11, 2013, in Phoenix, Arizona
- o Job-Task Analysis Validation Survey, January 18-February 3, 2013 via the internet
- o Job-Task Analysis Validation Webinar, February 7, 2013
- o Exam Question Item Writing Workshop, February 28-March 1, 2013, in Phoenix, AZ
- o Exam Question Review Workshop, March 14-15, 2013, in Phoenix, Arizona
- o Eligibility & Passing Score Workshop, April 11-12, 2013, in Phoenix, Arizona

HOW THE NEED-TO-KNOW CRITERIA WAS DEVELOPED

"Job analysis is the process by which the tasks performed by individuals in a particular job are identified, and the importance of those tasks is determined. Additionally, job analysis helps to establish the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics necessary for the effective performance of a job incumbent."

—Tiffany Castellvi, Ph.D., Professional Testing Inc.

On January 10-11, 2013, ITCA convened a panel of 13 Tribal subject matter experts and conducted the Job Task Analysis Workshop that was held at ITCA's offices in Phoenix, Arizona. The panel identified the following eight (8) domain areas of competency, or overarching work areas of Tribal utility managers, which can hold various job titles depending on the type/size of utility.

Domain Areas of Competency for the TUMC-1 Certification Exam

- 1. Regulatory Compliance
- 2. Policy Development
- 3. Financial Management
- 4. Workforce Management
- 5. Operations & Maintenance
- 6. Infrastructure Master Planning
- 7. Interact with Other Entities
- 8. Consumer Education

The panel then identified all the job tasks performed within each overarching domain. Both domains and tasks were written in a structured format, common for job/task analysis. The panel also listed the detailed behavioral steps required to complete each task, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform each task effectively. Finally, the panel reviewed the resulting data and came up with recommended examination weights based on the breadth and depth of content in each of the domain areas and associated tasks. These weights were calculated by a combined rating of both frequency and importance for each task. The weights were then transformed to a recommended number of items assigned to each domain and task area on the 100-question certification exam.

Validation Study

ITCA and Professional Testing, Inc. compiled the results of the Job Task Analysis Workshop and developed a survey for a larger population base of Tribal water utility management personnel for the purpose of validating the results of the Job Task Analysis. The survey used rating scales for job task frequency and job task importance. In addition, the survey included key demographic questions to ensure representativeness and validity. The survey was deployed over a two-week time period (January 18-February 3, 2013) using an internet survey service and was distributed by email to nearly 300 Tribal water utility and environmental program personnel located throughout Indian Country. A total of 59 qualifying individuals participated in the survey, representing tribal utilities of all sizes (very small systems-22%, small systems-37%, medium systems-20%, large systems-14%, and very large systems-2%, with a remainder of 5% as no responses) located in nine (9) states. The recommended weights from the job-task analysis workshop and the survey data were significantly in agreement, providing strong validation. Following the validation study, the panel then finalized the examination blueprint (specifications) based on a weighting in the job analysis results so that they reflect the criticality of tasks performed on the job.

THE TRIBAL UTILITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION-LEVEL 1 EXAM

The Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 exam consists of 100 multiple-choice questions. The exam blueprint, shown in **Table 1** below, lists the percentage of questions on the exam that fall under each domain area of competency, as well as the number of exam questions pertaining to each of the associated job tasks. In addition, the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with the job tasks are provided in the following section.

<u>Table 1</u>: Exam Blueprint for the Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1
Professional Certification

Domain Areas of Competency /	Percent of Exam /
Job Tasks	Number of questions
1. Regulatory Compliance	17 %
Identify Primacy Agency	2 questions
Enforce Rules & Regulations	4 questions
Demonstrate Regulatory Compliance	4 questions
Maintain Compliance Records	4 questions
Establish Utility-Specific Regulations	3 questions
2. Policy Development	18 %
Develop Organizational Flowchart and Policies	2 questions
Establish Boundaries of Authority	2 questions
Evaluate Existing Policies	2 questions
Develop and Update Rules and Regulations	3 questions
Develop Financial Policies	2 questions
Develop Safety Policies	3 questions
Develop Emergency Response Policies	3 questions
Develop Construction Policies	1 question
3. Financial Management	12 %
Acquire Resources	3 questions
Develop a Budget	3 questions
Develop and Maintain Rate Structure	2 questions
Implement Accounting Principles	2 questions
Manage Contracts	2 questions

<u>Table 1</u>: Exam Blueprint for the Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1
Professional Certification, continued

	Domain Areas of Competency / Job Tasks	Percent of Exam / Number of questions
4.	Workforce Management	10 %
	Determine Staffing Requirements	2 questions
	Identify Workforce Needs	2 questions
	Train and Develop Staff	3 questions
	Perform Succession Planning	1 question
	Implement Human Resources Policies and Procedures	2 questions
5.	Operations and Maintenance	16 %
	Reporting / Recordkeeping	4 questions
	Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	3 questions
	Develop a Preventative Maintenance (PM) Program	3 questions
	Ensure Process Control	3 questions
	Evaluate and Maintain Equipment	3 questions
6.	Infrastructure Master Planning	9 %
	Forecast Water Resource Adequacy	2 questions
	Model Community Growth	1 question
	Participate in Land Use Plan Development	2 questions
	Project Capital Improvement Needs	3 questions
	Validate Master Plan	1 question
7.	Interacting with Other Entities	8 %
	Identify Potential and Existing Partners	3 questions
	Collaborate with funding Agencies	3 questions
	Establish Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) and	-
	Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)	2 questions
8.	Consumer Education	10 %
0.	Provide Education for Council and/or Board Members	3 questions
	Prepare Consumer Education Materials	2 questions
	Conduct Community Outreach	4 questions
	Establish Water Conservation Guidelines	1 question

Job Tasks & Steps

Identify Primacy Agency (2)

Determine enforcement jurisdiction

Determine if laws are federal, state, county, or tribal

Determine if utility is private or public

Enforce Rules & Regulations (4)

Review existing rules and regulations

Review historic data Conduct inspections Request information

Identify required corrective action

Apply corrective action

Demonstrate Regulatory Compliance (4)

Prepare analytical results

Compile/maintain compliance records

Conduct or coordinate facility inspection

Provide records/reports as requested or required

Provide proof of public notice

Maintain Compliance Records (4)

Maintain accurate files

Maintain copies of violation notices/non-compliance

Maintain laboratory reports

Maintain chain-of-custody documentation

Maintain sampling instructions

Maintain daily logs

Maintain as-built drawings

Establish Utility-Specific Rules and Regulations (3)

Delineate lines of responsibility

Identify the need for utility-specific rules/regulations

Identify consumer criteria for service

Establish site sampling plan

Present proposed ordinance to tribal government

Present proposed ordinance to tribal council

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of:

Federal, state, county and tribal rules and regulations

Safe Drinking Water Act & Clean Water Act

Compliance history

Investigative techniques

Process controls

Continuing education requirements

Maximum contaminant levels

Non-compliance consequences

Regulatory agency requirements

Sampling schedule

Standards

As-built drawings

Basic sampling techniques

Hold times

Monitoring requirements

Recordkeeping/documentation time schedule

Hazards

Public safety and welfare **Uniform Plumbing Code**

Sills & Abilities:

Networking skills

Research skills

Investigative skills

Communication skills

Data management Interpret laboratory data

Organizational skills

Recordkeeping

Technical writing skills

Archive data

Coordination

Data interpretation

Planning

Analytical ability

Identify hazards

Job Tasks & Steps

Develop Organizational Flowchart and Policies (2)

Research governmental structure

Establish authority (chain-of-command)

Identify existing/historic structure

Write organizational flowchart and policies

Present flowchart and policies to proper authorities

Establish Boundaries of Authority (2)

Identify existing boundaries of authority

Identify populations that need to be served

Identify water capacity

Identify services to be provided

Identify need for expansion or shrinkage of boundaries

Evaluate risk

Establish zones of service for each utility (e.g., sewage)

Evaluate Existing Policies (2)

Identify existing policies

Identify need for revisions or updates on existing policies

Revise policies when necessary

Develop and Update Rules and Regulations (3)

Identify need for tribe- or utility-specific regulations

Evaluate current rules and regulations

Draft tribe- or utility-specific regulations as needed

Conduct community outreach meetings to discuss regulations

or changes

Revise rules and regulations as necessary

Develop Financial Policies (2)

Evaluate existing financial policies

Develop a system of checks and balances

Develop rate structure policies

Draft collection and disconnect policies

Develop procurement policies

Identify financial management tools

Develop Safety Policies (3)

Review existing safety policies

Develop or update safety program

Maintain safety records

Identify resources for safety training

Evaluate applicable safety concerns

Connect risk management assessment

Establish safety budget line item

<u>Develop Emergency Response Policies</u> (3)

Review existing emergency response policies

Conduct a vulnerability assessment

Establish climate-related preparedness plan

Establish list of emergency responders

Establish list of emergency service vendors

Draft emergency response plan

Establish communication plan for emergency response

Establish recovery plan

Review and update emergency response plan annually

Develop Construction Policies (1)

Review existing construction policies

Establish contracting protocols

Draft construction policies as required

Maintain construction policy records

Identify funding sources

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of: Funding responsibility

Skills & Abilities: Flowcharts Ethics Benchmarking Governmental structure Venders

Research skills First Aid Basic surveying Communication skills **OSHA** regulations Chain-of-command

Written communication sills Jurisdictions **PPE**

Planning skills Land ownership Safety requirements Analytic skills Local regulations Utility system Interpretation skills Mapping **HAZMAT**

Mathematics Topography **MSDS** Negotiation Historic records Recordkeeping requirements

Environmental safety awareness Rules and regulations Construction equipment

Investigation skills Accounting Industry standards Safety awareness Finance Traffic control

Work zone safety

Project management skills

Financial management software Uniform Plumbing Code Funding requirements

Job Tasks & Steps

Acquire Resources (3) Research funding sources Draft grant proposals

Complete funding applications Identify alternative revenue sources Report on funding use as necessary

Develop a Budget (3) Identify existing resources

Identify operating and maintenance expenses

Calculate indirect Forecast future expenses Adjust for inflation

Determine staffing requirements Identify workforce benefits

Review reserves

Review utility sustainability plan Present budget for approval Establish appropriate rate structure Identify financial management tools

Develop and Maintain Rate Structure (2)

Identify financial needs

Identify operation and maintenance costs

Research existing rate structures in surrounding communities

Product availability

Analyze customer classifications Analyze consumer price index

Evaluate socioeconomic conditions of customers

Identify direct Identify indirect

Present rate structure proposal to board or council for approval

Implement Accounting Principles (2)

Identify chain-of-command

Apply accounting principles to existing budget Ensure accounting principles are adhered to

Coordinate financial audits with outside vendors as required

Manage Contracts (2)

Interpret technical specifications

Utilize utility standards

Determine contracting protocols Review construction documents Create inspection reports

Assess preferred vendor qualifications

Have contract reviewed by appropriate authority

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of: Accounting codes Funding requirements Funding sources

Accounting principles Asset management

Benefits

Depreciation Spreadsheets

Financial management software Operating and maintenance expenses

Utility software Inflation Meter types Political awareness

Water volume requirements

Assets and liabilities

Budgeting

Checks and balances Financial auditing process OSHA regulations Technical specifications Technological advancements Skills & Abilities:

Budgeting Mathematics Time management Communication skills

Written communication skills

Data analysis Data management

Forecasting/projecting expenses Forecasting/projecting growth

Persuasion Presentation skills Benchmarking

Calculate Direct & Indirect

Educational skills Contract management Critical thinking skills

Negotiation

Problem solving skills Project management skills

Job Tasks & Steps

Determine Staffing Requirements (2) Evaluate job tasks and responsibilities Forecast man hour requirements Establish work schedules

Establish pay scale Create work order system

Determine supervision requirements

Determine job eligibility requirements (e.g. certifications)

Identify Workforce Needs (2)

Identify required tasks

Identify certification requirements Identify required tools and equipment Identify required training/continued education

Develop relationships with staff members

Establish parameters for employees' decision-making

Identify physical and safety requirements Assess employee risk and liabilities

Train and Develop Staff (3)

Identify required knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff

Review HR and safety regulations Evaluate training and development needs

Identify training resources

Appraise existing knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff

Maintain training records

Establish training incentives Establish career ladder

Conduct training as necessary Evaluate effectiveness of training

Acknowledge and prepare staff for technological advances Obtain staff development buy-in from decision makers

Perform Succession Planning (1)

Develop succession plan Forecast future staffing needs Identify need for cross-training Establish mentoring program Document staff capabilities Maintain staffing records

Identify external recruitment requirements

Transfer institutional knowledge

Evaluate effectiveness of succession planning Obtain succession plan buy-in from decision makers

Implement HR Policies and Procedures (2)

Review existing HR policies and procedures Develop HR policies and procedures as necessary Ensure compliance with prevailing HR regulations

Enforce HR policies and procedures

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of: HR regulations **Industry** regulations Job classifications Job descriptions

Safety regulations & requirements

Scheduling software

Service area

Task and time requirements Industry tools and equipment Occupational hazards Operation of utility system

PPE

Industry standards Performance appraisal Rules and regulations Training methods Training resources Utility system operations Institutional knowledge Technological advancements

HR principles Staffing requirements

Skills & Abilities: Data management Employee management

Recruiting

Time management Communication skills Written communication skills

Listening skills Interpersonal skills Management skills Adaptability Conflict resolution Motivational skills

Negotiation skills Presentation skills

Training / educational skills

Cultural sensitivity Recordkeeping skills

Job Tasks & Steps

Reporting / Recordkeeping (4)

Develop appropriate reporting formats/templates

Identify applicable EPA regulations

Determine recordkeeping/reporting frequencies

Identify minimum retention time for records

Establish recordkeeping responsibility

Train staff on utilizing records

Capture critical utility data

Conduct system inventory

Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) (3)

Identify job tasks

Identify materials and equipment

Review existing SOPs

Amend or update existing SOPs as necessary

Create new SOPs as necessary

Review manufacturer specifications

Review safety program

Review man hour requirements

Establish OA/OC plan

Establish SOP placement/availability

Communicate SOPs to staff members

Develop a Preventative Maintenance (PM) Program (3)

Review maintenance records

Identify equipment maintenance requirements

Apply SOPs to equipment maintenance

Apply SOPs to system maintenance

Establish work order system

Obtain buy-in from staff members

Allocate budget resources for preventative maintenance

Establish PM task schedule according to manufacturer

specifications or industry standards

Ensure Process Control (3)

Establish a process control testing program

Evaluate process control test results

Compare test results to historic trends

Adjust system as needed

Review process control logs

Maintain staffing capabilities for process control

Maintain process control logs

Evaluate and Maintain Equipment (3)

Conduct equipment audit

Maintain equipment records

Provide tools and materials necessary for regular maintenance

Establish service contracts

Train staff to conduct regular equipment maintenance

Implement standardization practices

Compare replacement versus repair costs

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Regulatory requirements for process

Industry tools and equipment

Process controls

Statistics

Economics

control

Knowledge of:

Accounting codes

Confidentiality requirements

Spreadsheets

Data management software

Industrial materials

Industrial standards

Inventory control

Regulatory agency reporting

requirements

Electrical and mechanical equipment

Job classifications

Job descriptions

Manufacturer specifications

Equipment maintenance requirements

Operations and maintenance standards

Presentation software

Safety requirements

Utility system requirements

Equipment warranties

General maintenance

Chemicals

Skills & Abilities:

Archiving

Data formatting

Data management

Communication skills

Written communication skills

Technical writing skills Resource assessment

Interpret historic data

Interpret laboratory reports

Mathematics

Recordkeeping

Trending

Critical thinking

Observational skills

Training skills

Troubleshooting skills

Job Tasks & Steps

Forecast Water Resource Adequacy (2)

Assess current water capacity for production

Evaluate storage capacity

Evaluate distribution system capacity Evaluate source / pumping capacity

Perform flow testing (e.g., 24-hour pump test)

Examine static water levels

Estimate future consumer population

Evaluate existing water rights

Forecast environmental changes impacting service

Identify water quality constraints

Participate in regional water planning (Tribal & non-Tribal)

Model Community Growth (1)

Evaluate growth capacity

Review population growth trends Estimate continued population growth

Analyze future water needs for projected community growth

Project economic growth

Forecast extra-territorial growth

Project industrial growth

Participate in Land Use Plan Development (2)

Identify boundaries and resources within them

Conduct sanitary surveys

Identify allocation of land ownership

Identify land use

Contribute to zoning mapping

Consider impact to water quality and quantity

Review historical data

Identify land use planning stakeholders

Identify topographical constraints

Communicate with other entities regarding impacts to utilities

Project Capital Improvement Needs (3)

Assess existing equipment conditions

Analyze projected community and capacity growth

Identify all potential funding sources

Develop asset inventory

Identify system requirements for future growth

Communicate with other entities regarding impacts to utilities

Determine if the capital improvement project is feasible

Validate Master Plan (1)

Review development / updates to the master plan

Verify that system capacities are adequate

Modify master plan or system as required

Update master plan according to updates in financial /

economic status

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of:

Electrical capacities Engineering terminology

Source water assessment terminology

Statistics

Water rights

Available resources

Historical data and trends

Archeological data

Culturally sensitive areas

Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

Topographical constraints

Emerging pathogens

Funding sources

Impending legislation

Industry tools and equipment

Rules and regulations

Regulatory requirements

Water quality trends

Master planning

System capacities

Skills & Abilities:

Communication skills

Computer skills

Coordination with other entities

Hydraulic modeling skills

Interpret hydrological reports

Mathematics

Planning skills

Recordkeeping

Trending

Mapping

Read technical reports

Contract management

Estimating

Interpretation skills

Budgeting

Collaboration

Critical thinking skills

Innovative

Problem solving skills

7. <u>Interacting with Other Entities</u>.....8 test questions on the following

Job Tasks & Steps

Identify Potential and Existing Partners (3)

Identify stakeholders

Identify emergency responders Identify local health department

Provide utility contact information to existing and potential partners

Refer to jurisdictional boundaries

Develop relationships with potential partners

Collaborate with Funding Agencies (3)

Identify all potential funding sources

Establish communication with potential funding sources

Obtain funding

Report to funding sources as necessary

Comply with terms and conditions of funding agency

Establish Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) and Establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) (2)

Review existing IGAs and MOUs

Review existing policies

Establish authority for negotiating IGA or MOU Determine necessity of entering into IGA or MOU

Maintain agreement documents

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of:

Jurisdictions

Regulatory agencies Rules and regulations Accounting principles

Funding cycles
Grant management

Grant management Chain-of-command

Inter-Governmental Agreements Memorandum of Understanding

Political process

Skills & Abilities:
Communication skills
Computer skills
Data management
Interpersonal skills

Articulate
Collaborate
Grant writing
Persuasion
Time management

Negotiation Read technical reports

Recordkeeping

Job Tasks & Steps

Provide Education for Council and/or Board Members (3)

Conduct educational meetings

Determine proper personnel to present at board meetings

Determine target audience

Instill awareness of industry value

Review tribe constitution

Provide opportunities to participate in industry training

Solicit feedback from board and council members

Conduct tours of facility or operations

Prepare Consumer Education Materials (2)

Define educational subject matter

Prepare and deliver presentations

Prepare annual Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs)

Identify target audience

Identify community advocates

Budget for consumer education costs

Draft printable educational materials

Produce educational media

Identify existing educational resources

Conduct Community Outreach (4)

Determine target audience

Identify public relations representative

Determine appropriate outreach communication methods

Determine message / goal of outreach

Participate in community events

Coordinate utility information activities

Create visual displays

Establish Water Conservation Guidelines (1)

Determine need for water conservation

Obtain authorization for implementing conservation guidelines

Identify available resources

Identify triggers for implementing water conservation

guidelines

Establish enforcement guidelines

Establish incentives for water conservation

Research alternative water harvesting methods

Develop communication plan for water conservation protocols

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Knowledge of:

Capital development

Cost / benefit analysis

Cultural awareness

Customer awareness

Industry standards

Political environment

Rules and regulations

System operations

Water quality standards

Copyright regulations

Presentation software

Marketing

Media

Program development

Conservation programs

Population

Source water protection

System capacity

Skills & Abilities:

Communication skills

Written communication skills

Computer skills

Cultural sensitivity

Educational skills

Interpersonal skills

Presentation skills

Motivational skills

Planning skills

Public relations

Critical thinking skills

Problem solving

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

The following reference sources were consulted by the Tribal subject matter expert panel in developing the ITCA Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 examination. Candidates should use the latest edition of these reference sources to prepare for the exam.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)

• Tribal Utility Governance Program – Building Managerial and Financial Capacity training manual

To order, contact: Rural Community Assistance Corporation

3120 Freeboard Drive, Suite 201 West Sacramento, California 95691

Phone: (916) 447-2854 Fax: (916) 447-2878 Website: www.rcac.org

American Water Works Association (AWWA)

- Water Utility Management, M5 AWWA Manual of Water Supply Practices
- Utility Management for Water and Wastewater Operators, by Frederick Bloetscher

To order, contact: American Water Works Association

Denver, Colorado 80235 Phone: (800) 926-7337 Fax: (303) 347-0804

6666 West Quincy Avenue

Website: www.awwa.org

California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) Foundation, Office of Water Programs

- Utility Management A Field Study Training Program
- Manage for Success Effective Utility Leadership Practices

To order, contact: Office of Water Programs

California State University, Sacramento

6000 J Street

Sacramento, California 95819-6025

Phone: (916) 278-6142 Fax: (916) 278-5959

Website: www.owp.csus.edu

United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA)

Numerous materials concerning water utility management can be found on U.S. EPA website pages starting at: www.epa.gov