

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: Presentation of the 2007 Registered Laboratory of the Year Awards

FOR: MARCH 2007 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: David Webb, Chief Environmental Science Services Section

SUMMARY:

The Department presents annually the Registered Laboratory of the Year Awards to recognize Wisconsin's best registered laboratories for their outstanding commitment to producing high quality data. Awards are offered in two categories: Large Registered Facility and Small Registered Facility. This will be the 12th consecutive year the Department has presented these awards.

The 2007 Large Registered Facility Award will be presented to the Stevens Point Wastewater Treatment Plant. The 2007 Small Registered Facility Award will be presented to the Fremont - Orihula - Wolf River Joint Sewage Commission Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The nomination papers for each laboratory along with an overview of the award selection criteria are included in the attached memorandum.

RECOMMENDATION: Presentation of the 2007 Registered Laboratory of the Year Awards

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|-----|-------------------------------------|----------|
| No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement Required | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

APPROVED:

/s/	2/16/07
_____	_____
Bureau Director,	Date
/s/	2/16/07
_____	_____
Administrator,	Date
/s/	2/16/07
_____	_____
Secretary, Scott Hassett	Date

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| cc: Laurie J. Ross - AD/5 | Joseph R. Renville - LE/5 |
| David Webb - SS/G3 | Mark K. Corbett - NER - Oshkosh SC |
| Amy Smith - AD/5 | Alfredo Sotomayor SS/G3 |
| John R. Sullivan - SS/G3 | |
| Camille Johnson - SS/WCR - Eau Claire | |

DATE: February 19, 2007

TO: Natural Resources Board Members

FROM: Scott Hassett, Secretary

SUBJECT: 2007 Registered Laboratory of the Year Awards

Background Information

The Department has presented the “Registered Laboratory of the Year Awards” since 1996. The awards recognize registered laboratories that have developed superior systems for producing high quality environmental data. Registered laboratories perform testing solely on behalf of their own facility, municipality, subsidiary or corporation under common ownership or control. The Laboratory Certification and Registration Program coordinates nomination and selection activities, but a laboratory can be nominated by anyone familiar with it and its operations.

Yearly recipients are selected based on the following criteria:

1. The laboratory’s commitment to exceeding the minimum requirements for compliance with Department rules and guidance.
2. The laboratory’s commitment to correcting instances of non-compliance.
3. The measures taken by the laboratory to ensure the production of high quality data.
4. The manner in which the laboratory uses its quality assurance program to evaluate and improve laboratory procedures.
5. The laboratory’s engagement in other noteworthy practices or achievements deserving recognition.

Two awards are presented, one each for a small and a large registered facility. Only registered laboratories are eligible to be nominated. Laboratories that meet any of the following criteria may be nominated to receive the “Small Facility” award:

- Registered to perform limited testing, such as that covered by Chapter NR 149 test categories 1 through 4: oxygen demand, nitrogen, phosphorus, and solids.
- Associated with a facility with an average annual flow of less than 1 mgd.
- Unaffiliated with a large corporation or large public entity.

Laboratories that meet any of the following criteria may be nominated to receive the “Large Facility” award:

- Registered to perform tests of greater complexity in any of the Ch. NR 149 test categories.
- Associated with a facility with an average annual flow greater than 1 mgd.
- Affiliated with a large corporation or large public entity.

2007 Laboratory of the Year Award Selections

Large Registered Facility Award: The Stevens Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Laboratory

The laboratory is registered to perform testing for biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), carbonaceous BOD, total phosphorus, and total suspended solids. The laboratory has been evaluated six times by the Laboratory Certification and Registration Program and had received a previous nomination for the Large Registered Facility Award. The laboratory was commended for being proactive in compliance, achieving excellent quality control results, and for maintaining thorough documentation.

Small Registered Facility Award: The Fremont – Orihula – Wolf River Joint Sewage Commission Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility

The laboratory is registered to perform testing for biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and total suspended solids. The laboratory has been evaluated three times by the Laboratory Certification and Registration Program. The laboratory was commended for its exceptional attention to analyses details, excellence of its analytical data, and dedication to correcting promptly any quality control exceedances.

Copies of each laboratory's nomination papers are attached.



2007 Wisconsin DNR Registered Lab of the Year Nomination Form

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Registered Lab of the Year Awards annually recognize registered laboratories for their outstanding commitment to producing high quality data. One award is presented in each of two categories: Small Facility and Large Facility. Small facilities include municipal wastewater treatment laboratories with a flow of less than 1 mgd, or labs that perform limited types of testing (e.g., BOD, nitrogen, phosphorus, and solids). Large facilities may include major municipal wastewater treatment laboratories with flows greater than 1 mgd, labs that perform tests of greater complexity (e.g., metals, PCBs, VOCs) or labs that process a large volume of samples annually.

Nominees for the award must be registered facilities located in the State of Wisconsin. Certified laboratories will not be considered. Anyone, including DNR staff, can nominate a laboratory for one of the awards, but laboratories may not nominate themselves. There is no limit on the number of times that a laboratory may be nominated, and a laboratory may be nominated for (or receive) an award in consecutive years. In the event that insufficient nominations are received for either category, the Department reserves the right to not issue either award.

To nominate a registered laboratory for the 2007 Lab of the Year Award, complete the following form and include a summary of no more than three pages describing the reasons why you are nominating the laboratory for the award. Be sure to address the following considerations in your summary (please note - all considerations do not necessarily have to be addressed for a laboratory to be chosen to receive the award):

Nomination Considerations:

- Does the laboratory demonstrate a commitment to exceeding the minimum requirements for compliance with Department rules and guidance?
- Has the laboratory demonstrated a high level of commitment to correcting instances of non-compliance?
- What measures does the laboratory take to ensure the production of high-quality data?
- Does the laboratory's quality assurance program ensure that quality control data is used to evaluate and improve laboratory procedures?
- For which other practices or achievements should the laboratory be recognized?

Completed nomination forms must be received by January 10, 2007 in order for the candidate to be considered. A nomination committee will decide the Award winners. Please send the completed nomination form to: Lab of the Year Award, c/o Camille Johnson, WI DNR, 1300 W. Clairemont Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54702.

Category:	Small Registered	XLarge Registered
Name of Laboratory Nominated:	Stevens Point Wastewater Treatment Plant	
Laboratory Director:	Eric Niffenegger	
Laboratory Address:	301 Bliss Avenue, P.O. Box 242 Stevens Point WI 54481	
Laboratory Phone #:	715-345-6633	
Nominator (your name):	Camille Johnson	
Your Affiliation with Nominee:	DNR Lab Auditor	
Your Address:	1300 W. Clairemont Ave	
Your Phone #:	715-831-3272	



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Scott Hassett, Secretary
Scott Humrickhouse, Regional Director

West Central Region Headquarters
1300 W. Clairemont Avenue
PO Box 4001
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54702-4001
Telephone 715-839-3700
FAX 715-839-6076
TTY Access via relay - 711

January 4, 2007

To: Lab of the Year Nomination Committee

Re: Nomination of Stevens Point Wastewater Treatment Facility Lab (FID: 750008160) for the Large Registered Lab of the Year award.

The Stevens Point Treatment Plant Laboratory was evaluated for compliance with NR 149 on October 19th, 2006. Their previous evaluation was done in April 2003. I completed both this and the 2003 evaluation and was very impressed on both occasions. Influent samples are analyzed for BOD and TSS daily. Effluent samples are analyzed for CBOD and TSS daily and phosphorus weekly. Daily process control samples are analyzed for phosphorus. The plant flow ranges from 2 to 3 mgd so they are in the large facility category. Eric Niffenegger is the Superintendent, Jeremy Cramer is the chief operator and there are four other operators that rotate the lab duties. Even though there are 4 operators rotating the lab duties this lab maintains superb quality. Some of the great things being done at the lab include:

1. No significant deficiencies were found at this evaluation and there were not any recommended lab practices that were not already being utilized.
2. There were a number of fine-tuning type deficiencies found at the 2003 audit but they were all promptly corrected, maintained and improved upon since then.
3. The lab is exceptionally clean and organized.
4. Lab staff attends training regularly and utilize what they learn to improve the lab.
5. The lab balance is checked with weights daily and a TSS blank is run daily.
6. Barometer reading is verified monthly.
7. A phosphorus spike, replicate, and two known standards are run on each analysis day.
8. Excellent results are obtained for spike and replicate samples with very rare control limit exceedances.
9. Challenging Control limits:
 - a. Phosphorus Spike CL 89-109%
 - b. Phosphorus effluent CL: 0.11 mg/L range
 - c. Phosphorus influent CL: 0.29 mg/L range
 - d. BOD influent CL: 26.6 mg/L range and samples are 150 – 330 mg/L
 - e. BOD effluent CL: 0.47 mg/L range and samples are 4-10 mg/L
 - f. TSS influent CL: 44 mg/L range and samples are 150 – 330 mg/L
 - g. TSS effluent CL: 1.3 mg/L range and samples are 3 – 10 mg/L
10. Replicates for BOD and TSS are run after every 10 samples (twice as often as required).
11. QC results are excellent and in the rare instance that there is a problem the DMR reporting is properly qualified.
12. Blind samples are rotated among all the operators as a further check on quality.

13. Nice quality control charts and LOD results are developed and posted on a regular basis (usually semi-annually).
14. Benchsheets are very detailed and well utilized.
15. Reagent records are thorough and up to date.
16. All records are clear and exceedingly well organized.
17. There is a detailed lab work schedule that shows all the daily requirements very clearly. This helps to ensure that all lab maintenance is performed on a regular basis.
18. A very comprehensive corrective action log is kept which includes the problem, possible solutions and follow-up information.
19. Very meticulous corrective action (including re-analysis when possible) is taken whenever a quality control (QC) sample deviates from the requirements. Operators are extremely proactive about any QC issues that arise. They often contact me or other sources of assistance and go to great lengths to track problems down. For example, one time they were having BOD blank issues and they were able to track this down to some dripping occurring in the incubator and getting into their distilled water. They installed a glass plate on the shelf to eliminate the chance of dripping.
20. The operators are also very dedicated and make changes when they learn that there is a better way of doing something.

To summarize, I feel the Stevens Point WWTP lab deserves the lab of the Year award for their very proactive actions, their excellent QC results and their thorough records. They demonstrate great dedication to their lab work and to doing the very best they can.

Sincerely,

Camille Johnson
Audit Chemist

Cc: Joe Behlen



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- Does the laboratory's quality assurance program ensure that quality control data is used to evaluate and improve laboratory procedures?
- For which other practices or achievements should the laboratory be recognized?

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Category:	X Small Registered	Large Registered
Name of Laboratory Nominated:	Fremont-Orihula-Wolf River Joint Sewage Commission by MCO	
Laboratory Director:	Mr. John Wilson	
Laboratory Address:	P.O. Box 468 Fremont, WI 54940-0468	
Laboratory Phone #:	920-446-3905	
Nominator (your name):	Camille Johnson / Mark Corbett	
Your Affiliation with Nominee:	Lab Auditor / Engineer	
Your Address:	1300 W. Clairemont Ave, Eau Claire WI	
Your Phone #:	715-831-3272	



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December 28, 2006

To: Lab of the Year Nomination Committee

Re: Nomination of Fremont-Orihula-Wolf River Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility Lab (FID: 469005020) for the Small Registered Lab of the Year award.

The Fremont-Orihula-Wolf River Treatment Plant Laboratory was evaluated for compliance with NR 149 on June 29th, 2006. Their previous evaluation was done in June of 2002. I completed both this and the 2002 evaluation and was very impressed on both occasions. John Wilson is the only lab analyst. If John is absent then MCO contract operators are hired to take samples which are sent to a commercial lab. Samples are analyzed for BOD and TSS twice a week. Replicates are done every 2 weeks. The quality of the work done at this lab is superb. Some of the great things being done at the lab include:

1. No significant deficiencies were found at this evaluation.
2. Only a few minor deficiencies were found at the 2002 evaluation and they were promptly corrected.
3. The lab glassware is kept spotlessly clean.
4. A TSS blank is run on each analysis day and the analyst filters up to 1000 mL of sample for TSS when possible.
5. Two BOD blanks are run on each analysis day in order to generate more QC data. Both blanks are generally in compliance. When there are blank issues the analyst makes every possible effort to track down and correct the issue.
6. Very frequent equipment maintenance and cleaning.
7. The laboratory is very clean and well-organized.
8. The analyst has put together a great method binder for quick method reference.
9. Nice quality control charts are developed on a regular basis.
10. Quality control samples are run more often than required – they are only required every 10 weeks but the analyst runs them every 2 weeks. GGA is run weekly as required.
11. No GGA/blank problems until this spring when a contamination problem began.
12. Extraordinary measures are taken to solve QC problems. Such as contacting water suppliers, changing tubing super frequently, buying new tubing, and keeping detailed records of everything done.
13. When there are QC problems the data is very well qualified on the DMR.
14. Great quality control and equipment logs.
15. Meticulous records covering all facets of the lab are kept by the analyst.
16. Tremendously well-organized filing system.

17. Excellent quality control limit compliance – all TSS and BOD replicates have been in the limits during the last 3 years and current limits are very tight.
18. Current range control limits are 0.8 mg/L for TSS effluent, 1.6 mg/L for BOD effluent, 44 mg/L for TSS influent and 70 mg/L for BOD influent. Sample replicates are usually well below that, for example the majority of the BOD influent replicates range less than 20 mg/L and the influent concentration can vary from 100 to 600 mg/L BOD.
19. The analyst is extremely open to recommendations for improvement and/or suggestions to help solve QC issues.

To summarize, I feel the Fremont WWTP lab deserves the lab of the Year award for their amazing attention to detail, excellent data, and their dedication to promptly correcting any QC problem encountered. BOD analysis is a very difficult test and issues are bound to arise due to the biological nature of the analysis. When issues have come up John makes every effort to solve the problem. He leaves no stone unturned and really cares about generating the best data possible. Please consider the Fremont-Orihula-Wolf River Joint WWTF for the Lab of the Year award.

Sincerely,

Camille Johnson
Audit Chemist

DATE: January 5, 2007

FILE REF: 3400

TO: Camille Johnson-Lab Auditor/Chemist
Eau Claire DNR Regional Office

FROM: Mark K. Corbett, P.E – Engineer
Oshkosh DNR Service Center

SUBJECT: *LAB OF THE YEAR NOMINATION*

The regionally owned, Fremont-Orihula-Wolf River Joint Sewage Commission Wastewater Treatment Facility was newly constructed, and placed on line in late 1997. The plant's annual average hydraulic design flow of 0.20 MGD classifies it as a *minor municipal* facility. I've served for the past 28 years, as the local Department regulatory contact, for the new plant and former lagoon system.

The operation and maintenance of the advance, activated sludge-oxidation ditch facility is contracted to the private firm; Midwest Contract Operations Inc.(MCO). MCO employee, John Wilson-Certified Operator is the lone staff person at the facility, in charge of all treatment plant duties. Tasks also include all laboratory testing functions which are performed on site.

Since facility construction, effluent compliance has consistently complied with all permit effluent limitations. The outstanding process control and maintenance practices performed by John Wilson have directly contributed to this fine compliance record.

Equally impressive, is the fine laboratory self monitoring program, which has clearly led to improved plant performance and the banner compliance record. Impeccable lab procedures and testing protocol is continuously demonstrated at the facility lab. This meticulous attention to testing and recording detail, establishes the on site lab as a true model facility.

Cc: Dave Webb – Madison/SS