

MWOA Membership – what you may or may not know

The MWOA has strived to be a great resource for its members while maintaining somewhat of a “low profile”. Our membership has been kept at the meager \$15/year for over 25 years. How do “we” do that? Well, unlike a lot of organizations, we have only three members that draw any compensation for providing services to our members. There are a lot of volunteers who serve as Section Officers, Committee Members, Board Members and the speakers at our workshops, Section and Annual Conferences. Without all of the member assistance – “we” couldn’t begin to keep the costs down or provide the services our members enjoy.

So- what about the membership itself – what does a member get for the dues they pay. Memberships presently are listed as in Individual Membership with 3 options. One year - \$15.00
Two years - \$25.00 or Six years for \$60.00

Memberships are for individuals and are not transferable. What that means is that each person listed as a member (regardless of who may ultimately pay those dues payments) is a member of the MWOA. If City XXX pays dues for S. Smith for two or more years and S. Smith leaves XXX City – the membership goes with S. Smith and cannot be transferred to a new or other employee of XXX City.

But what about the “Corporate” membership that members sometimes see in old copies of the WASTEWATCHER or some older membership applications? It’s true that the MWOA did offer a “Corporate” membership – but that was for members (typically vendors) who wanted to get hard or paper copies of all the MWOA Section Meeting notices. The printing and mailing of notices was getting to be a very large cost to the Association and as electronic email and mwoa.net access is now the accepted form for notices – the costs for mailing notices moved into maintaining the MWOA electronic database where ALL MWOA Members WHO HAVE SIGNED UP TO RECEIVE NOTICES THROUGH THE mwoa.net WEBSITE WILL RECEIVE ALL NOTICES FOR ALL MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS and IMPORTANT NEWS. But you do have to sign up through the website – this is to keep things in an appropriate method of contact as the MWOA is subject to privacy regulations which basically do require that you request being placed on the email list. Should you wish to decline receiving notices – simply contact the mwoa.net through the “Contact Us” link on the website to be removed.

Dues renewals go out around Thanksgiving, and you should have your reminders if your dues is going to expire in early December. Why December renewals? The MWOA dues is for a calendar year and ALL MEMBERS DUES EXPIRE DECEMBER 31st of the year they are paid through. So, if you joined the MWOA in March this year and paid for two years your membership would be through December 31st, 2018. The Board has been discussing potentially having a link or a table with member names and year of expiration or just those members who are past due using a first initial and last name only to provide integrity of the privacy, but also alert members that they may have missed a dues notice and need to submit.

We are also working on utilizing credit card payments, but as of this date, the software and FEES associated with this activity would greatly impact the current registration costs for meetings and dues. It is likely that in the near future the MWOA may

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adopt a credit card payment schedule – but would pass along any FEE or upcharge for convenience to the user.

One scenario would be that a one year dues payment of \$15.00 could have an end user fee of closer to \$25 per year with a transaction fee of \$5.00 plus 10-30% credit card guaranty of payment and costs of software to associate the funds with service or registration fee for meetings. Until we can achieve a workable solution to not subject our members to exorbitant fees and charges – look to continue the practice of payment by check or cash at the meetings.

Back to benefits – since it was just noted – members receive the electronic notices, they also will receive the three issues of the WASTEWATCHER publication each year in paper form. So, it is important to let us know of any address change as the post office no longer will forward your copy. We do get a small charge for undeliverable WASTEWATCHERS and the address label so we can remove that address from future mailings – but you don't get the copy and we don't have any idea of where you went. So please do use the "Contact Us" link for address changes.

You also have voting privileges at the Section and Annual Meeting level. As a member – you can serve as an officer, be on committees and help direct the MWOA in planning training sessions and discuss important issues within the wastewater industry.

We have many members that not only work with municipal wastewater systems but private systems, regulatory agencies, engineers and consultants, manufacturers, contractors and vendors who supply equipment or other services to the wastewater industry. This is extremely important as members can discuss problems with others in the industry and often find solutions or assistance with their specific needs.

Membership also receives recognition from the Section and State Association level. Being a member for 15 continuous years will be noted by issuance of a plaque with that designation. Every 5 years thereafter will issue a plate with 20,25,30 etc. to note those additional milestone achievements. In addition, if a member retires with at least 15 years of continuous membership, they can request "Life" membership. Life members do not pay dues and are welcomed to the Annual Conference as guests of the MWOA on Wednesday of the Annual Conference. (No registration fees are required; however, they should register and plan for lodging on their own if they plan to stay overnight).

Other recognition for Members include the Operations Awards for both A,B,C,D,SA,SB,SC,SD, Maintenance, Laboratory, Rookie, Loyal Service and Special Recognition. Only the "Special Recognition" award may be given to members or non-members who have made contributions to the Wastewater Industry, but did not fit one of the other categories. This could be to an Educator, Regulatory. Vendor or even a politician who a member supported such recognition and was submitted through the Section for Consideration at the State level.

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