

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR OPERATORS KENTUCKY DAM VILLAGE RESORT PARK

Pine Mountain State Resort Park

166 Upper Village Drive

Gilbertsville, KY 42044

Presented by

Kentucky Rural Water Association

March 24-25, 2026

All times Central Daylight Time

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

(DW-6 hrs WW-4.5 hrs)

8:00 – 9:30

Lead Service Line Inventory, Now What?

Pete Conrad, Kentucky Rural Water Association

Core Content: G4 Distribution Systems; G5 Drinking Water Standards and Rules

(DW 1.5 hrs)

This session provides an overview of the updated requirements under the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI), published in the Federal Register in October 2024. Participants will learn how to develop and maintain a Baseline Service Line Inventory, prepare a Lead Service Line Replacement Plan, and understand key compliance deadlines, including the initial compliance date of November 1, 2027. The session reviews new service line material definitions and classifications, public notification requirements, and regulatory expectations for documentation and recordkeeping. Participants will also explore strategies for validating inventory data, prioritizing replacement activities, and maintaining compliance throughout the implementation timeline extending to 2034.

9:30-11:00

Communications: Day to Day Basics

Pete Conrad, Kentucky Rural Water Association

Core Content: H3-Community/Public Relations/Compliant Response

(DW/WW-1.5 hrs)

This session focuses on the importance of effective communication within water and wastewater utilities and with the communities they serve. Participants will explore how clear, respectful communication improves internal coordination, strengthens customer relationships, and supports effective service delivery. Discussion will emphasize that strong communication begins within the organization—how staff share information, collaborate, and address challenges directly impacts operational efficiency and public perception. Participants will also review practical strategies for active listening, responding to customer concerns, and developing a consistent communication approach that builds trust and transparency.

11:00-12:00

Lunch

12:00 – 1:00

Cyber Security

Colin Glover, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Core Content: H5 – Emergency Response Planning & Security Training

(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session introduces water and wastewater operators to cybersecurity fundamentals relevant to utility operations. Participants will review common cyber threats facing critical infrastructure and discuss the role

operators play in protecting operational technology (OT) systems such as SCADA and other control networks. The session will also cover basic cybersecurity practices for identifying, preventing, and reporting cyber incidents while maintaining reliable system operations. Emphasis will be placed on protecting critical infrastructure, supporting emergency response planning, and aligning with federal guidance and Kentucky Division of Water expectations.

1:00 –2:00 GIS and Asset Management
Jasper Wyatt, Kentucky Rural Water Association

Core Content: A4 - Geographic Info Systems (GIS)
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session introduces how Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support modern asset management practices for water and wastewater utilities. Participants will review how GIS tools assist with system mapping, asset inventory development, data collection, condition assessment, and lifecycle management. The session will also highlight how GIS supports proactive maintenance planning, capital improvement planning, and regulatory reporting through spatial analysis and data visualization. Real-world examples will demonstrate how utilities use GIS platforms to improve operational efficiency, prioritize infrastructure investments, and support long-term system sustainability.

2:00-3:00 Protective Coatings for Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
Ethan Conley, Sherwin-Williams

Core Content: G17 - Trenchless Technologies; E15 - Trenchless Technologies for Pipe Rehabilitation
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session explores the role of protective coatings and linings in extending the service life of water and wastewater infrastructure. Participants will review coating systems designed for potable water storage tanks, wastewater collection systems, treatment structures, pipelines, and structural steel components. Topics include corrosion protection, chemical resistance, abrasion protection, and regulatory standards such as NSF/ANSI 61, NSF/ANSI 600, and AWWA coating specifications. The session will also discuss common operational challenges such as hydrogen sulfide exposure, immersion environments, and rapid return-to-service requirements, along with strategies for improving asset protection and reducing long-term maintenance costs.

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
(DW-6 hrs WW-4 hrs)

8:00 – 9:00 Being a Water & Wastewater Prepper
Bob Cashion, S4 Water Sales

Core Content: H5 Emergency Response Planning & Security Training
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session discusses the importance of emergency preparedness in protecting water and wastewater infrastructure and maintaining essential services. Participants will explore the concept of being a “utility prepper,” recognizing that preparedness requires ongoing planning, training, and coordination. The session will review common threats to utility operations, including natural disasters, infrastructure failures, and operational disruptions. Participants will also discuss practical steps utilities can take to strengthen response capabilities and improve continuity of operations during emergencies.

9:00-10:00 **Water & Wastewater Operational SOP's**
Bob Cashion, S4 Water Sales

Core Content: **H4 Design Manual Development (SOPs and BMPs)**
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session focuses on the development and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to support consistent and reliable utility operations. Participants will review how clearly defined procedures help reduce operational errors, improve training, and ensure consistent practices across staff and shifts. The session will also discuss strategies for developing SOPs, engaging staff in the writing process, and integrating procedures into daily operations. Additional discussion will cover how utilities can review and update SOPs to reflect operational changes, new technologies, and evolving regulatory requirements.

10:00-11:00 **Energy Efficiency**
Jason Pennell, Kentucky Rural Water Association

Core Content: **H6- Energy Efficiency/Energy Conservation at W/WW Facilities**
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session provides an overview of energy efficiency principles applicable to water and wastewater treatment, distribution, and collection systems. Participants will review how energy is used throughout utility operations and identify common areas where energy losses occur.

The session will also discuss practical strategies for improving efficiency in pumps, motors, aeration systems, and facility operations. Emphasis will be placed on operator-level actions that support cost-effective operations, improve system reliability, and promote environmental stewardship.

11:00-12:00 **Lunch**

12:00 – 1:00 **Overview of KY Operator Certification Program**
Byron "BJ" Bland, KY Operator Certification Program

Core Content: **H18 – Regs (CWA/SDWA, State & Local such as Operator Certification Requirements), NPDES Permit Requirements, Compliance**
(DW/WW-1 hr)

This session provides an overview of the Kentucky Operator Certification Program and the regulatory requirements associated with obtaining and maintaining certification.

Participants will review eligibility requirements for testing, certification levels for water and wastewater operators, continuing education expectations, and renewal procedures. The session will also discuss regulatory compliance responsibilities and how certification requirements support professional competency and system reliability.

1:00-2:00 **Leak Detection 101 (Part 1 of 2)**
Cody Kirby, Caldwell County Water District

Core Content: **G9 – Leak Detection/Water Audits**
(DW-1 hr)

This session introduces operators to the fundamentals of leak detection and water loss control in water distribution systems. Participants will review common causes of leaks, the operational impacts of water loss, and basic field techniques used to locate leaks. The session will also cover common leak detection equipment, early warning indicators of system leaks, and methods for prioritizing repairs. Emphasis will be placed on practical techniques that help utilities reduce non-revenue water and improve system efficiency.

2:00-3:00 Leak Detection 101 (Part 2 of 2)
Cody Kirby, Caldwell County Water District

Core Content: G9 – Leak Detection/Water Audits
(DW-1 hr)

This session continues the discussion from Part 1 with a deeper focus on field application and best practices for identifying and confirming leaks within water distribution systems. Participants will review real-world examples and troubleshooting scenarios while discussing methods for documenting findings, coordinating repairs, and integrating leak detection activities into broader water loss management programs.

SPEAKER BIOS

Colin Glover serves as the Cybersecurity State Coordinator (CSC) for Kentucky with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In this role, he supports homeland security efforts by identifying, assessing, and monitoring risks to critical infrastructure assets while helping develop the national cyber risk picture. As a CSC, Colin acts as a liaison between federal services and state, local, territorial, and tribal governments, as well as private sector partners. His work focuses on promoting cyber preparedness, incident response coordination, risk mitigation, and situational awareness to strengthen protection of critical infrastructure systems. Prior to joining DHS, Colin worked in the private sector assisting organizations with cybersecurity strategy and risk management and served as a Counterintelligence Special Agent with the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency. He also served in the United States Marine Corps with multiple combat tours in Iraq. Colin holds a Master of Engineering from the University of Virginia and maintains several cybersecurity certifications including CISSP, CISA, and CEH.

Pete Conrad grew up in the northern suburbs of Chicago and jokingly refers to himself as a “reformed Yankee.” After serving in the United States Marine Corps, Pete began working in the utility industry in 1998 and has since gained experience across several sectors including cable television, electric, telephone, and natural gas utilities. After earning a degree in History and Political Science from Southern Illinois University–Carbondale, Pete began working as an infrastructure planner with the Green River Area Development District. In that role, he assisted communities with funding opportunities for water and wastewater infrastructure projects, working closely with utility leadership, engineers, and regulatory agencies. In 2013, Pete became Superintendent of the Henderson County Water District where he oversaw system operations and worked with customers, staff, elected officials, and regulators. His career has reinforced the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing across utilities to strengthen water and wastewater systems.

Jason Pennell joined the Kentucky Rural Water Association staff in August 2017 as part of the Energy Efficiency Program and currently serves as Education Coordinator. Jason began his career in the water and wastewater industry in 2005 in Whitesburg, Kentucky with Veolia Water. During his time there, he served in multiple roles including meter reader, treatment plant operator, laboratory manager, chief operator, and Operations Manager. From 2014 to 2017, Jason worked as a Utility and Regulatory Investigator with the Kentucky Public Service Commission. He holds several Kentucky certifications including Class IIIA Water Treatment Operator, Class II Water Distribution Operator, Class II Wastewater Treatment Operator, and Class II Collection System Operator. Jason is also certified in Pipeline and Manhole Assessment by NASSCO and holds a Utility Management Certification from the National Rural Water Association. His professional experience spans operations, regulatory oversight, and operator training.

Robert K. "Bob" Cashion is a Nationally Certified Water Technologist and a highly experienced trainer in the water and wastewater industry with more than 30 years of experience providing technical training. He holds Class IV water and wastewater operator licenses in several states and currently serves as the Business Development Manager for S4 Water Sales & Services. In this role, Bob works extensively with utilities on filtration system operations, maintenance practices, and water quality assessment projects. He is an active member of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the National Rural Water Association (NRWA), and several state rural water associations. Throughout his career, Bob has received numerous awards recognizing his contributions to operator education and professional development within the water industry. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Health and Technology from Missouri Southern State University and is also a graduate of the Water and Wastewater Technical College in Neosho, Missouri.

Byron "BJ" Bland works with the Kentucky Operator Certification Program in the Division of Enforcement and has served in this role since July 2021. His responsibilities include reviewing operator experience credentials, certifying water and wastewater operators, providing training and continuing education opportunities, and offering technical assistance to utilities. He also assists with investigations related to operator certification compliance. BJ holds a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the University of Kentucky and earned a Master of Business Administration from Midway University in 2013, where his capstone project focused on implementing drinking water asset management. He later completed additional coursework in accounting through Morehead State University. Throughout his career, BJ has served in several government roles including state forester, firefighter with the Franklin County Fire Department, environmental scientist with the Division for Air Quality, and program manager within the Division of Waste Management.

Ethan J. Conley is a Protective and Marine Sales Representative with Sherwin-Williams specializing in coatings and linings designed to protect critical infrastructure and industrial assets. He holds a Certified NACE Coating Inspector credential through the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP), demonstrating advanced knowledge of coating inspection and corrosion protection practices. Ethan has held several leadership roles within Sherwin-Williams including Assistant Manager, Store Manager, Commercial Sales Representative, and Commercial and Industrial Branch Manager. In his current position, he works with utilities and industrial clients to develop coating solutions that extend asset life and improve infrastructure reliability. Prior to entering the coatings industry, Ethan served as an Infantry Officer in the Arizona Army National Guard, where he developed leadership and operational planning experience. He holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Pikeville along with degrees from Eastern Kentucky University and Big Sandy Community and Technical College.

Chloe Brantley joined the Kentucky Rural Water Association in January 2023 as the Source Water Specialist. In this role, she provides technical assistance and support to utilities related to source water protection, water supply planning, and resource management. Prior to joining KRWA, Chloe worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) specialist supporting projects throughout the Ohio River Basin. Earlier in her career she served for six years with the Kentucky Division of Water as a supervisor in the Water Supply Section. During that time, she worked on source water and wellhead protection programs, water supply planning, drought monitoring, and water withdrawal permitting. Chloe holds a Master of Science in Ecology and Climate Change from Utah State University and a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and Natural Resources with concentrations in Sustainability and Environmental Studies from Berea College.

Jasper Wyatt joined the Kentucky Rural Water Association staff in March 2022 and works within the GIS and Mapping Program. In this role, he assists utilities across Kentucky with GIS mapping, asset management support, and technical and managerial assistance related to system operations and infrastructure planning. Prior to joining KRWA, Jasper served as System Manager for the Dexter-Almo Heights Water District beginning in 2013, where he oversaw distribution system operations and district management. His previous experience also includes working as a Water Management Coordinator for the Purchase Area Development District, a meter reader for the City of Murray, and a survey technician for Four Rivers Surveying. Jasper's experience working directly within utilities provides valuable insight into the operational and infrastructure needs of water systems. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Murray State University.

Cody Kirby has more than 13 years of experience in water distribution operations and utility management. He holds a Kentucky Class III Water Distribution license and has spent six years serving in water utility management roles. Throughout his career, Cody has worked with several Kentucky water systems including Christian County Water District, the City of Oak Grove, and South Logan Water Association. He is also licensed by the Kentucky Public Service Commission to perform water meter testing. Cody currently serves as the Kentucky Sales Manager for C.I. Thornburg, where he works with utilities across the state to support water system operations and infrastructure needs. His background in both field operations and management provides practical insight into leak detection, distribution system maintenance, and day-to-day challenges faced by water utilities.