

May 2022

Issue 1 | Volume 1

Newsletter for Qualified Persons



Introduction and Purpose

Welcome to the Water Security Agency's (WSA) first issue of the Newsletter for Qualified Persons (QPs). We are extremely excited to launch this newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to ensure essential information about the Agriculture Water Management Program and the Drainage Approval Process is available to all Qualified Persons. It is our intention that we will be publishing these newsletters on a quarterly basis.



Updates and Revisions

We want to keep you up to date with all the revisions and updates we've made, based on the feedback we've received, to the drainage application and drainage related documents.



Upcoming Courses

We are continuing to develop and deliver courses for QPs, and we'd like to let you know what courses we have developed and when they are being offered.



Updates and Revisions

What's New in Saskatchewan's Agriculture Water Management Program and the Drainage Approval Process

In this section of the newsletter, we want to provide QPs with all the important updates that WSA has made to the Agriculture Water Management Program and the Drainage Approval Process. We will also provide highlights about all the revisions that we made to the drainage application and drainage related documents.



I. We've Developed a Webpage for Qualified Persons

Just a reminder that we developed a password protected webpage for active QPs titled "Qualified Person Resources". This webpage is part of the WSA's public website – wsask.ca and can be found at the following link: <https://www.wsask.ca/water-programs/agricultural-water-management-drainage-approvals/qualified-persons/qualified-person-resources/>. If you've forgotten the password, please reach out to Heather Davies (heather.davies@wsask.ca) and she will provide it to you. We will be adding videos to the Qualified Person Resources webpage over the next month that may be helpful in explaining some of the concepts and steps in preparing the application.

Application and Approval For Drainage Works

II. Improvements to the Drainage Application

To better capture the necessary information about each drainage project and to improve the functionality of the application, we've made some additions and revisions to the [Application and Approval for Drainage Works](#) that we would like you to know about.



Some of the important changes that were made to this document are listed below.

1. Added a few more entities that can hold a drainage approval with a 99-year term. So, now Conservation and Development Area Authorities, Watershed Association Boards, Irrigation Districts, Municipalities or Provincial/Federal Government can all apply for a 99-year term.
 - Just a reminder that, for these entities to qualify for a 99-year term-length the project associated with the approval must serve a substantial public interest, for example protection of infrastructure, and the land control must be in the form of an easement.
2. Please note that the approved term length may not be the maximum requested term length. The approved term length is listed at the top of the Approval To Construct and Approval To Operate sections of the Application and Approval for Drainage Works document.
 - Just a reminder that the maximum term length of a Drainage Approval can be up to 45 years depending on the risk of the project. Please see the D2 Operating Procedure for further guidance on how to determine the term length of a Drainage Approval.
3. WSA is moving towards collecting and sending drainage related information to applicants via email. So, on the signature pages we have added text under the email address line of the signature block to indicate that email is the preferred method of communication.
4. Removed the signature pages that contained multiple signature blocks, as we would like QPs to only collect one signature per page. We would like the QP to ensure that each applicant reads and certifies, acknowledges and understands what they are signing when they sign the application. To help QPs with populating the signature blocks with the landowners' name(s), we have created a mail merge option for larger drainage networks with multiple landowners.

Please be sure to download the most recent version of the [Application and Approval for Drainage Works](#), when next completing and submitting a Drainage Application to your WSA Tech for review.



Operating Procedures

III. Upgrades to the D2 Operating Procedures – Preparation of Drainage Applications

Based on questions and feedback from WSA staff and QPs we've made some improvements to the [D2 Operating Procedures](#). This Operating Procedure has been rewritten and a lot of new information has been added. Please be sure to download this document and review it to ensure you are following the most current procedure when preparing a drainage application. We will be adding videos to the Qualified Person Resources webpage over the next month that may be helpful in explaining some of the concepts and steps in preparing the application.

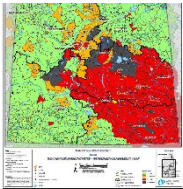
Some of the important changes that were made to this document that we would like to highlight include:

1. Added Section 1.2 –this section provides a bit more information on how WSA staff will help direct clients on how to initiate a drainage project.
2. Added Section 2.1 - This section was added to ensure QPs contact the WSA Tech they are working with to discuss the general extent of the project, QP skills required to complete the project (QP competencies), conduct a high-level review of the project scope, determine the preliminary point of adequate outlet, identify the project risks and discuss the WSA project team.
3. Added Section 2.2 – This section provides QPs with information about which WSA staff, depending on the risks and impacts of the project, may be involved in a drainage project team. It's important that if there are erosion, channel disturbance, aquatic habitat, or species at risk concerns associated with the project that a WSA Aquatic Habitat Protection Specialist and/or Species at Risk Biologist is involved early in the project.
4. Some additional information around conservation groups was added to Section 2.4. Some of the information is to explain to QPs why it's important to work with and answer questions from conservation groups if land owned by that conservation group is involved in the drainage project. Conservation groups often ask a lot of questions to clarify exactly



how the drainage project may impact their lands. The reason they are asking these questions isn't to be difficult, but because they often have complex funding agreements which limit the conservation group's ability to provide land control to these lands.

5. Added Section 2.6 – This section provides information to QPs around landowner bio-security concerns and the need for QPs to ensure proper precautions and disinfection protocols of vehicles and footwear are conducted prior to accessing lands. The primary bio-security concern of landowners in SK is related to the spread of clubroot.
6. Added Section 2.7.4 – This section provides more information to QPs about the differences between channel disturbance and channel clearing and channelization. Hopefully this additional information will help QPs better explain the differences between these activities to their clients. In this section we also mention a new Impact Mitigation Supplemental Report that WSA recently developed in April 2022.
7. Added Section 2.8 – This section helps QPs determine, based on the risk of the project, what an appropriate term length of the drainage approval might be. Please note, the final length of the term length is based on the expert judgement of the WSA Tech involved with the project.
8. Added Section 2.9.2 – This section talks about the Point of Adequate Outlet and mentions the D7 Operating Procedure for Determining the Point of Adequate Outlet.
9. Added Section 2.10 –
 - a. This section reminds QPs that the ISC data in ADAM is not current with the data on the ISC website and on land titles in the province. So, it is important, for QPs to ensure that an email is sent to ADAM.App@wsask.ca requesting that the ISC data be updated for all the lands in the drainage network. This email should be sent by the QP, to the above email address, when the WSA Tech working on the project indicates that the Applicants' signatures can be collected.
 - b. This section also includes a table that helps QPs better understand which landowners/lands should be listed in Section 3.1 of the application versus Section 3.2 of the application.



IV. Changes to the Risk Framework Worksheet

Based on feedback from WSA's Aquatic Habitat Protection Specialists and Species at Risk Biologist we've made some edits to the Mitigation Requirements page (page 3) of the [Risk Framework Worksheet](#). In the last two rows of the Risk Framework Worksheet, we've indicated that if there are:

- presence of rare or endangered species in or adjacent to a drainage project that a species at risk (SAR) review needs to be conducted.
- Wildlife Habitat Protection Act and/or Fish and Wildlife Development Fund lands in or adjacent to the drainage project that the WSA Tech will consult with the Ministry of Environment on the project.

Note: If there are any lands in the project that are identified, when filling in the Risk Framework Worksheet, to be at high risk for erosion, channel disturbance, and/or Species at Risk then the QP must fill in the newly developed Impact Mitigation Supplemental Report for those lands (see below).



V. Developed an Impact Mitigation Supplemental Report

We've developed an [Impact Mitigation Supplemental Report](#) that we would like all QPs to fill in if any lands in the project are identified to be at a high risk for erosion, channel disturbance, and/or Species at Risk. This document was developed in conjunction with WSA's Aquatic Habitat Protection Specialists and Species at Risk Biologist.

This report provides WSA's Aquatic Habitat Protection Specialists and/or WSA's Species at Risk Biologist with the additional information they require to do their assessments. It provides WSA



staff with the info they need to determine how the project may impact the aquatic habitat and/or species at risk and how best to mitigate those impacts. You can find this report on the Qualified Persons Resources Webpage.



VI. Initiated Client Satisfaction Surveys to Collect Feedback from Drainage Applicants

As of April 1, 2022, the Water Security Agency (WSA) started collecting feedback from clients on their level of satisfaction with the drainage approval process. The information that drainage approval applicants provide will be used to improve the drainage approval process and it will help WSA better understand clients' needs so that WSA can meet their expectations in the future. WSA hired Inshtrix, a reputable third-party market research company, to conduct the survey. Clients' responses are completely anonymous. No personal identifiable information is captured unless they voluntarily offer personal or contact information in any of the comment fields. Additionally, their responses are combined with those of many others and summarized in a report to further protect your anonymity.

To collect the applicants' feedback, we have added some information about the Client Satisfaction Survey and a link to the survey in the Link Letter. The Link Letter is the letter that WSA Administrative staff send to all applicants who receive a Drainage Approval.



Upcoming QP Courses

In this section of the newsletter, we want to provide QPs with all the upcoming QP courses and dates that we have developed and are offering.

1) **Introductory QP Training course - Free**

This course offers the introductory concepts that are important to ensure QPs have the appropriate skills and knowledge necessary to assist in the continued growth and resiliency of the agricultural sector. During the Intro QP Training course attendees will learn about Water Security Agency's Agricultural Water Management Strategy, the Role, and functions of a QP, the drainage approval process, the preparation of plans, how to fill in the drainage application, and a bit about climate change and how drainage works need to be designed to be resilient to climate change.

The Introductory QP Training Course is now delivered by an instructor from Southeast College, and it consists of five online sessions which are typically delivered over a two-week period.

If you haven't taken the Introductory QP course since 2020, we encourage you to retake the course, as new information has been added.

Please go to the Introductory Qualified Persons Training Webpage on Southeast College's website to register (<https://www.southeastcollege.org/courses/introductory-qualified-persons-training/>).

The dates that the Intro QP Training course is offered this spring are during the weeks of:

- June 7 – June 16, 2022 (mornings)

Note: We will be offering the

2) **ADAM Mapping Course - Free**

The pre-requisite for this course is the Introductory Qualified Persons Training Course.

During this ADAM course you will learn how to use WSA's ADAM (Agricultural Drainage Application Mapping) software to map wetlands and drainage works.



WSA delivers the ADAM Course in-house, and it consists of two online three-hour sessions.

To register for this course, please email Heather Davies (heather.davies@wsask.ca), with the dates you would like to attend. Please find below the dates that WSA will be offering the ADAM Course over the next couple of months, which include:

- June 21 & 22, 2022 (9am - 12pm)

Note: We won't be delivering the ADAM course during July or August 2022, but we plan to offer it again starting in the fall 2022.

3) Point of Adequate Outlet Course - Free

The pre-requisite for this course is the ADAM Mapping Course.

During this course participants will learn: the key technical concepts required to determine the point of adequate outlet (PAO) of a drainage project; a generalized approach for hydrological assessment of the PAO; step by step instructions and procedures for determining the PAO for a drainage application.

- Each course offering will be delivered over three partial days. So, how it works is that the first and second day will each consist of a 1.5-hour online lecture/educational session through MS Teams (typically between 1:30 and 3pm) and the third day will be an in-person session from 9am – 3pm. The location of the in-person component of the course is yet to be determined.

To register for this course, please email Heather Davies (heather.davies@wsask.ca), with the dates you would like to attend. The dates we are currently proposing to offer the Point of Adequate Outlet Course include:

- **June 7, 8 & 9, 2022** (Note: June 7 & 8 consist of 1.5-hour online sessions and the session on June 9 will be an in-person session between 9am and 3pm near Yorkton, SK);
- **July 5, 6 & 7, 2022** (Note: July 5 & 6 consist of 1.5-hour online sessions and the session on July 7 will be an in-person session between 9am and 3pm near Moose Jaw, SK);
- **September 26, 27 & 28, 2022** (Note: September 26 & 27 consist of 1.5-hour online sessions and the session on September 28 will be an in-person session between 9am and 3pm near Nipawin, SK); and



- **October 4, 5 & 6, 2022** (Note: October 4 & 5 consist of 1.5-hour online sessions and the session on October 6 will be an in-person session between 9am and 3pm near Moose Jaw, SK).

4) **The Art of Influential COMMUNICATION** Course - Free

The pre-requisite for this course is the Introductory Qualified Persons Training Course.

The Art of Influential Communication course is designed to help QPs gain the skills they need to communicate more effectively with agricultural producers. During this course you will learn:

- what drives behaviour to transfer messages and ideas that affect or change how someone thinks, feels, or behaves;
- negotiation skills; and
- skills on managing and resolving conflict.

Note: This course is 100 per cent online and allows you to learn on your own schedule, when it works best for you. It is **estimated** to take approximately 1.5 hours to complete **all three modules**.



5) **AgH2Onward - Free**

This is an [online workshop](#) that will introduce you to innovative agricultural water management solutions that will help strengthen farm and ranch operations.

These workshops are geared to agriculture producers, but they are also good for qualified persons to take. The information in these workshops will help farmers and QPs plan agricultural drainage projects that are resilient to weather extremes, such as floods and droughts, while increasing productivity.



Note: We are taking a break from delivering AgH2Onward over the summer, but we will start delivering it again in the fall. You can send an email to agh2onward@gmail.com and we will let you know when we are next offering the AgH2Onward workshops!



Feedback

We strive to provide you with the information you need to know as a QP to work with agriculture producers to bring their drainage works into compliance. Your feedback is an integral part of the improvement process, which is why we would be grateful if you could fill out this short [survey](#). The survey is expected to take no more than five minutes to answer. We really appreciate you taking the time to share your feedback. Please [click here](#) to get started....



You're receiving this newsletter because you are either an active QP or you have taken the Introductory Qualified Persons Training Course during the past 18 months. If you would like to unsubscribe from:

- this newsletter, [please click here](#); or
- all emails about the Qualified Persons Program, [please click here](#).