



NEWS

The Newsletter of the Association of the Chemical Profession of Alberta

Spring 2002 ISSUE

Announcements

AGM

**Annual General Meeting
June 8, 2002 2:00 pm
Alberta Research Council
Auditorium
Edmonton**

Agenda attached

Elections to the Board of Directors

All positions on the Board were filled by acclamation this year as there were insufficient candidates to elect.

Ethics Corner

A reprint of an article which appeared in the Water and Waste Association's EM magazine is the first to appear in this section.

General information

The ACPA web address is : www.pchem.ca. Newsletters will be archived at this location in PDF format for easy retrieval.

From the President

Another ACPA year is winding down, culminating in our Annual General Meeting on June 8, 2002 at the Alberta Research Council auditorium in

Edmonton. The meeting will commence at 2:00 pm. Following the AGM we will be hosting a Wine and Cheese get-together for those attending the AGM to mingle, network and celebrate the main accomplishment of the current year – passage of the Professional Chemists Regulation.

Since the approval of the Regulation, the Board has been working to complete a number of projects that were on the back burner. It is our intent to have membership certificates and stamps at the AGM for those members who have completed all the requirements under the Regulation for status as "Members" and the right to the title P.Chem. Many of you have not taken the necessary steps to move from the "provisional" or "P" category to the "M" or member category. This is unfortunate because unless you do, you do not have the right under the Professional Chemists Regulation to use the title P.Chem. Additionally you will not be eligible to vote on Association business.

The Board has been in contact with Alberta Environment (AENV) regarding the issue of "professional sign-off" on reclamation and remediation documents. It appears that

AENV is going to require that these documents be signed by a "professional." We striving to make sure that professional chemists are included as professionals in this matter along with the biologists, agrologists and the ever-present engineers. We will keep you posted as to the status of this initiative since it affects many of our members in the consulting and laboratory fields. If in the course of your business you have opportunity to discuss the issue of professionalism with members of AENV, please make sure that you indicate that you think ACPA members should be included in any professional sign-off issues that are applicable to their knowledge and experience.

The Board has sent a representative to several meetings of other technical and professional associations with the intent of approaching the government with the concept of umbrella legislation for the science and technology professions. The associations that have been involved in the discussions include professional biologists, applied science and engineering technologists, landscape architects and interior designers. The proposed legislation would mirror that used by government for the current Health Professions Act

and the Accounting Professions Act. Alberta government policy on professions legislation is leading to the removal of exclusive right to practice and recognizes that there is an overlap in practice among the professions. This model also provides for mandatory registration of professionals. We believe that there is merit in defining the scope of practice for a number of professions and in formally recognizing that there is overlap by professions with different areas of expertise.

As professional chemists we all have concerns that people with appropriate experience in chemistry evaluate and interpret chemical data. Chemistry significantly impacts the decisions that are made with respect to site remediation, environmental monitoring and water quality, as examples. None of these areas are necessarily the exclusive domain of the chemist, biologist, agrologist or engineer. Each professional may have valuable input into the overall decisions that may be made in the examples above. Proper definition of roles and limitations will serve to protect the public by ensuring that certified and regulated professionals are working to make decisions that can have major impacts on public health and environmental protection. We will be talking more about this initiative at the AGM.

Finally, the Board is looking for interested members to serve on committees that are required by the Professional Chemists Regulation. We need several none Board volunteers to serve on the Registration Committee, Discipline Committee and the Practice Review Committee. Our plan is to base committees in either Calgary or Edmonton

in order to facilitate members getting together easily for meetings. If you are interested in serving your Association in this way, please send an e-mail to either president@pchem.ca or secretary@pchem.ca

**Don White
President**

Ethics Corner

This article is a re-print with permission from the January 2002 **EM** magazine published by the **Air & Waste Management Association**. We will be reprinting other articles in the series over the next few months. One of the issues of importance to professionals regardless of our discipline is that of ethics. We hope that this series will help to clarify ethical issues that we may face in our careers through the discussion of practical examples.

DOING THE RIGHT THING

Consider this: the Manufacturing manager at your plant asks you to not report an illegal discharge to a nearby river and says the process responsible will be corrected immediately. "No one could ever prove the gunk came from our plant," the manager says. How do you handle this dilemma? ... *Ethics Corner* is a new, bi-monthly column designed to help you, the environmental professional, deal with such ethical issues that may arise in your daily work.

The primary responsibility of an environmental professional is to protect public health and safety. But environmental professionals also have a responsibility to their employers

or clients, to their families and themselves, and to the environment. Meeting those responsibilities will challenge the environmental professional to draw upon a system of ethical values. Ethics means, "doing the right thing" (as opposed to "what you have the right to do"). But doing the right thing is not always obvious or easy. In fact, ethical decisions are often difficult and may involve a certain amount of self-sacrifice. Doing the right thing for an environmental professional can be especially challenging. Furthermore, the corporate and government world has confused this concept by developing ethics programs that emphasize only what you have the right to do. An organization, for example, may have a list—often called a Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct—of what an employee can and cannot get away with. Employees are required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understood the list. The company calls this "ethics training." *Ethics Corner* will present information about A&WMA's Code of Ethics, a set of ethics values, and case studies, then discuss how these values apply to certain situations. This is what I call ethics training. I hope that these examples will prepare you to respond ethically to real-life situations in your daily work.

Ethical dilemmas may occur infrequently in our work. As a result, we are often unprepared to handle them when they do arise. The ethical aspects may even go unrecognized due to a rusty or faulty value system. In

this column, I seek to identify ethical challenges that environmental professionals might encounter, and analyze possible solutions. Although we might like to believe otherwise, the appropriate reaction to ethical dilemmas is usually not obvious. To reach a measured response, our natural selfish instincts and living experiences must first be overcome. With each installment of *Ethics Corner*, we will work through case studies by examining various options, testing ethical values, and practicing meeting the challenge to “do the right thing.”

As a starting point, I have taken the set of values developed by Michael Josephson in his book, *Making Ethical Decisions*,¹ in which he defines “Six Pillars of Character” and the moral duties and virtues that flow from these primary ethical values. The Six Pillars of Character are

1. Trustworthiness (includes honesty, integrity, sincerity, and loyalty)
2. Respect (includes courteousness, punctuality, and the right of self-determination)
3. Responsibility (includes pursuing excellence, competence, integrity, and self-restraint)
4. Justice & Fairness (includes open-mindedness and willingness to admit error)
5. Caring (includes kindness, generosity, compassion, and avoiding harm to others)
6. Civic Virtue & Citizenship (includes

social action, public service, and opposition to injustice)

These are the core values that I will use to derive “the right thing to do” in the various cases or ethical dilemmas. These six ethical values must be learned; they will be discussed frequently in future columns. For more information, see “Making Ethical Decisions in Environmental Practice,” *EM*, July 1995, pp 18-23, and “Ethics Training for “Doing the Right Thing,” *EM* August 1997, pp 24-25.

Now consider the following ethical dilemma that an environmental professional might encounter...

DILEMMA

You are the environmental manager for a manufacturing plant located on a major river. You receive a call from a local marina manager who suggests that you look into whether or not your plant is the source of some gunk that is floating in the water and staining the boats moored at his docks. You investigate and conclude that the gunk is probably over-spray from your painting area. You confront the painting foreman, who confirms the discharge. Apparently the runoff from the spray-booth water curtain is routed to a wastewater treatment plant. The pump at the treatment plant failed two months ago and was not repaired because the year’s maintenance budget was expended. Untreated water has been discharged since then. The manufacturing manager had warned the painting foreman that he would be fired if he

exceeded his maintenance budget again. You speak to the manufacturing manager, who is outraged, denies everything, and says the pump will be fixed within 48 hours. You know that the cost of the repair would adversely affect that manager’s bonus, and you suspect that was the motive behind her warning. She directs you not to report the incident because “no one could ever prove it was from our plant.” You know that there is a stiff penalty involved if the company is caught. You report your findings to your boss, the plant’s general manager, who asks for a recommendation. How could this happen? Should he fire the foreman or just impose time off without pay? What about the manufacturing manager? Do you and she share in the responsibility for the release? What is the responsibility of the general manager and the corporation?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

This is a case of “where does the buck stop?” Clearly, the incident must be reported as soon as the facts are assembled and with appropriate management and legal oversight. By employing proper self-reporting, punitive measures by the enforcement agency could be mitigated. The values involved here are primarily trustworthiness, respect, and responsibility.

As to the question of how this could happen, it appears to be a failure of management practice. It is common in corporate management to relate compensation to performance.

This practice, while an incentive for good performance, can lead to improper practice, a lack of training, and cover-ups. Firms with good environmental management systems in place will often exempt pollution control and other regulatory-compliance expenses from its bonus incentive program. If this firm had this policy, chances are that this situation would never have occurred.

Should the foreman be given time off without pay or possibly fired? It really depends on how he was instructed in regard to environmental compliance and other factors. If the foreman has a long record of satisfactory performance, is generally considered to be a good person, and really thought his job was being threatened, then a brief period of time off is justified. This would be a wake-up call to him and other plant employees. The manufacturing manager should be subject to harsher punishment if she failed to adequately instruct the foreman and, presumably, the entire shop staff on the importance of environmental compliance. Worse still, the manufacturing manager violated the trust placed in her by corporate management, not only by polluting, but also by trying to cover it up. Depending on her years of satisfactory service and other performance factors, the manager should be demoted to a position where she is no longer in charge. She might be fired.

The general manager and you, the environmental manager, are not without guilt. The general manager is responsible in the eyes of the law and,

depending on how egregious the violation, could find himself guilty of a felony. You failed to install a proper environmental management program, including formal training with ethics workshops to train employees to do the right thing environmentally. Also, the corporation was at fault in not having a formal corporate environmental management system backed-up with a strong environmental policy.

This dilemma will be discussed further in my next column. It is offered to stimulate discussion among you, the readers. In a circumstance like the one portrayed above, there are many issues that must be considered and many values that must be tested before a final decision is made. Your comments on this dilemma are solicited.

REFERENCE

1. Josephson, M. *Making Ethical Decisions*; The Josephson Institute of Ethics; Marina Del Rey, CA, 1993.

About the Author

Hal Taback, P.E., DEE, QEP, is chairman of the Air & Waste Management Association's Ethics Committee and an A&WMA Fellow. He is the president of Hal Taback Co. Environmental Consultants. He has been a speaker at an A&WMA meeting in Edmonton. He can be contacted via e-mail at taback@ix.netcom.com.

Personals

The following list is a list of members who seem to have gone missing. If you are one or know one could you please forward updated information regarding address and e-mail to Trent_Parks@URSCorp.com.

Ms. Catherine A. Rose
Dr. Michael K. Peters
Dr. Read T. Seidner
Mr. James R. Carlile
Mr. Lishi Ying
Mr. Jody Hoshowski
Mr. Paul C. Cheung
Mr. George W. Ruddock
Mr. Laurence E. Wolfe
Mr. Peter L. Fredeen
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Ancheta

From the Editors

All contributions from members to the newsletter will be welcome. Please send them to Robert Swingle at Maxxam Analytics 2021-41 Avenue N. E., Calgary, Alberta T2E 6P2 or fax them to 403-2919468. If you prefer electronic mail address them to the internet at roberts@internode.net. It would be nice if you could send any lengthy material on disk in PC format using Microsoft Word.

2001 ACPA Board of Directors

Name	Position	Affiliation
Don White	President	Technical Manager Safety-Kleen Environmental Services
Mary Mayes	Secretary	Project Chemist Matrix Solutions Inc
Trent Parks	Treasurer	URS Corporation
Kevin Dunn	Past-President	Management Systems Consultant
Jim Hyne	Director	Professor Emeritus, U. of Calgary, Consultant
Frank Bachelor	Director	FWB Chemical Consulting
Stan Backs	Director	SynchroComm Technical Communications
David Wong	Director	Quality Assurance Officer Epcor
Dixon Thompson	Director	Faculty of Environmental U of Calgary
Ken Schmidt	Director	DK3 Scientific
Bob Swingle	Director	Manager, Scientific Services Maxxam Analytics Inc.
Tim Blackmore	Director	Enbridge Pipelines Inc.

ASSOCIATION OF THE CHEMICAL PROFESSION OF ALBERTA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

LOCATION: ALBERTA RESEARCH COUNCIL
250 KARL CLARK ROAD
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

From Calgary Trail/Gateway Blvd turn east on 23rd Ave, turn right on Parsons Road and follow to Karl Clark Road

TIME: 2:00 pm June 8, 2002 (Registration begins at 1:30)

WINE & CHEESE MIXER immediately following the AGM

Association of the Chemical Profession of Alberta

Annual General Meeting

June 8, 2002

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Review of minutes of 2001 AGM
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Registrar's Report
6. Professional Association Task Group Report
7. Discussion of requirements of ACPA by POARA
8. Discussion of Professional Development Credits
9. Proposed Bylaw Revisions
10. Adjournment

Wine & Cheese Mixer immediately after AGM