



The Source

The Newsletter of the Water Quality Association of Wisconsin

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www.wqaw.com

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President's Column

By Don Meredith

Greeting from the WQAW Board Members!

The WQAW board has been very active lately. Our association has been notified of regulatory changes that could have an effect on a number of our members involved in commercial and industrial water treatment businesses and especially our manufacturers. The changes are in their infancy stages at this moment, but are intended to be implemented as of July 1, 2009. There's nothing substantial to report yet. However, please be aware that we (the WQAW board members) are working with the Department of Commerce and will keep you advised as things develop.

The WQAW is continuing to offer the plumbing "Cram Sessions" for this coming year. If you have someone in need of licensing, I recommend they attend the June 17, 2009 class in Madison. Registration forms are found on the WQAW.com site under 'Events'.

The board continues to research other added benefits for our members. Our intent is to make your membership as valuable as possible. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact one of the board members or myself.

The current economic environment has, undoubtedly, effected every one of our businesses. Regardless of the daily news, we all need to continue to purposefully do what we can to support you!

Earnestly,

Don Meredith

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Link to WQAW

Dues paying members are encouraged to create a WQAW link on your website.

Speakers Wanted!

If you or your company would like to be considered to present a one hour seminar at the WQAW Convention on Sept. 12th, please submit the following information to: info@WQAW.com by **April 17, 2009**.

- Name of Speaker.
- Speaker's Title.
- Name of Organization.
- # of Years Speaker has been in position.
- Relevant educational experience.
- Title of presentation.
- Presentation outline listing 4 topics you will discuss in presentation.
- Learning objectives of presentation - List of 3 items attendees will be able to do after presentation.
- Two References.

E-Newsletter

Save a tree and subscribe to an electronic copy of **The Source** newsletter.

E-newsletter will be delivered to your email address and saves the WQAW paper and postage.

★ Current newsletter tally is:
4 = e-copies 68 = tree-copies

★ To receive **The Source** newsletter via email please email to: CherylLytle@charterinternet.com and request your copy!

WQAW Cram Session

The final WQAW Cram Session of 2009 will be Wednesday, June 17, 2009 in Madison, WI.

The “Cram Session” is for anyone registered to take the Restricted Appliance Plumbing exam in Madison, WI. Jim Davis, a retired State of Wisconsin Plumbing Instructor, will be teaching an 8-hour focused session with information designed to specifically prepare you for the exam. Ultimately, we intend to assist you and your employees to increase your chance of a passing grade.

Registration is \$199 (\$299 for non-members) and includes educational materials and lunch. It is requested that attendees bring their code book and a calculator.

A registration form and directions for the Cram Session, along with Restricted Appliance License exam dates and locations can be found at www.WQAW.com under Events.

Please call Cheryl at (608) 244-8460 if you have any questions.

WQAW.com

Check out the www.WQAW.com website. Stay current with the new article section that searches for articles around the state with updated articles printed in local newspapers and website. Check out the Cram Session information and keep posted on the WQAW Convention on the Event page. Please also verify your information is listed correctly locate a dealer or manufacturer pages.

2009 Website Statistics – as of March 9, 2009

	<u>Unique Visitors</u>	<u>#Visits perVisitor</u>	<u>VisitedPages per Visitor</u>	<u>Hits per Visitor</u>
January 2009	195	5.29	9.98	13.58
February 2009	239	4.21	8.48	12.03
March 9, 2009	84	3.64	2.42	2.42

A ‘hit’ is counted every time a visitor clicks on a page, photo or a link.

Comments or suggestions on www.WQAW.com? Please send to: info@WQAW.com.

WQAW Annual Convention

September 11 & 12, 2009 are the dates of this year’s WQAW annual convention at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells.

Mark your calendar, flag the date in your computer and inform your family, that this year’s WQAW Convention is once again at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells on Friday, September 11th and Saturday, September 12, 2009.

WQAW will offer 3 hours of continuing education credits for State of WI plumbing licenses and WQA certification, and WQA certification testing. More information will be announced regarding specific seminars and timeline. Check www.WQAW.com/event for updated information.

Room rates start at \$109 for a standard room with up to four people. Suites are also offered at a discounted rate. Check the Kalahari Resort website (www.KalahariResorts.com) on their updated amenities or call (877) 254-5466 to book your room.

Off To The Races

By Brandon Scholz & Michelle Kussow, The Capitol Group, LLC

The state senate and state assembly flew out of the gates when the legislature officially convened on January 8th, already introducing over 75 proposals in each house.



- Coming out of the gate early was **minimum wage**. SB 1/AB 41 dealt a blow to all small businesses, raising the minimum wage for many classifications of workers. The proposed wage for adults is \$7.60, up \$1.10 from its current level. A recent amendment proposed the wage for minors should increase \$1.35 to \$7.25. Of course, it would be indexed to inflation. This bill passed the Senate on a party line vote and the fate now lies in the hands of the state assembly.
- Hot on the trail was SB 2/AB 40, which changed the rules governing **wage liens**. Under this bill, an employee or collective bargaining agent bringing a wage claim would be awarded a priority lien, taking precedence over even banks and lending institutions. This bill also passed the Senate on a party line vote.
- **Compensatory and punitive damages** are also on the rise. Under SB 20/ AB 31, unlimited compensatory and punitive damages could be awarded for claims of workplace discrimination under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act. Employers would face the Wisconsin State circuit court to determine damages. AB 22 makes a violation of the fair employment rights of job applicants or employees based on the applicant or employee's arrest or conviction record a Class I felony. None of these bills have passed out of committee.
- The "**Wisconsin Stimulus Package**" was so fast that it didn't even need a public hearing before it was passed by both houses and signed by the Governor on February 19. SB 62 changes many tax provisions, but the most relevant in our case is the streamlined sales and use tax, which adopts common definitions for various products and services, instead of the exemptions we have been using. This is expected to bring in a \$70.7 million increase to the state coffers.

Governor Doyle entered his horse into the race, introducing his budget with AB 75 on February 17. It contains numerous tax, business liability, environmental, and employment changes, including:

- If passed, AB 75 will make it easier for a plaintiff to recover all damages in a tort case. Under current law, the defendant had to be at least 51% liable for injuries, but this bill would lower that to only 1%.
- A significant amount of money would go towards the retraining of unemployed workers. AB 75 would redirect \$1.45 million from the Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund to fund reemployment services. WUITF is currently insolvent and borrowing from the Federal Government. Doyle is also asking for \$2.6 million in employment training for Wisconsin Labor Unions.
- The budget proposes to raise recycling tipping fees from the current \$4 per ton of solid waste, other than certain kinds of high-volume industrial waste, to \$5 per ton.

While none of the proposals listed above directly affect the water conditioning industry, the civil liability issues could cost dealers and manufacturers millions of dollars through lawsuits. In addition, the labor and tax issues have an effect on dealers as small business owners. The Capitol Group, LLC will continue to monitor the Legislature and watch for legislation that specifically or indirectly affects the Water Quality Association of Wisconsin. If anyone has any questions on the issue or how to contact your legislators on these issues, please call Brandon Scholz or Michelle Kussow at 608.244.8460.

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