



Fact Sheet

The Drinking Water Academy



WHAT IS THE DRINKING WATER ACADEMY?

The Drinking Water Academy (DWA) is a long-term training initiative established by the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW) to expand EPA's capability to support states and other organizations as they implement the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments of 1996. The goal of the DWA is to assist EPA, states and tribes to build program capability to successfully carry out the SDWA requirements. This, in turn, will promote increased program compliance and greater public health protection.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

EPA created the DWA in response to the far reaching changes brought forth by the 1996 SDWA Amendments. The Amendments created new programmatic challenges for states and water systems and also provided new funding opportunities to meet these growing needs. EPA has promulgated and will continue to promulgate and implement new regulations. States, in addition to maintaining their current drinking water programs, are required to adopt and implement these new regulations and other requirements. For example, States must adopt new microbial and disinfection by-products standards, increase source water protection efforts, develop new funding programs to provide low-cost loans for the construction of important drinking water infrastructure needs, and states must encourage greater public awareness and involvement in how their drinking water programs are developed and implemented.

NEED FOR TRAINING?

The new requirements and approaches to regulating drinking water systems have increased the need for training EPA, state, and tribal personnel, particularly those personnel new to SDWA programs. The Academy will focus on helping EPA and states to maintain a high level of expertise in their drinking water programs, which otherwise could be diminished through personnel changes and lack of sustained training. The DWA will help strengthen the knowledge of all staff about statutes, regulations, and other important SDWA requirements.

WHAT TYPES OF TRAINING NEEDS WILL BE ADDRESSED?

The DWA curricula are being developed by a workgroup composed of state and EPA personnel, to meet the training needs of SDWA EPA and state program staff responsible for Public Water System Supervision, Underground Injection Control, Ground Water, and Source Water Protection programs. Training will take place through a combination of classroom style, workshops, web-site based, and on-site inspections where appropriate. Field work, where applicable, may include inspections of public water systems and UIC wells. Trainers will have extensive experience with SDWA programs.

HOW CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION?

For general information on the SDWA, call the Safe Drinking Water Act hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or (202) 260-7908. For information on the Drinking Water Academy, please visit the DWA website at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa.html> or contact James Bourne at (202) 564-4095 or bourne.james@epa.gov.