



Training: Inspector Needs and Resources for NPDES Inspectors

Association of Clean Water Administrators
2023 Mid-Year Meeting
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ACWA Inspector Needs Survey

Nationally, EPA and State inspectors have expressed an increased need for CWA NPDES training due to a lack of recent in-person training, high employee turnover, and a loss of organizational expertise over time.

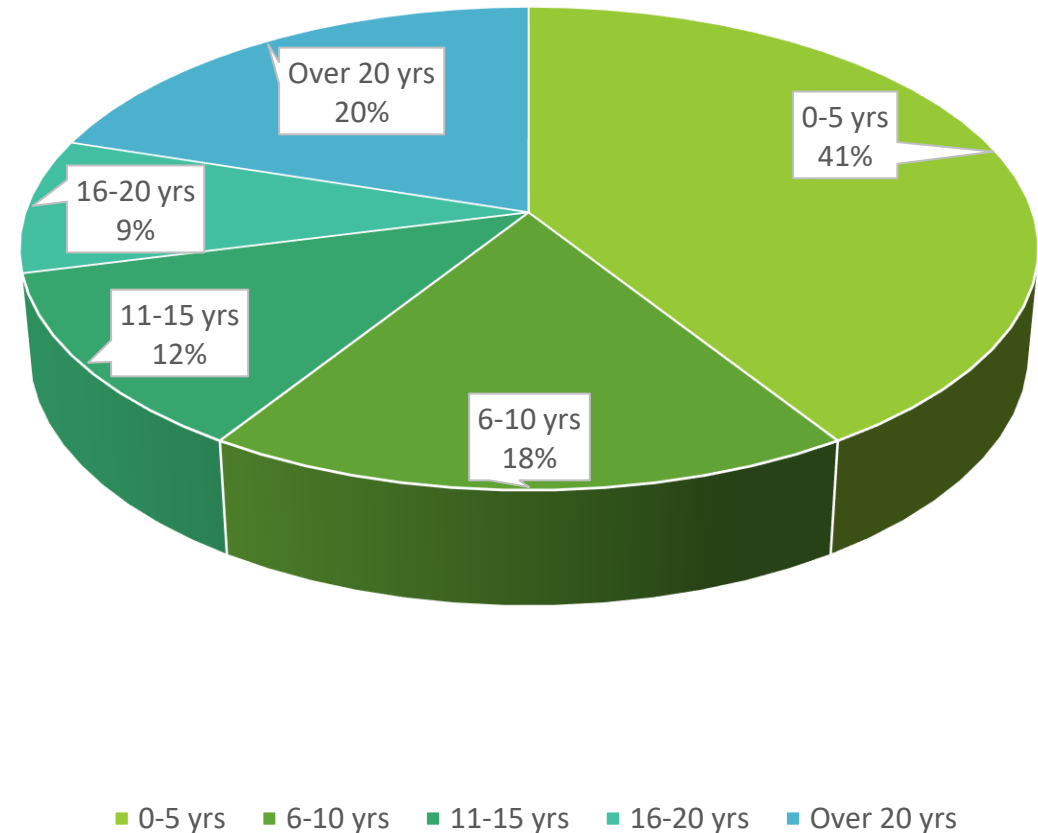
In March 2022, ACWA sent a survey to state NPDES inspectors to capture their ideas for the types of inspector trainings/resources needed and the best mechanisms for delivery.

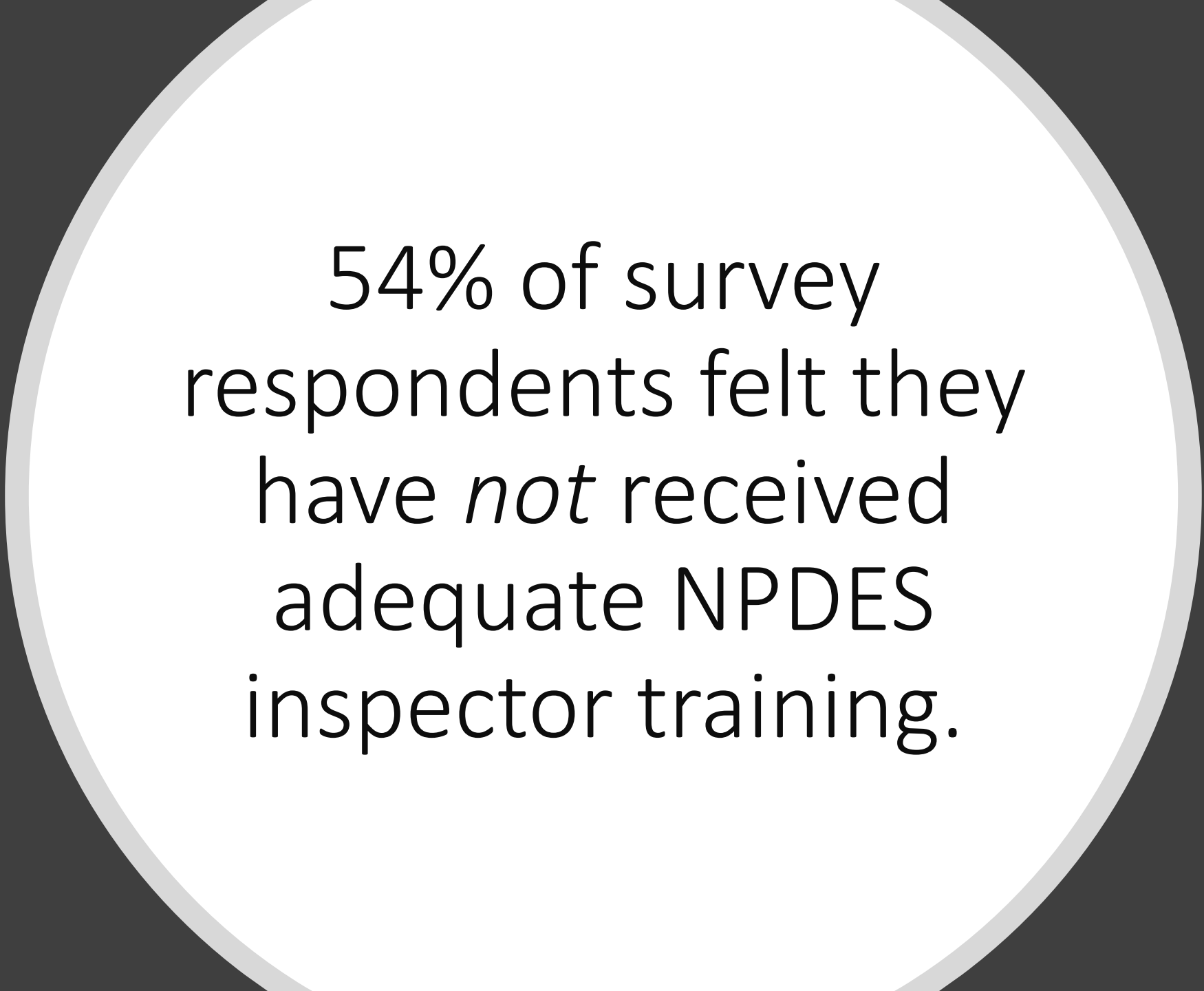
ACWA shared this state inspector survey data with EPA's Office of Compliance. We are actively working to integrate these results into an overarching CWA NPDES Training Development Plan.

Inspector Needs Survey Results

- 290 responses received
 - At least one response each from 43 states
 - Mostly inspectors (vs. supervisors)
 - Largest experience level represented was 0-5 years

Experience Level by Percentage of Respondents





54% of survey
respondents felt they
have *not* received
adequate NPDES
inspector training.

Inspector Needs Survey Results

- Preferred type of training/resources:
 1. Live, in-person field-based training
 2. Updated guidance manuals
 3. Live webinars with inspection video component
 4. Checklists
 5. Live, in-person classroom training

Inspector Needs Survey Results

- Preferred training on inspection processes:
 1. On-site documentation
 2. Inspection
 3. Pre-inspection checklists
 4. Interview skills
 5. Smart Tools
- Preferred NPDES program areas to receive training:
 1. Municipal Wastewater
 2. Industrial Wastewater
 3. Industrial Stormwater
 4. Municipal Stormwater
 5. Construction Stormwater




Current EPA Training Resources

- [Inspector Wiki](#)
- [FedTalent](#)
- Resources and Training
- [Technical Assistance Webinars](#)



The **Inspector Wiki**
is your *'first-stop'*
comprehensive resource
where EPA, state, local
and tribal inspectors can
access information about
inspections, training
materials on a variety of
subjects, SmartTools,
compliance assistance,
and more.

- <https://inspector.epa.gov>
 - Wiki Access – requires a Login.gov account
 - Content includes:
 - EPA 3500.1 Media-specific Inspector Training Curricula
 - Links to FedTalent Inspection Skills Refresher Training
 - Compliance Presentation Library
 - Registration links for new webinar content
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Inspector Wiki - FedTalent

ACCESS **FEDTALENT**, EPA'S LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, TO TAKE INSPECTOR TRAINING



Non-EPA Inspectors Must request a FedTalent account to access inspector training.

[Click Here](#) for more information.

[Click Here](#) to access FedTalent & for FedTalent resources

Resources:

NPDES Compliance Inspection Manual (2017)

- Chapter 1 – Introduction - Inspection Types, Responsibility for EPA Inspectors, Legal Authority
- Chapter 2 – Inspection Procedures
- Chapter 3 – Document/Record Keeping and Reporting
- Chapter 4 -- Facility Site Review of WWTPs
- Chapter 5 – Sampling
- Chapter 6 – Flow Measurement
- Chapter 7 – Laboratory Procedure and Quality Assurance
- Chapter 8 – Toxicity
- Chapter 9 – Pretreatment
- Chapter 10 – Sewage Sludge (Biosolids)
- Chapter 11 – Stormwater
- Chapter 12 – Combined Sewer Overflows
- Chapter 13 – Sanitary Sewer Overflows
- Chapter 14 – Inspecting Green Infrastructure Controls
- Chapter 15 – CAFO Program Inspections
- Chapter 16 – Vessel General Permit
- Chapter 17 -- Pollution Prevention
- Chapter 18 – Multimedia Concerns
- Chapter 19 – Appearing as a Witness
- Appendices






Training: CWA NPDES National Technical Inspector Workshop

- The 2022/23 Workshop was held in December 2022 in CO.
- This Workshop, geared toward EPA and State NPDES Inspectors, has been held almost annually for the past 16 years.
- In-person attendance consisted of 105 people.
 - 77 EPA attendees from all 10 EPA Regions and HQ
 - 22 State inspectors from four different Region 8 states
- This training also offered a remote option with approximately 250 people attending via ZoomGov.

CWA NPDES National Technical Inspector Workshop

- Field exercises - site visit options:
 - municipal wastewater treatment plant
 - a direct industrial discharger
 - an industrial user location, *or*
 - construction and industrial stormwater sites.
- Primary objectives of the Workshop:
 - train NPDES inspectors
 - facilitate knowledge transfer between new and experienced inspectors
 - Most Workshop attendees agree that the most beneficial part of the Workshop is the *ability to collaborate, network, and exchange information with other regions and states.*



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Technical Assistance Webinar Series

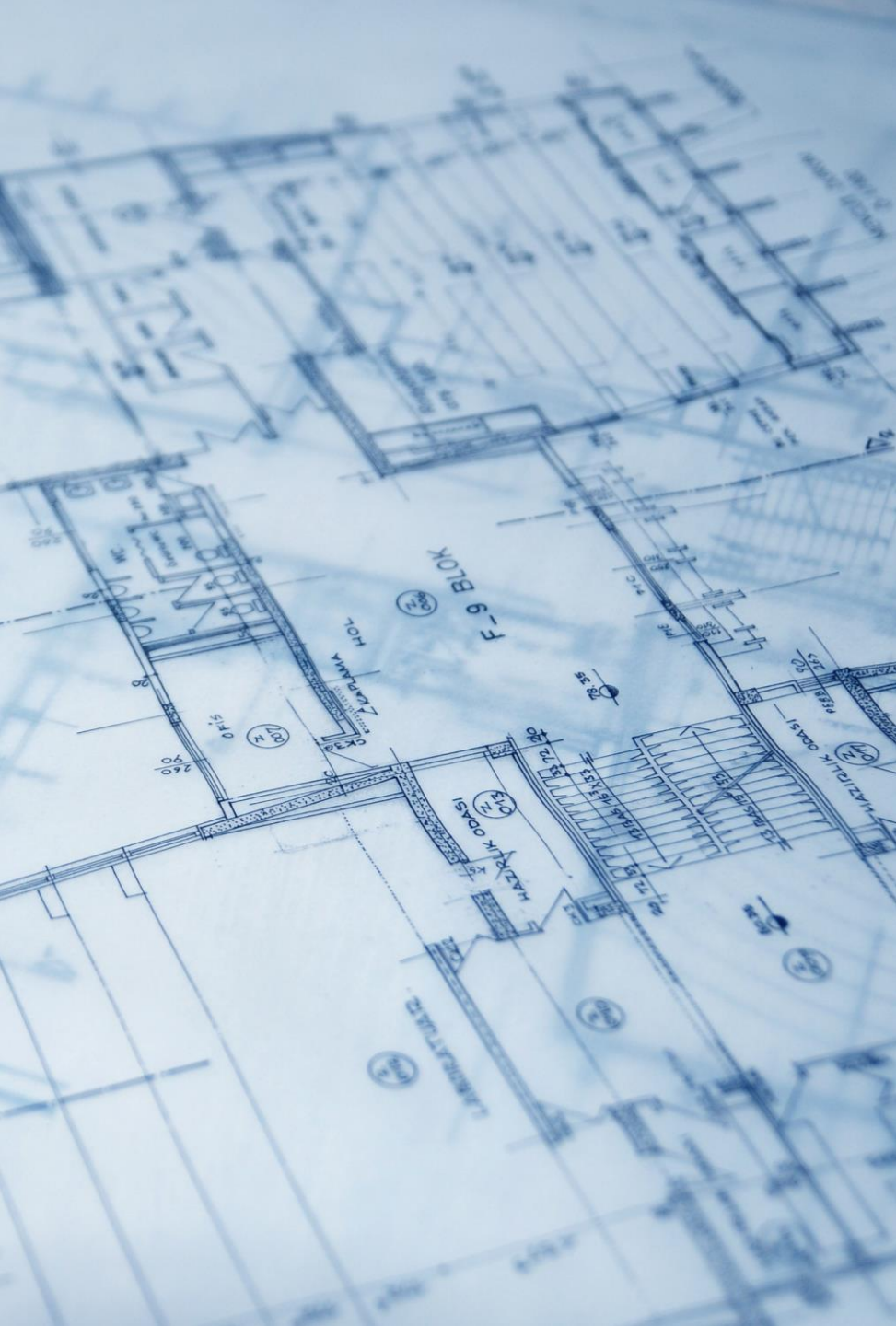
- Monthly series focused on improving compliance at Small Wastewater Treatment Systems
- Geared toward owners and operators of smaller systems (flow of less than 1 million gallons per day).
- Supports the CWA NPDES Significant Noncompliance National Enforcement and Compliance Initiative (SNC NECI).
- Over 10,000 people have participated since 2019
- Others who would find the webinar series beneficial include:
 - any WWTP owner/operator,
 - design engineers,
 - municipal leaders,
 - NPDES technical assistance providers,
 - permit writers,
 - ***compliance and inspection staff from state, local, tribal, and federal governments.***
- Additional information can be found at:
<https://www.epa.gov/compliance/technical-assistance-webinar-series-improving-cwa-npdes-permit-compliance>



Under Construction

Short-term

- *NEW* - bimonthly NPDES Inspector Training webinar series for both EPA and State inspectors
 - Starts March 30, 2023
 - Title: *The Onsite Inspection: From Entry to Opening Conference*
 - Presenter: David Esparza, US EPA Region 6
 - Registration now open on the Inspector Wiki!
 - With registration, we'll add participants to our subscription list
- Continue annual in-person CWA NPDES National Technical Inspector Workshop with hybrid option to broaden outreach



Under Construction

Long-term

- Create a new CWA training development plan
 - Modernize current NPDES training
 - Create new training with interactive eLearning modules
 - Develop on-site video demonstrations
- Create a centralized training clearinghouse to more easily find relevant NPDES-specific training



Feedback

- What training topics are of particular interest to you?
 - How can EPA CWA NPDES training be improved?
 - How can we leverage resources to provide more in-person training?
 - Do you have subject matter experts who can help us with our new training development?
 - Presenting
 - Content creation
 - Videos/voiceovers
- We appreciate your feedback!

Wrap Up

- We are aware of the need for additional State and EPA CWA NPDES training
- We are actively pursuing ways to provide inspectors training
- Feel free to reach out to us with your training needs and ideas

Reach out to us!

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Thank You!