

## **First CIDWT Installer Training Program Train-the-Trainer Academy Conducted in St. Louis, MO August 9-12, 2009**

The first Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment (CIDWT) Train-the-Trainer Academy introducing the new installer training materials was conducted on August 9-12, 2009. Missouri SmallFlows Organization (MSO) served as the local host for the training event and worked with the St. Louis Plumbing Industry Council to secure the classroom. This installer train-the-trainer event was conducted following the completion of the Installer Training Program project.

The Installer Training Program project focused on development of a training manual and associated training materials. The manual *Installation of Wastewater Treatment Systems* is a comprehensive document describing the installation of various technological components which comprise decentralized wastewater treatment systems. The installation and startup checklists for these components are the heart of the training manual and guide the classroom instruction. The startup checklists provide critical information that serves as the starting point for system operation and maintenance. This is essential to the continued use of onsite wastewater treatment systems as a sustainable part of our wastewater infrastructure. The associated training materials included slide presentations and assessment tools. The training materials bring the science into installing systems by focusing on the why and how to perform tasks rather than using a prescriptive number. Understanding why installation tasks are critical will promote installation of reliable long-term systems. The Installer Training Project was funded as part of the National Decentralized Water Resources Capacity Development Project from the US Environmental Protection Agency and was administered through the Water Environment Research Foundation.

Eighteen people representing twelve training entities in eleven states attended the Academy. The attendees currently help deliver training courses offered in Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Virginia. The instructors and writing team are affiliated with training programs in Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Texas. Therefore, qualified instructors will now work with training entities located in eighteen states to deliver the installer training materials.

The Train-the-Trainer Academy consisted of a two-day installer training course and an additional training day focused on how to use the materials to deliver an effective training program. The installer training course was an intensive two-day overview of the training presentations. Because of the volume of material developed through the writing project, the training course was extremely fast paced.

The training materials can serve as a reference for taking installer certification and credentialing exams. The course participants had the opportunity to take the examination for the Certified Installer of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (CIOWTS) credential being offered the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) following completion of the two day training.

The qualified instructors will use these materials to develop training courses for certification and/or continuing education units for delivery through their training programs. The training

materials provide a starting point for development of multiple training courses for installers and other audiences. Participants indicated they would begin to conduct their first training classes in October and November 2009.

Instructors for the event included John Buchanan, University of Tennessee, Nancy Deal, North Carolina State University, Bruce Lesikar, Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Randy Miles, University of Missouri. Additional writing team members not present at the training event include Sara Christopherson, University of Minnesota, Kitt Farrell-Poe, University of Arizona, David Gustafson, University of Minnesota, David Kalen, University of Rhode Island, David Lindbo, North Carolina State University, George Loomis, University of Rhode Island, and Rebecca Melton, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

The installer training manual will be available through the Midwest Plan Service located in Ames Iowa. Midwest Plan Service can be reached by e-mail using [mwps@iastate.edu](mailto:mwps@iastate.edu) or telephone at 800-562-3618. The expected availability date for the manual is October 2009.

The writing team thanks the decentralized wastewater treatment industry for their input during development of these training materials. Because of the willingness of this wide array of industry members to share their knowledge, skills and business practices, these materials will serve as a comprehensive resource for installation practitioners for a long time into the future.

To access the checklists in an electronic format or gain information about future CIDWT Train-the-Trainer events covering the Installer, O&M service provider or Analyzing Wastewater Treatment Systems training curriculums please visit the CIDWT web site: [www.onsiteconsortium.org](http://www.onsiteconsortium.org).