



January 5, 2021

Wastewater Workers of Connecticut
Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution Plan

CT Water Environment Association (CTWEA) formally CWPAA is a statewide organization that represents paid professionals that manage, operate and maintain municipal wastewater collection and treatment facilities. The CT Association of Water Pollution Control Authorities (CAWPCA) is also a statewide organization representing the interests of the municipal positions that are appointed to serve on local and regional Water Pollution Control Authorities (“WPCAs”), with the charge to oversee and manage the operation of the wastewater facilities in their respective municipalities. Collectively, these organizations represent the backbone of Wastewater Operators and Professionals within Connecticut.

Today we are here to ensure that the Wastewater Operators are not forgotten within the priority matrix of the COVID-19 Vaccine distribution. Current CDC guidelines show distribution of the vaccine to wastewater operators within (Phase 1C) behind (or at the same time as) both food service and transportation workers (see attached.) This is a CDC publication **not** a State of CT Health Dept recommendation, so we understand that Connecticut has not reached the point of deciding the priority of Phase 1b or 1c.

We would like to highlight to the Governor and his representative subcommittee, that the wastewater workforce is critical and has very little redundancy related to the number of qualified workers required to staff equipment and facilities. Vaccinating frontline wastewater utility staff members is important because the wastewater sector underpins all aspects of society, including hospitals and long-term care facilities. Utility operators, who have specialized skills and licenses, are not only difficult to replace if they become ill but are essential to keeping facilities operating. Furthermore, staff can be exposed when making emergency field calls to protect the health of residents.

We have weathered COVID-19 thus far utilizing split shifts and sacrificing routine maintenance and non-critical work. Timely vaccinations of the wastewater workforce would provide a safety net to insure the health and wellbeing of all CT residents. In closing, we would very much like your assistance in **asking that the water/wastewater utility essential staff be prioritized within Connecticut’s Phase 1b plans.**

Sincerely,

Ray Weaver
CTWEA President

Town of Manchester

Thomas V. Sgroi, PE
CAWPCA President

Director of Engineering
Greater New Haven WPCA

The Connecticut Water Environment Association (CTWEA) is the local affiliate of the New England Environmental Association (NEWEA) and the Water Environmental Federation (WEF). The CWPAA represents Connecticut’s 80+ Water Pollution Control Facilities and a network of over 500 certified operators serving more than 2,000,000 Connecticut residents.

The Connecticut Association of Water Pollution Control Authorities (CAWPCA) is a group of members dedicated to improving, enhancing knowledge and understanding the interests of publicly owned/operated WPCA’s or wastewater management entities within the State of Connecticut. The CAWPCA represents its members as well as the 150+ Connecticut WPCAs serving more than 3,000,000 sewered and non-sewered residents.