

What's New With The NYRWA 30th Annual Technical Conference

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As I write this article the snow is falling, wind is howling, and its just miserable outside. I find myself comforted by the thought that warmer days, and the NYRWA 30th Annual Technical Conference are just around the corner. Thirty years and going strong, so the board and staff here at NYRWA wanted to change things up a bit, making for a more enjoyable experience for all who attend.

Following the '08 Tech Conference, we spent a great deal of time reviewing assessments, talking with members, and researching changes, many of our deeply valued Associate Members. Some very interesting possibilities were discussed, some of which we have incorporated, and some we need to research further. The time and effort is necessary to ensure that we deliver the best overall product to you, our members, who make all our efforts possible.

While change is necessary and hopefully good, some things are meant to remain the same. In light of that, the golf tournament will remain, and continue to be the “kickoff” event of the conference. The golf tournament is always a good time, and allows many of our attendees to share some time together as they annually meet for this event.

The first notable change will come following the golf tournament, with the opening 2 hour training session. For our 30th year, we have decided to hold a dual certification session, with all attendees participating in the same session. Paul Chatfield from Chatfield Engineers will be discussing how to provide value added services to your customers. We hope this will allow everyone to interact, and also start the training portion of the conference off on a high note.

Tuesday and Wednesday mornings will also start the same way. On Tuesday, the opening morning session will be conducted by Mark Koester from Koester Associates, while the opening Wednesday session will be a discussion lead by Bob Moody from EJ Prescott. We hope each of you enjoy these daily “kickoff sessions”, allowing all attendees to spend more time together and hopefully start some new friendships.

In an attempt to better meet the needs of our members, we are also going to conduct a Grade A Compliant Lab Class for at least one day. If the need exists, we will add another day to accommodate as many

operators as possible.

One of the biggest changes, which we hope will be well received by all attendees, involves dinner for Monday and Tuesday night. For those nights, everyone will be given a purchased voucher (or coupon) to be used downtown for dinner. The coupon will be good for \$35/ person, and should allow vendors, and operators alike, a chance to enjoy some of the wonderful restaurants in the area, and also more one-on-one time between vendors and operators. As always, Wednesday night will be the Annual Awards Banquet, so dinner will be held at the hotel in conjunction with the ceremony.

In the Exhibit Hall, we plan to conduct 1/2 hour “new product demos”, where vendors can spotlight new products on the market, and provide you, the operators, with the knowledge you need to continue to deliver such a valuable service to your customers.

Although the details are not finalized, Carnival Night will be changed. Instead of the usual event held in the Exhibit Hall, we are working on either some form of social gathering in a local establishment, or possibly a bowling tournament. We will keep you updated on the events as the plans are finalized.

As always, the NYSDOH and DEC will be making valuable presentations intended to keep all operators current. We have staggered their sessions in an effort to allow our dual certified operators the opportunity to attend both sessions. We hope you appreciate the change, and thank both agencies for their continued support.

As you can see, we have been working hard to freshen things up while still providing the best value for your training needs. We sincerely hope you enjoy the changes, and look forward to your input following the conference.

So mark your calendars for the NYRWA 30th Annual Technical Conference, May 11-14, 2009, at the Saratoga Hilton in Saratoga. We look forward to seeing you all there, and having another successful conference. *“Meeting the Needs of Rural Communities for 30 years.”* ♣