

# **Committee Guidance Manual**

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**A Guide for Managing the Committees**

**of the**

**Wisconsin Section**

**Central States Water Environment Association**



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## **1. Introduction**

Committees are the fundamental working unit of the Wisconsin Section. The committees are the primary place where the “value added” work of the Section takes place and they provide Wisconsin Section members a means of contributing to the industry and profession while offering opportunities to associate and network with fellow professionals. For the overall health and vitality of the Section it is essential that the committee process works well.

This document presents guidelines for the effective functioning of the committees of the Wisconsin Section. It focuses on the activities needed to lead and manage the committee process. It does not deal with the substantive work of the committees, the specific charges such as organizing a seminar, submitting awards nominees, and so on. The substantive work for each committee is defined by that committee's charges as contained in the Section's Policy and Procedures Manual and in the committee's annual plan.

## **2. Definitions and Key Information**

PPM – Wisconsin Section Policy and Procedures Manual

Board – Wisconsin Section Board of Control

Executive Committee – Executive Committee of the Central States Water Environment Association (CSWEA)

SAAT – Section Annual Activity Timeline

Administrative Year – The Association and Section administrative year runs from the Annual Business Meeting of the Association in May to the succeeding Annual Business Meeting of the Association so that the administrative year begins in May.

Terms of Office - All Association and Section terms of office begin and end with the administrative year in May. The Section elects its officers at the Wisconsin Section Annual Business Meeting in November for the term of office beginning at the Annual Business Meeting of the Association in the following May.

Fiscal Year - The Section fiscal year runs January 1 through December 31 to match the fiscal year of the Association.

### **3. General Objectives of All Wisconsin Section Committees**

The Wisconsin Section Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM) §13.2 gives the following basic objectives for all committees :

- a. To provide a firm foundation for a strong and growing Association and Section.
- b. To meet local (state) needs through effective committee activities.
- c. To provide direct communications among committees and the Board.
- d. To coordinate activities of similar committees across the three states, without stifling individual Section creativity.
- e. To provide a forum for the Professional Wastewater Operators (PWO).
- f. To promote membership through coordinated, effective, and productive committee work at the Section level, where constraints of geography and time are minimized.
- g. To delegate to the Section certain authority to carry out programs and member services, while maintaining communications and necessary coordination and control at the Association level.
- h. To involve as many members as possible in committee work and Section offices.
- i. To allow flexibility so that Section can develop individually.
- j. To promote mutually beneficial relationships with state operator association groups (Via a Liaison position on Section Board).

### **4. General Responsibilities and Guidelines For All Committees**

The Wisconsin Section Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM) §13.08 gives the following basic objectives for all committees:

- A. Report to the Board.
- B. Transfer knowledge of products, processes, and techniques that may benefit Association members.
- C. Provide the WISILLMIN editor with articles on important matters accomplished by the committee.
- D. Coordinate and exchange information with the corresponding Committee Chairs from the other Sections.
- E. Implement WEF /CSWEA policies that fall within the purview of the committee.
- F. Maintain communication with the WEF/CSWEA committees on related activities.
- G. Keep the Trustee and Board liaison informed of important actions of the committee and pass on to the committee information provided by the Trustee and Board liaison.

- H. Promote membership in the Section among those individuals interested in the environment.
- I. Adopt a list of specific goals for achievement every year with the advice and consent of the Board.
- J. Perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board.

## **5. Responsibilities of the Board of Control**

A key role of the Board is to provide support for the committees. The general responsibilities of the Board in this regard are to:

- 1. Provide direction and support for committees as necessary
- 2. Provide feedback on committee plans and directions
- 3. Educate and train committee chairs and members on the committee process
- 4. Run the overall committee process (planning, budgeting, monitoring, guiding)

Specific duties of the Board of Control involving the committee process include:

- 1. Provide individual Board members to perform the liaison role to specific committees.
- 2. Review status of and compliance with the SAAT at each Board Meeting.
- 3. Include during each Board Meeting an agenda item to review committee needs and manage the committee process.
- 4. Provide training to the committee chairs on the committee process.
- 5. Maintain roster of the Section committees and appointments (Secretary-Treasurer, PPM §12.0.B)
- 6. Take the lead in securing nominations for committee membership and appointees as Section representatives for the following administrative year. (Vice Chair, PPM §12.0.E)
- 7. Submit a list of all State Section Officers and Committee chairs to the Association President by March 31 of each year. (Chair, §PPM 12.0.A)

The specific duties of the assigned Board liaison include:

- 1. Contact each committee chair at least four times per year to review committee activities and provide support. These contacts should occur in the time periods before each quarterly report is due and should be personal, that is, in person or by telephone conversation; emails, faxes, voice messages, and similar indirect contacts can be used to supplement but not replace the direct personal contacts.
- 2. Review and provide feedback on the assigned committee's annual plan each November.
- 3. Review the assigned committee's other reports (winter report, May annual report, and summer report) and provide feedback to the committee chair.

4. Assist with training and guidance of committee chairs.
5. Assist the committee chair with nominating a vice-chair and maintaining adequate and balanced committee membership.

The liaison assignments are as follows:

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Assigned Committee</b>
Chair	Students and Young Professionals
Trustee	Watershed Management and Government Affairs
Past Chair	Membership <sup>1</sup> and Public Education & Awareness
Vice-Chair	Collection Systems and Industrial Wastes
WWOA Liaison	Operations and Safety

<sup>1</sup>The Past Chair is also a member of the Membership Committee for at least one year.

## **6. Responsibilities of Committee Chairs**

A committee chair has four key responsibilities:

1. Provides leadership and organization for the committee.
2. Involve others in the work of the committee.
3. Organize and run committee meetings, see that minutes and other committee records are kept,
4. Serve as the primary contact with the Wisconsin Section Board including providing regular written reports.

Specific duties of a committee chair include:

1. Prepare the annual committee plan and budget.
2. Prepare the agenda for committee meetings.
3. Prepare meeting reports (minutes) noting attendance at meetings and summarizing actions taken.
4. Provide written reports of committee activities to the Board. (See PPM §13.07)
5. Maintain records of the committee's activities to pass on to his/her successor.
6. Serve as the contact between the committee and the Board, the assigned Board liaison, and Executive Committee of CSWEA.
7. Designate a vice-chair, who will become committee chair after the chair has completed a two- to three-year term. Notify the Board of the new chair for the following administrative year (begins in May) by the November Business Meeting of the Section.
8. See that the committee nominates members for the next administrative year (begins in May) for approval by the Board at the Section Winter Board meeting.
9. Maintain a list of individuals interested in serving on the committee (PPM §13.02)

A committee chair should typically serve in that for capacity for two or three years. To provide continuity for the committee and guidance to the new committee chair, it is recommended that the past chair remain a member of the committee for at least one year after his/her term expires.

Specific charges for each committee are described in PPM §14.01 through 14.13. All committee chairs should be familiar with the specific charges for their committee and with the contents of this manual.

## **8. Committee Meeting Frequency**

Committees should meet at least twice a year with three to four meetings a year being desirable.

## **7. Committee Size**

Each committee should have a minimum of three members. A target size of three to six members is suggested, but may be larger as determined by the Committee Chair.

Each committee member shall generally serve a minimum of two years.

## **9. Tools for Supporting the Committee Process**

The following tools help to support the committee process:

Section Annual Activities Timeline – Provides an overview of Section and committee activities on an annual basis. *(Provide SAAT as an attachment or provide a web link to it)*

Annual committee action plans – Provide committees a way to organize, prioritize, and communicate the activities of a committee within a committee, to the Section Board, and to other members of the Section and Association. *(Provide annual planning template as an attachment and a sample annual plan or provide a web link to them)*

Quarterly committee report templates – Provide content guidelines and a common format for committee reports. *(Provide templates as an attachment or provide a web link)*

## **10. Additional Resources**

1. The Wisconsin Section Policy and Procedures Manual weblink:  
[www.cswea.org/wisconsin/governance/](http://www.cswea.org/wisconsin/governance/)
2. Strategic Plan for the Wisconsin Section weblink:  
[www.cswea.org/wisconsin/strategicplanning/](http://www.cswea.org/wisconsin/strategicplanning/)
3. Central States Water Environment Association Constitution and Bylaws weblink:  
[www.cswea.org/governance](http://www.cswea.org/governance)