

# AWPCA TO PROVIDE OPERATOR CERTIFICATION EXAMS

## ADEQ Awards Contract

*By Charlotte Waddle,  
Operator Certification Committee Member*

**D**URING AWPCA'S STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT LAST SUMMER, the Association's leadership identified six focus areas; leadership, communication, membership, recruitment, improved awareness, and participation. Under "improved awareness" one objective was to identify member training needs and work with partnering organizations such as ADEQ.

During the past few years, certification testing has been a goal of AWPCA—ever since ADEQ began outsourcing exam services to approved vendors. When outsourced testing was first offered, our Board agreed to take a "wait and see" approach before approaching ADEQ to become an evaluator. After polling our members' needs, the Board approved the Operator Certification Committee's request to submit a proposal when the program was offered again.

Several Committee members learned in mid-May that a Request for Proposal would be issued soon. So, they worked hard to submit a proposal for operator certification exam services. Jim Littrell, Committee Chair,

organized the members through phone meetings, e-mails, and late-night revisions. **On**

**August 10, 2004 AWPCA learned that it had been awarded the ADEQ Operator Certification Program Examination Services contract.**



What does this mean to AWPCA members and non-members? The main purpose for our RFP response was to provide regularly-scheduled low-cost exams throughout rural Arizona, plus testing during the Tri-State Seminar and our Annual Conference. In addition, your agency may request special test dates.

Certification training was also an option in the RFP. The Committee chose not to include training in our proposal because we believe training should be tied to your specific learning goals. We plan to submit a training plan to ADEQ for approval once we learn your community training needs. To promote this principle, the committee developed a Training Needs Assessment Form (see page 5). We urge you to complete this form

soon, so AWPCA's educational committees can provide the training you need. Until then, other approved vendors are available to provide certification training.

Exam schedules, exam applications, certification regulations, renewal information, and study guides can be accessed through our website at [www.awpca.org/operator/certification.aspx](http://www.awpca.org/operator/certification.aspx). Contact information is also available on the web page and we will provide updated information in future newsletter issues.

The Certification Committee, chaired by Jim Littrell who works for Brown & Caldwell, includes Matt Taylor (Burns & McDonnell), Ted Bailey (Tucson Water), Charlotte Waddle (City of Phoenix and past AWPCA Board President), and Charolotte Jones (City of Mesa and current AWPCA Board Member). Patricia Nelson, our current Board President, and Debbie Muse, Association Manager, assisted with the legal issues.

The AWPCA Board thanks everyone involved in the successful bid for this contract.