

Erika Schwender has a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry and holds the following certifications: Wastewater Operator Group IV, Drinking Water Treatment Operator III, Sample Collection Technician II, and Environmental Professional.

Mrs. Schwender has over 27 years of experience in the water quality, treatment, and regulatory field. In 1991 she started her career in a commercial laboratory in MD, where the majority of her activities were related to collecting, preparing, and analyzing water and wastewater samples, managing the quality assurance program, and providing support to water and wastewater utilities' compliance programs.

Throughout her career she was hired by a variety of municipal, private, and governmental agencies to develop, implement, and manage water quality, stormwater, pretreatment, wastewater, drinking water, and other regulatory programs.

In 1999 Erika held a temporary appointment as a Chemist II with the WA Dept. of Ecology's Laboratory in Manchester. Later that year she joined the Central Kitsap WWTP laboratory, where she performed a variety of analyses for process control and regulatory purposes, and oversaw quality assurance, lab accreditation, waste management, and permit compliance activities. She collaborated with operations on a variety of projects and studies and provided support related to compliance, lab data, and lab accreditation for the County's 4 WWTPs.

In 2002 Mrs. Schwender was one of the founders of the Lab Training Group in Port Angeles, WA, which became a subsection of PNCWA. From 2002 to 2010 she was essential in the development and organization of the group's laboratory and process control training for wastewater operators.

Later she developed and managed the regulatory compliance and water quality monitoring program for the Buckman Direct Diversion Project, a state-of-the-art surface water treatment plant, in Santa Fe, NM, and was promoted to General Manager of the facility.

As the Resource Protection Division Director of the NM Environment Department Mrs. Schwender oversaw the State's Groundwater Quality Bureau, Surface Water Quality Bureau, Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau, and the Department of Energy Oversight Bureau.

After returning to WA in 2014, she became Mason County's Deputy Director – Utilities & Waste Management and managed the County's 3 wastewater treatment operations, 2 drinking water systems, and 4 solid waste operations.

In 2016 Mrs. Schwender joined the WA Dept. of Health as the Deputy Director of the Office of Drinking Water, where she managed the Water Quality Monitoring, Compliance, State Revolving Fund, Finance, and Public Outreach programs.

In 2017 Mrs. Schwender and 4 other industry related professionals created Professional Training Association (PTA) to provide support for rural communities. PTA is a non

profit organization and focuses on supporting small to mid-sized water and wastewater operations by providing training and technical support to operations, maintenance, finance, and management, as well elected officials. In her current role as PTA's Executive Director she manages the training and technical support, public relations / outreach, and fundraising programs, and provides technical assistance and training to water & wastewater professionals.

Contact information:

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