

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1 • JANUARY 2026

The CW Tea



Monthly Newsletter from CWT Training Academy

2026 - New Skills for a New Regulatory Landscape

In 2026, our communities will enter a new year marked by both continuity and change. **Regulatory frameworks that have shaped water quality protection for decades remain foundational, yet they are being tested and refined** in response to emerging challenges such as climate-driven precipitation extremes, aging infrastructure, and evolving land use patterns. Anticipated permit renewals, updates to guidance documents, and continued litigation and rulemaking at the federal and state levels signal that stormwater compliance will remain a dynamic and closely watched space. For regulated entities and practitioners alike, 2026 represents an opportunity to reassess programs, strengthen knowledge and training, and ensure success through shifting regulatory landscapes.

Internally, CWT Training Academy is also adapting to meet these and other new demands in order to best serve you and all our communities. **We heard you!** We will be utilizing the results, data, and feedback from the programmatic audit we completed and discussed in the last newsletter, to implement big changes that will include **a brand-new lineup of courses, updated content, regulatory-aligned materials, and new site and course features launching this month! Check out the following pages for more info on some of our biggest feedback items, exciting improvements, and new course offerings.**

Looking forward, 2026 offers a chance to turn lessons learned from recent years into more durable and adaptive training opportunities and more robust on-site permit compliance. As the regulatory landscape continues to evolve, the new year invites renewed commitment to protecting receiving waters while navigating complexity with clarity, preparation, and innovation.

We Wish a Happy New Year to You and Yours!

Nathan Hardebeck, Owner of CWT and CWT Training Academy

Happy
New Year!

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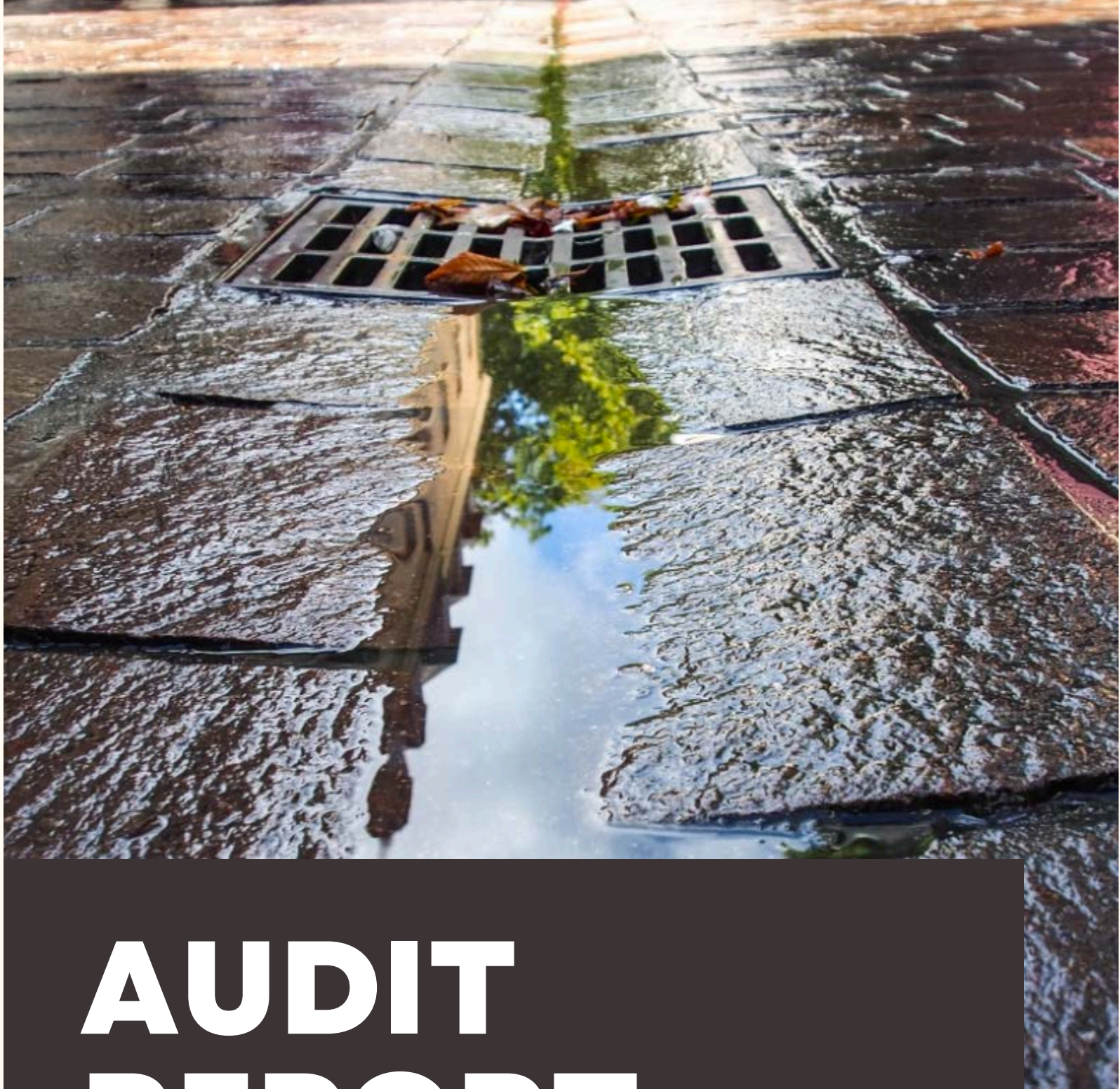
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AUDIT REPORT



CWT
Training
Academy

About Us



We are dedicated to offering workshops,
trainings, and certifications in
Water, Environmental, Safety, & Career Development

Workshops

Trainings

Certifications

Our workshops, trainings, and certifications provide structured opportunities to build practical skills, deepen subject-matter expertise, and stay current with evolving regulations, technologies, and best practices. These offerings demonstrate CWT Training Academy's professional credibility and commitment to continuous improvement, benefiting individuals, organizations, communities, and the environment.

Goal

Our goal is to provide the highest level of education with experienced experts in their respective fields. We believe that education and practical experience is fundamental in career development, improving safety consciousness, water quality, the environment and ultimately, the corporate bottom line.



Learner Feedback

In August of 2025 we began an internal audit process of our services and offerings. We started by evaluating feedback on surveys from you. Here is some of what we heard:

This class was extremely well organized and laid out such that all topics built upon themselves and flowed very intuitively. Also, the amount of knowledge possessed by the presenter, as well as the relatable examples and stories given, added interest and depth to the course. Great work. Thanks a lot. ~ Scott H.

I can't believe I talk to a live person when I call! ~Many of you!

I have been in the construction stormwater industry for over 18 years and have given many training classes like this myself. I was thoroughly impressed with the material, the instructor, and overall presentation of this course. Very well done! ~Gina H.

I've been a CESCL for 15 years, and I learned a lot of new things in this training. Will certainly recommend it to others in my field. ~Jessi R.

I just wanted to reiterate how much more I got out of this class rather than the in-person classes I have taken in the past. Thanks. ~ Justin S.

Not all comments were glowing and there were similar themes in areas that needed improvement. Here are some of your thoughts....

- The registration process was not clear
- Some of the video content has spelling, graphics or glitch errors
- Some of the content seemed repetitive
- Resource materials for the courses were often missed
- Some of the quiz and/or exam questions were misleading or confusing

What's New

Instructions and Policies

- We have added important information in several locations to make sure that any refund, registration or reporting policies are clear and concise, and are evident in multiple locations and throughout the registration process.
- Website upgrades include standardizing course specific landing pages, rework of the catalog and other pages, and increased readability.
- Landing pages have all the instructions and descriptions that should be necessary to get approvals or know what the course is about.

Learning Management System

- We have added and continue to add closed captioning in English and Spanish
- We have added capabilities of the system to be in compliance with the new ADA standards.
- Some quiz and exam questions have been reworded for better understanding.
- In addition to section quizzes, we have added a new feature to the content called Check Dams which is a single question that asks about specific content in a section. The Learner must answer the question correctly to progress.
- Resources were difficult for some of you to find. So we have not only created the access points within the content for this, but we have also created a repository of resources specific to your course and others that you can access at any time in the appropriate Community.
- Communities have now become the host environment for all of our free content.
- Whether you want to track upcoming subject specific information, have access to relevant resources, listen to a podcast in the subject matter, or join in chats or conversations with colleagues on themed topics – Communities are the place to be!

Training Content

- It is amazing to think that some of these training videos were created over five years ago. Technology, cameras, and sound have significantly changed since then, and we have gotten so much better at production. We have provided some new b-roll (background footage), changed text seen on screen, and have applied new screening and AI software to improve video and sound quality.
- We have addressed misspellings and glitches so videos provide accurate information, are more manageable lengths of time, and are easy to navigate.
- We have added **10** new courses to the training catalog!
- We have also updated the CESCL content for WA and OR to reflect new permit requirements effective January 1, 2026.

CWT Learns Too...

Ready to Launch

Six months of prep, hundreds of video editing hours, multiple software integrations and website revisions later, we are ready to launch all of our hard work in 2026.

Responsive Support

Overall, we have created a better user experience and learning platform. None of this would be possible without your input and support.

From all of us at CWT Training Academy, we express our gratitude to you.

We are not done improving – so keep sharing your thoughts with us. Thank you!

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NEW COURSES, NEW CONTENT

You've read all about our audit findings, our new functionality and features, but you're probably wondering - what about new trainings?!

We have added TEN new courses to the training catalog! From construction permitting to non-traditional stormwater management, we've got tons of new content ready for you to learn:

NEW COURSES!

- WWA0101 - 2026 CSGP Overview
- WMN0100 - MN CSW SWPPP Designer Certification
- WMN0101 - MN CSW MNR1000001 Permit Overview
- WMN0102 - MN CSW Site Manager Certification
- WMN0103 - MN CSW BMP Installer Certification
- WMN0104 - MN CSW SWPPP Designer and Site Manager Recert
- WMN0105 - MN CSW BMP Installer Recert
- WUS0120 - Dewatering and In-water Work
- WUS0121 - MS4 and Stormwater System Maintenance
- WUS0122 - Non-Traditional Construction Stormwater Management
- WUS0123 - Erosion and Sediment Control for Linear Projects

REVISED Content to Reflect Permit Changes

- WWA0100 - WA 2026 CESCL
- WWA0105 - WA 2026 CESCL Recert
- WOR0100 - OR 2026 CESCL
- WOR0101 - OR 2026 1200C Overview
- WOR0105 - OR 2026 CESCL Recert
- WUS0118 - Construction Activity Stormwater Management Certification (CASM - now a 3-year certification!)

COMING SOON in 2026!

- Advanced Chemical Treatment Certification
- S3MP Program - Certifications and trainings related to stormwater management on non-NPDES commercial properties, residential communities, and academic campuses and school districts
- More career-focused content options for Erosion and Sediment Control Re-certifications

Head to www.cwtacademy.com to register now!

NEW YEAR SALE!

FOR THE WHOLE MONTH OF JANUARY, ALL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL BMP TRAININGS ARE ON SUPER SALE!

GET REFRESHERS ON PERIMETER, COVERING, OR CONVEYANCE CONTROLS WITH COURSES: WUN0101, WUN0102, OR WUN0103

**\$19.99
EACH**



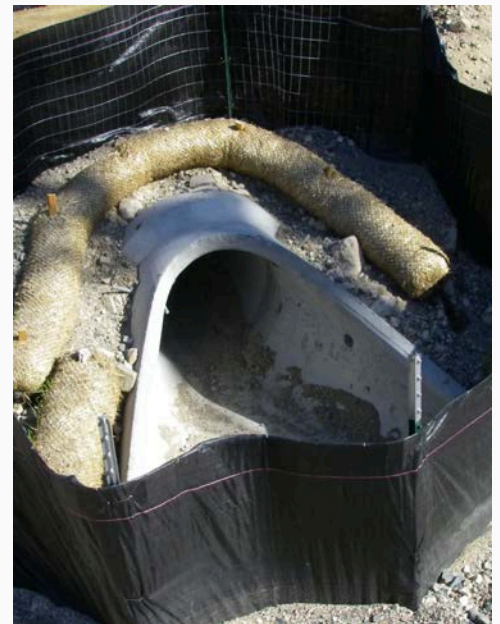
**PERIMETER CONTROLS FOR
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

WUN0101



**COVERING CONTROLS FOR
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

WUN0102



**CONVEYANCE CONTROLS FOR
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

WUN0103

DISCOUNT AUTOMATICALLY APPLIED AT CHECKOUT. NO CODE REQUIRED.

Last month, we discussed how the USEPA is planning to roll out two major general permits in 2026 that will shape industrial and construction stormwater compliance: the Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP) for industrial facilities, and the Construction General Permit (CGP) for construction sites.

In addition, and often in response, many states are updating their state-specific Industrial and Construction Stormwater General Permits which may include additional covered sectors, lower benchmarks, and even increased employee training requirements. **This page in each edition of the 2026 CWT Newsletter will feature state-specific permit updates that may be of interest to you.**

Florida - CGP

- Previous Construction Generic Permit (CGP) from 2015
- Public workshop held November 2025 - [Review the slides here](#)
- Proposed changes include the addition of off-site construction support activity, additional required BMPs, clarity around inspection requirements, etc.
- Public comment period closed December 30, 2025, with further implementation guidance due January 2026.



Texas - MSGP

- Current Texas MSGP expires August 14, 2026; new draft permit will go into effect on that date.
- Public workshop and public comment held December 2025
- In general, most specifics of the previous 2021 permit will remain the same; however, amendments from May 2025 will be in effect that pertain to certain quarries and some oil and gas activities.
- See this presentation for an overview of changes and timeline



Reminder!

Washington's new 2026 CSGP starts January 1, 2026, and Oregon's 1200-C CSGP started December 15, 2025!

Mississippi - ISGP

- Mississippi's Industrial Stormwater General Permit was set to expire November 30, 2025. It has been administratively extended and rulemaking should occur in 2026.

Interested in a crash course on EPA permitting, the Clean Water Act, MSGPs, ISGPs, CSGPs, and more? Check out our Stormwater Regulations Overview training that provides an overview of the stormwater industry and regulations that govern it, no matter where you live or work in the country.

CHANGES TO THE ESA IN 2026

Federal wildlife agencies are moving forward with a comprehensive package of proposed revisions to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that could take effect in 2026 and significantly reshape how endangered and threatened species are protected. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries have issued four key proposed rules that would return ESA implementing regulations to the framework used in 2019, and include changes to how species are listed and delisted, how critical habitat is designated, how interagency consultations are conducted, and how protections for threatened species are applied.

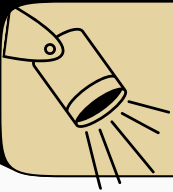
Policy, Compliance, and Regulatory Corner



Helping you navigate change in 2026

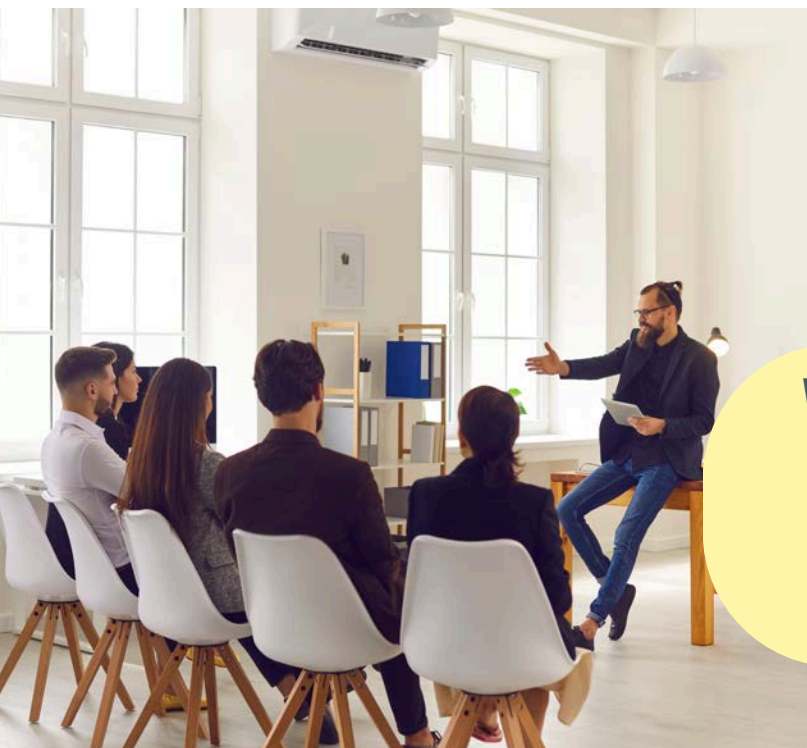
These regulatory shifts could change wildlife conservation approaches, and several state governments are advancing their own species protection measures in response to potential federal rollbacks. As these rulemakings proceed through public comment and finalization, 2026 will be a pivotal year for endangered species policy, with potentially substantial impacts on conservation efforts.

SPOTLIGHT ON: Mountain Snowpack



Mountain snowpack accumulating over these winter months plays a critical role in supplying drinking water for millions of people, particularly in the western United States and other regions that rely on seasonal snowmelt as a natural reservoir. Snowcaps accumulate during the winter months and slowly release water as temperatures rise, providing a steady and predictable source of runoff that feeds rivers, reservoirs, and groundwater systems well into the dry season. This gradual melt helps balance water availability throughout the year, supporting municipal drinking water supplies when rainfall is limited and demand is highest. In many watersheds, **snowpack functions as the primary storage mechanism.**

The importance of snowcaps is becoming even more pronounced as climate change alters precipitation patterns. Warmer winters can reduce snow accumulation or shift precipitation from snow to rain, leading to earlier runoff and diminished late-summer water supplies. These changes challenge water managers to adapt long-term planning, reservoir operations, and conservation strategies to ensure reliable drinking water in the future. As snow melts, it can mobilize sediments, nutrients, metals, and other pollutants from roads, developed areas, and disturbed soils, making effective stormwater controls essential for protecting downstream drinking water sources. Best management practices such as erosion control, infiltration, vegetated buffers, and treatment facilities help slow runoff, filter pollutants, and reduce the risk of contamination during peak melt and storm events.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Trainings, conferences, fun, and other happenings to keep you in the know in 2026

We are booking our public, private, in-person, and virtual courses and trainings into **Summer 2026** now! Reach out to info@cwtaacademy.com or visit cwtaacademy.com to check out all of our event offerings

Come See the Academy! **Register here!**

- CESCL Full Certification - January 28/29 - Salem, OR
- BMP Workshop - January 30, Salem, Oregon
- CESCL RE-Certification - February 24, Burlington, WA
- CESCL Full Certification - February 25-26, Sedro-Woolley, WA



Change up your look with some new Stormwater Defenders gear!



Other Events and Happenings

- Stormwater USA Conference
February 2-3, Anaheim, California
- Evergreen Rural Water of Washington Conference
February 10-12, Ridgefield, Washington
- Urban Water Institute Conference
February 25-27, Indian Wells, California
- IECA Annual Conference and EXPO
March 1-4, Fort Worth, Texas

SPECTRO'S

SPOTLIGHT

SEA OTTERS & WINTER RUNOFF

Starting the first Monday of every month, **we'll be shining Spectro's Spotlight** — a weeklong educational series that runs Monday through Friday, exploring how stormwater affects different animal species and their habitats. Each month, Spectro will highlight a new featured creature to help us understand how what happens on land impacts life in the water, and vice versa!



This month, Spectro's Spotlight dives into the world of Sea Otters and Winter Runoff, and the impacts on their coastal habitats. As rain and snowmelt wash across streets, parking lots, and neighborhoods, stormwater carries pollutants like oil, trash, and chemicals into nearby waterways. These pollutants can flow directly into coastal areas where sea otters live, feed, and raise their young. Throughout the week of January 5th - 9th, we'll explore how winter runoff affects marine ecosystems, why sea otters are especially vulnerable, and what simple actions we can all take to help protect them. From reducing pollution at home to understanding how everyday choices impact our waterways, this month's spotlight shows how small actions can make a big difference for one of our most beloved marine mammals.

Join us as we follow Spectro on another mission to protect clean water and healthy wildlife!

Follow CWT Training Academy for this and other fun, useful, and educational content on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn

