

Standard of Care Training for Municipal Councils

Clean and Safe Drinking Water Workshop



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Brian Jobb

Walkerton Clean Water Centre



WCWC Training Institute

- WCWC works with other training providers and suppliers to provide high-quality training
- Goal is to improve the effectiveness of training
- Delivery of mandatory courses for MOE
- Delivery of other specialized operator courses
- Special focus on small and remote systems

Statistics

- WCWC has delivered training to over 48,000 participants since 2005
- Rigorous training requirements for certified drinking water operators
- Relatively few drinking water courses aimed at decision-makers
- A need for plain-language, high-level, decision-maker training was identified



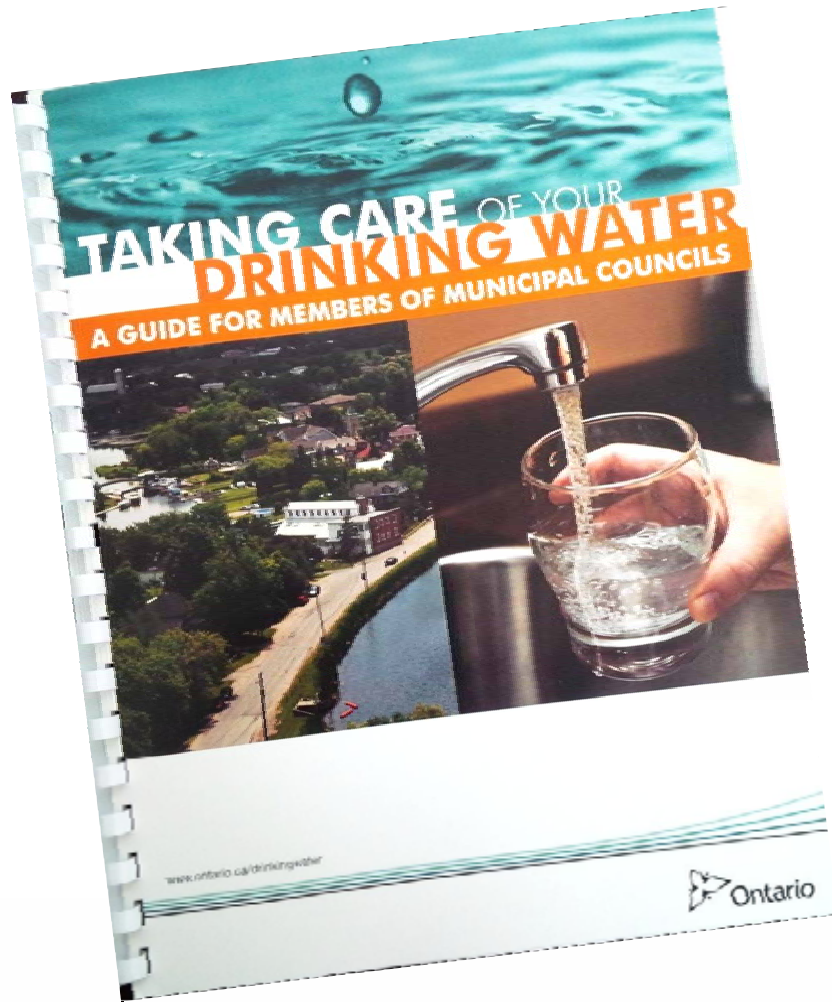
Training Course and Guidebook

Developed by Advisory Group of:

- Mayors, Councillors and Senior Management from:
 - Larger Cities
 - Medium-sized Cities and Towns
 - Small communities
- Municipal Associations
 - AMO, OMWA
- Ministry of the Environment
- Walkerton Clean Water Centre



Guidebook



34 page summary of
“what you need to know
about your drinking
water responsibilities”

Adapted from OMWA’s
2004 *Ontario Drinking
Water Stewardship
Responsibilities
Handbook*



Standard of Care Training Course

- Three-hour course aimed at junior councillors
- Developed to coincide with December 31, 2012 in-force date of the Standard of Care
- Some material from a book authored by Dr. Steve Hrudney, MD, PhD, P.Eng.
- Certificates for CEUs available - short test required



Standard of Care

- Part of Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act
- Legal responsibility for decision-makers with authority over municipal drinking water systems
- "... requires the level of care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would be expected to exercise..." (Justice O'Connor)
- Honesty, competence and integrity required



Who does the Standard of Care apply to?

- The owner of the municipal drinking water system (typically the municipal council)
- If water system owned by a corporation (other than a municipality) every officer and director of the corporation
- If a municipally-owned system is operated by an external operating authority:
 - every person who oversees the operating authority or makes decisions concerning the system
- It does not apply to licensed drinking water operators



Standard of Care Training

- Over 80 training sessions delivered throughout Ontario to ~1,400 decision-makers since 2011
- Training has been delivered on evenings and weekends to accommodate participants
- Reaches a critical group of decision-makers



Standard of Care Training

Key Messages:

- Councillors don't need to be drinking water experts!
- Get expert advice if unsure
- A council will not be held accountable if they act on professional advice (engineer, lawyer, accountant)
- Decisions can have a direct effect on public (and economic) health



Standard of Care Training

Key Messages:

- Learning from past mistakes
- Commitment to continual improvement required
- Important to provide sufficient resources
- Operational staff must be given the opportunity to recognize new risks and threats (training)



Mobile Training Units

- The WCWC operates a MTU program
- Modelled after the program developed by NL Department of Environment and Conservation





Maintenancefest



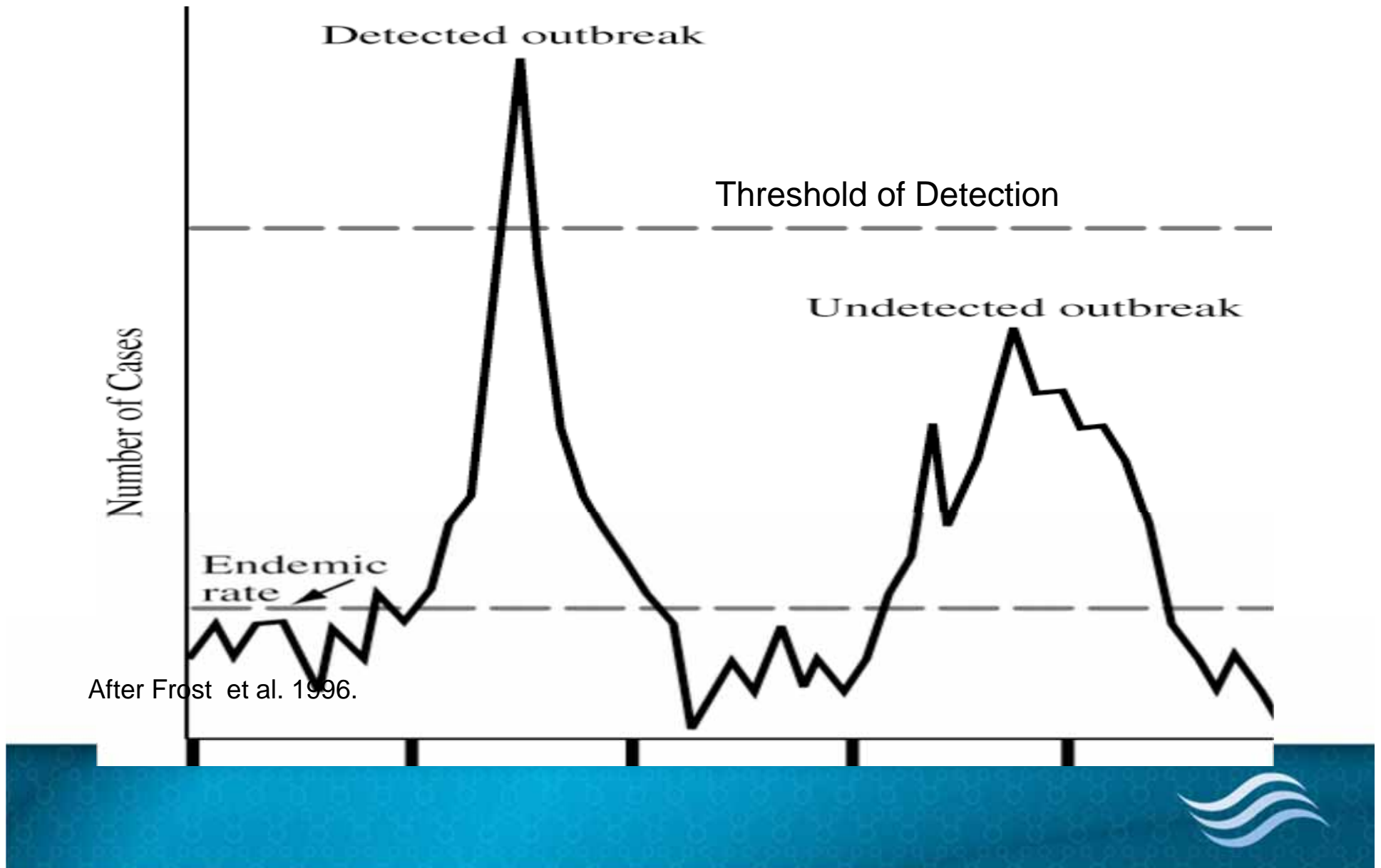
Question (from Standard of Care training)

2. Has the drinking water in my municipality ever made anyone sick?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Discuss



Most Waterborne Disease Outbreaks go Undetected



Standard of Care Training

Key Messages:

Operational staff should be given the

- Status
- Training
- Compensation

comparable with their responsibility for protecting public health (Justice O'Connor)



Reassurance

- Tough penalties if courts decide that a breach of responsibility occurred:
 - \$4 million fine + 5 years in jail
- HOWEVER -
- Many technical requirements are in-place to prevent a serious problem from occurring
- These “failsafe” mechanisms are for everyone’s protection, including the owner
- In the event of a serious problem, owners will not be held accountable if they acted on professional advice



Standard of Care Training

Feedback:

- Response to training has been good
- Many plan on visiting their water plant!
- Additional training topics have been requested by councils including:
 - Infrastructure Assessment
 - Asset Management
 - Introduction to Drinking Water Systems



Standard of Care Training

Feedback:

“ The course brought a lot of discussion between Council and Staff. It was great to see.”

“Very informative and needed.”

“Now I see what all the fuss is about.”



WCWC Quality Assurance Plan

Course Participant Evaluations

- Close to 100% response
- Many have requested additional training on specific topics
- 100% of survey respondents satisfied with Standard of Care training



THANK YOU!



Questions? Comments?

Brian Jobb, Manager, Training Institute

brian.jobb@wcwc.ca

Walkerton Clean Water Centre

www.wcwc.ca 416-579-4531