

## EPA Nutrient Survey

By Mike Lucas, Wastewater Technician

It is expected that the EPA nutrient removal survey will be arriving at your POTW (Publicly-Owned Treatment Works) at the end of 2016. **All facilities that receive this questionnaire must respond within 30 days of receipt under penalty of law.** EPA's Office of Water and Office of Science and Technology, will administer the questionnaire as a census to all known POTW's in the United States that discharge wastewater. This is in response to concern over increasing levels of nitrogen and phosphorous (a.k.a. nutrient) pollution entering the nation's waters. Nutrient pollution is thought to result in harmful algal blooms which release cyanotoxins. As part of this study, EPA will share statistically representative data on the profile and performance of POTW's across the country.

The survey consists of 24 questions to collect information on POTW identification, outfall identification and POTW operations and treatment characteristics. Respondents will be required to complete and submit an electronic version of the questionnaire. However, EPA also recognizes there may be cases where POTW's may lack electronic access and require a format that can be mailed to EPA. Most POTW's will most likely need to complete the entire survey. EPA anticipates that it will take 3 ½ hours to complete.

EPA is not requiring you to perform non-routine tests or measurements solely for the purpose of responding to the questionnaire. In the event exact data or information is not available, you are allowed to use your best professional judgement.

Some of the types of data that you will need to complete on the survey are as follows: a Certifying Official's signature; your NPDES ID and population served; your design capacity flow, both daily and peak in MGD; your average flow, both daily and peak; percentage of contribution by Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Septage and other to your waste stream; estimates of your inflow and infiltration quantities in GPD or MGD; your type of treatment; latitude and longitude of your outfall; total volume discharged in 2016; and nutrients that you monitor and their concentration ranges, etc.

As you can imagine, discussion of this survey resulted in extensive conversation with EPA representatives at our National Conference in June. Our assignment was to be prepared to assist POTW's with completion of the required questionnaire. In that effort, you can expect presentations at NeRWA Wastewater Operator training classes and I will also be available to assist system operators individually as needed.

