



Environmental Ethics Webinar Description

Environmental ethics is not a separate topic from treatment work—it is embedded in every operational decision, report, adjustment, and approval made in a water or wastewater system. From routine sampling to capital improvements, ethical judgment influences public health protection, regulatory compliance, environmental outcomes, and long-term system integrity.

This 2-hour webinar examines how ethical decision-making shows up in day-to-day treatment operations and where it can break down under pressure. Participants will explore the difference between justification and sound professional judgment, and how “getting through the moment” decisions can create long-term operational, regulatory, and environmental consequences.

Using real-world case studies, the course highlights situations where ethical boundaries were crossed or professional responsibility was compromised, including failures in oversight, misrepresentation of data, and breakdowns in accountability. These examples are used to reinforce practical lessons about integrity, responsibility, and the real-world impacts of technical decisions.

The course also addresses modern ethical challenges in the industry, including when to bring in outside expertise, how to approach data-driven problem solving honestly, and how emerging issues such as PFAS, emerging contaminants, and materials like flushable wipes create new ethical and regulatory pressures on operators and managers.

By the end of the session, participants will have a clearer framework for recognizing ethical risks in operational decisions, a stronger understanding of professional responsibility in environmental protection, and practical guidance for maintaining integrity while working within complex technical and regulatory systems.