

News Release

Mammoth Community Water District
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 30, 2019

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MCWD Laboratory Selected for Mentorship Program to Help Meet New Requirements

Upcoming State requirements will affect all water laboratories in California. MCWD laboratory staff are prepared for the changes and will serve as leaders in the industry.

Mammoth Lakes, California – April 30, 2019 – The Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) oversees the accreditation of environmental testing laboratories, including drinking water and wastewater laboratories in the state of California. ELAP will be changing requirements over the next several years to ensure statewide consistent water quality testing and reporting. The new requirements, which will be presented to the State Water Board for consideration of adoption this summer, are based on a national consensus standard and requires quality management procedures to document and ensure quality through every step of the analysis and builds on existing laboratory procedures.

In the interest of seeing a smooth transition to meeting these new requirements and promote data of known and documented quality, ELAP launched a Mentor Program to help identify what resources small laboratories need to achieve compliance. The Mammoth Community Water District's (MCWD) laboratory was selected to participate in the new program, becoming an early adopter of the developing standards.

"The additional documentation requirements may be more challenging for small laboratories to achieve as they will require additional staff time. This is why we are excited to participate in this program to develop tools that will help laboratories like ours throughout the state" explains Bruce Medhurst, Laboratory Analyst at MCWD. Factors that likely influenced the state's decision to include MCWD in this program include Mammoth's remote location and its service to communities from Big Pine to Lake Tahoe. "For many years, MCWD's laboratory has been the only local resource to provide testing for time sensitive samples, helping utilities maintain their compliance with environmental requirements," says Blair Hafner, MCWD Laboratory Director. MCWD's laboratory provides services to over 200 individual water systems including local, state, and federal agencies, tribal lands, public and private campgrounds, and individual homeowners. Without MCWD's laboratory, 'nearby' communities would have no convenient option to ensure the quality of their drinking water or effectiveness of their wastewater treatment.

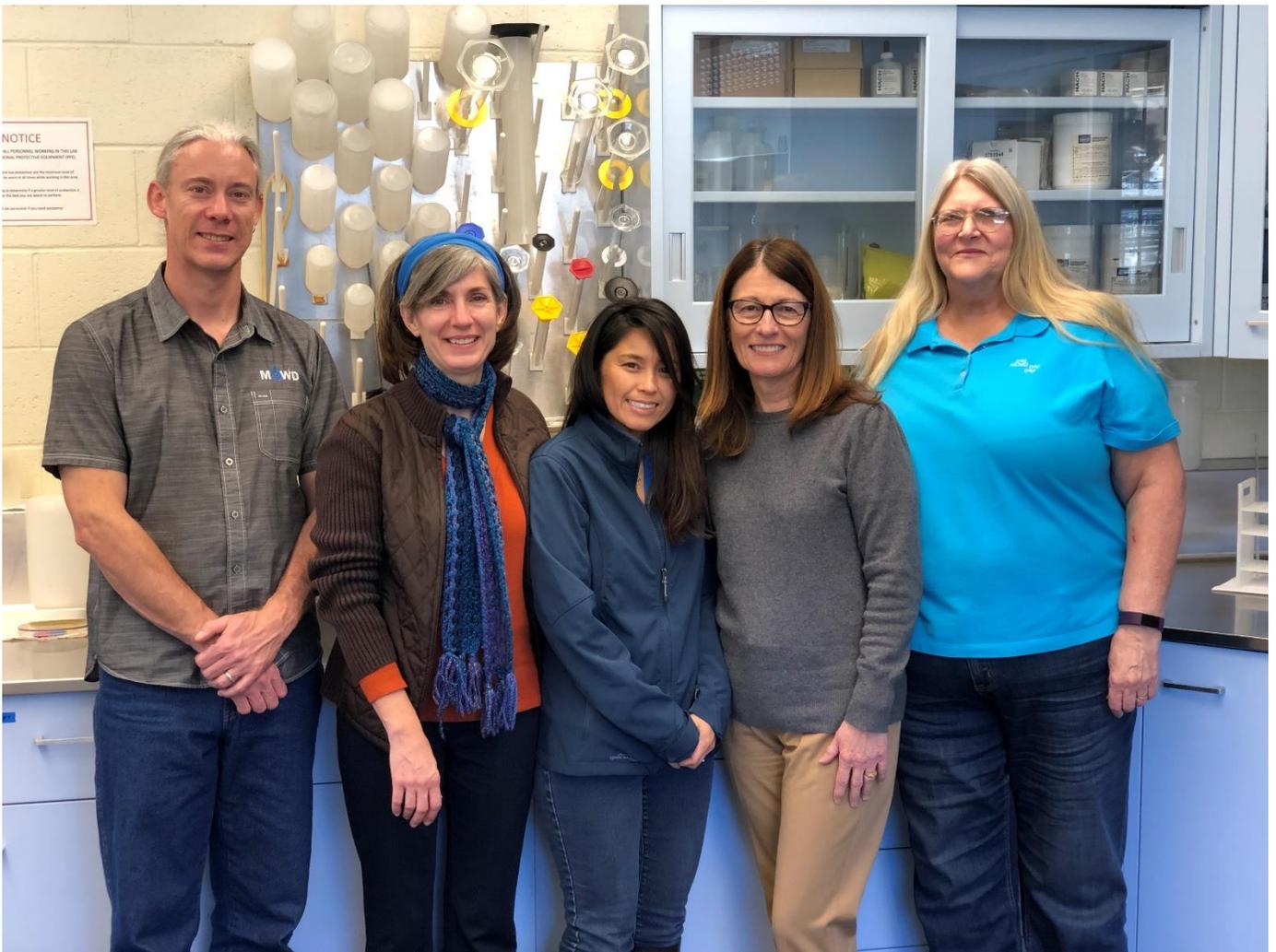
There are over 650 laboratories accredited by ELAP in the state and MCWD was one of five selected to participate in the program. On January 23, the mentors for MCWD, Diane Anderson, Owner and CEO of APPL Inc., a private water quality laboratory in Clovis CA, Sharon Dehmlow, APPL Inc., Quality Assurance Director, and Christine Sotelo, Chief of ELAP traveled to Mammoth Lakes to spend an entire day conducting a review of MCWD laboratory operations.

"The MCWD is well prepared for the upcoming changes needed to be compliant with California ELAP," stated Christine Sotelo, "Their laboratory staff has been active in attending classes, workshops and industry conferences to receive training and are enthusiastic and receptive to implementation of the new standard. We look forward to continue working with them."

It is ELAP’s mission “to implement a sustainable accreditation program that ensures laboratories generate environmental and public health data of known, consistent, and documented quality to meet stakeholder needs.” This program will provide citizens with continued confidence in California’s laboratories. The MCWD is committed to continuing to providing reliable and trustworthy laboratory services for its customer and the surrounding communities.

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MCWD provides water and wastewater utility service to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and surrounding areas. MCWD strives to provide reliable, affordable utility service to our customers and to conduct our operations in a manner reflecting our stewardship role. We encourage our customers to practice responsible use of our limited water resources, and to take advantage of the information and services available to support this goal.



At the MCWD Laboratory, from left to right Bruce Medhurst, Sharon Dehmlow, Christine Sotelo, Diane Anderson and Blair Hafner