Fort Collins, Colo-based Platte River Power Authority has an ambitious goal—to achieve and sustain a noncarbon (ZNC) energy portfolio of generation resources by the year 2030. Steve Roalstad, Platte River Manager of Communications, believes it’s doable. “Our board passed an Integrated Resources Plan in 2018. We’ll be shifting our energy mix in the next 10 years by using a broader array of noncarbon sources.”

Platte River Power Authority is one of more than 2,000 community-owned electric utilities in the U.S. They are operated by local governments and provide their owner communities with reliable, responsive, not-for-profit electric service. The distinction for this not-for-profit is that they’re no stranger to pushing the envelope when it comes to progress.

THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN COLORADO
The origins of Platte River Power Authority are rooted in the 1960s. Prior to the 1960s electric power along the Northern Front Range came from a mixture of both public and private local-independent and regional-cooperative sources. In 1963, a group of 31 municipal electric utilities, known as the Colorado Association of
Municipal Utilities (CAMU), met to discuss statewide energy concerns created to meet growing electricity demand while balancing financial pressures, and comply with the new environmental regulations passed in that decade to include the Clean Air Act, the Water Quality Act, and the Clean Water Restoration Act. The group divided the state into quadrants with the intent that the quadrants would be brought together into one statewide joint action agency. Only the Platte River quadrant moved forward to create a not-for-profit Platte River Power Association. The Association became the Authority in 1973.

“All four of our owner communities got together in the 70s and determined that they couldn't afford to meet financial pressures individually, but they could if they came together collectively,” Roalstad said.

A G&T (Generation and Transmission) organization, Platte River supplies electricity to its owner communities of Estes Park, Fort Collins, Longmont, and Loveland and they take that bulk power, step down the voltages and distribute it to their communities.

In 1973 Platte River contracted 90 MW of hydropower operated by the Bureau of Reclamation and marketed by Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). At that time Platte River’s peak load was 90 MW so, in its beginning, Platte River Power Authority utilized 100% renewable federal hydropower coming from the Loveland Area Project and Colorado River Storage Project.

ENERGY DIVERSIFICATION PLANS IN PLAY

Today Platte River has an effective energy delivery capacity of 931 MW. But the majority of Platte River’s energy generation sources come from a coal-fired plant (55%), followed by hydropower (19%) and wind (17%). The balance is derived from solar, natural gas, and other sources. So how can a noncarbon energy portfolio generation plan be realized in just 10 years, when so much energy is still being generated by carbon-burning sources?

Paraphrasing a well-known statement, Roalstad quipped, “There's not going to be a silver bullet. It will be more like silver buckshot.”

As of January of this year, that buckshot had already scattered. Platte River announced the closing of Rawhide Unit 1 by 2030, its coal-fired plant, in operation since 1984, to support a cleaner energy future. “We are looking to add another 150W of solar capacity, plus we’re joining the WEIM [Western Energy Imbalance Market] which allows us to enter into contracts with diverse energy providers. Platte River has
the lowest wholesale rates in the state. Joining a full market would enable us to do broader and more future oriented energy trading so that we can acquire new resources without impacting customer bills," said Roalstad.

THE THREE PILLARS

According to Steve, there are three pillars in its Mission Statement the company not only abides by but lives and breathes each day.

“System reliability, financial stability – both for us and our customers - and environmental responsibility.”

One glance at Platte River’s history, its actions today, and their plans for the future can attest to that. Platte River’s Rawhide coal plant was ranked the best utilized coal-fired plant by Electric Light and Power in 2014, and its coal ash management system won Best Project Winner in the Energy/Industrial category from Engineering News Record (ENR) in 2019.

For financial stability, Platte River’s wholesale rates charged to owner communities are currently the lowest in Colorado which enables owner communities to provide residential and commercial customers with competitive retail rates.

As for environmental responsibility, Platte River boasts of numerous environmental awards, to include the Environmental Business Award in 2006 and Environmental Stewardship Award in 2007, and they have committed to a noncarbon energy portfolio, based on customer demands, by 2030.

ANCHORING THE PILLARS WITH PERSONNEL TRAINING

Anchors to any company’s mission or vision statements are its people. And this is where Platte River truly excels. In 2007 Platte River recorded one million work hours without lost time injury. This is an incredible statistic.

“We’re on track to achieve two million work hours without lost time injuries this year, not just in any one plant, but system-wide,” added Roalstad.

What gets people to commit to safety 100% is a workplace safety culture within their organizations and one that is also dedicated to continuous improvement and to training.

WHY AVETTA AND EWEBOQ

Cheri Coker, HR Training Coordinator with Platte River, says that the range of their employees who use eWebOQ is diverse.

“They range from power delivery to power production. They are plant operators, telecommunications and mechanical maintenance personnel, Control Room
operators, mechanical engineers, environmental specialists and I&E Technicians. Our needs vary and eWebOQ has met each need very well,” Coker said.

While eWebOQ is principally an ‘OQ’ solution of Avetta’s, the training and its accompanying Learning Management System (LMS) isn’t restricted to just ‘OQ’. Avetta/eWebOQ services all member companies.

“The (Avetta) Learning Management System is easy to use and records maintenance is always important to us. I’m easily able to see if employees are taking and completing their course work. I like the way courses are set in tracks depending on the students’ role. I select the employees’ role, and eWebOQ assigns courses that are pre-set for their particular role. All in all, we’re pleased with the LMS and its functionality,” added Coker.

According to Roalstad, "We have reached a point at which we’re at the two millionth work hour across all systems without a lost time injury. This can be attributed in part to effective and efficient online training systems including eWebOQ's. The Proof is in the Pudding."

**LEADING INTO THE FUTURE**

Avetta/eWebOQ celebrates Platte River Power Authority as a Leader who is willing to take on the next venture of providing a 100% noncarbon mix of energy resources to reduce climate change impacts and to move customers into a more sustainable energy resource future. For more information on Platte River Power Authority, visit https://www.prpa.org/.

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**Figure 1: Summary of Pipeline Incidents from 2010 to 2018; Source: FactTracker Alliance**

**PIPELINE INCIDENTS AND OQ - BEHIND THE NUMBERS**
By Daniele Dixon

From 2010 to 2018, a total of 5512 pipeline incidents occurred in midstream oil & gas and other related sectors. The total losses incurred from all these incidents are worth more than 4 billion USD. A quick look at the major causes of midstream pipeline incidents in 2018 reveals an interesting picture. While material/weld/equipment failures accounted for more than 35% of incidents, the major cause for 11.7% of incidents was incorrect operation measures including damage done by an operator or operator’s contractor, incorrect installation, incorrect valve position, showing, at its base, a deficiency in personnel qualification.

In 2019, the regulatory authority, PHMSA, initiated 195 cases in response to an accident or inspection identifying one or more probable violations of the pipeline safety regulations or statutes. Also in 2019, PHMSA initiated 35 civil penalty cases and the total amount of civil penalties proposed sums up to USD 3,721,100.

In 2020, we are standing at a precipice. $277K of fines have been levied against operators for OQ violations y-t-d. Even with the 2nd Quarter muted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the percentage of OQ fines (16%) to total PHMSA fines (1,727,306 USD) is the highest it has been in the last five years. This indicates an overall rise in OQ regulatory audit activity.

As pandemic restrictions lift and we face a potential change in Administrations, it is essential for Operators to stay vigilant and to keep intact their OQ programs – not only in response to higher OQ audit activity so far, but as custodians of safe pipeline operations meant to protect pipeline personnel, the public, and the environment.
NEED TO CONDUCT PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS?

Coming Soon: Only if you’re eWebOQ-Authorized

Passing a performance evaluation on OQ-Covered Tasks is a key component of becoming ‘Qualified’ to perform work on jurisdictional pipelines. Evaluators entrusted to carry out performance evaluations of pipeline personnel must possess, not only the knowledge and experience in the covered tasks themselves, but the high integrity needed to judge candidates on their actual skills rather than turn a blind eye based on personal bias or other external influences. Performance Evaluators are the Strong Safetys on the football field. No one gets through without their say-so.

To ensure eWebOQ performance evaluations are conducted in a manner indicative of high integrity, **eWebOQ requires all evaluators to be Authorized through eWebOQ's Authorized Evaluator program by July, 2021**. There are four steps evaluator candidates must successfully complete in order to attain Authorized Evaluator status:

- **Step One:** Apply at ewebog.com. Candidate applicants must select only the covered tasks in which they can show evidence of 7+ years work experience. Documentation (resumes, et. al.) and references must be provided to support covered task selections.

- **Step Two:** Undergo Vetting. *Once the applications are complete and required documentation and references are submitted, eWebOQ's auditors will screen the candidates by reviewing their documentation and interviewing their references. At the end of the vetting process, the candidates will be notified as to whether they can proceed to training. If approved for training, candidates will*
also be notified of which covered tasks they’re approved to conduct evaluations on, pending their completion of the next two steps.

- **Step Three:** Participate in Online Training. *Upon completion of the vetting process, candidates will be required to take and pass the Authorized Evaluator online training, effectively the ‘knowledge’ component of the Authorized Evaluator course.*

- **Step Four:** Participate in Live Training. *Upon completion of the online training, candidates will be required to register for a Live Training [3 are tentatively scheduled to take place in 2020] in which they’ll participate in mock evaluations and complete a performance test. CDC recommendations for social distancing and donning of face masks will be maintained during the current COVID-19 pandemic.*

Don’t be left out. *Get started on your application now.* Learn more about eWebOQ’s Authorized Evaluator Program here [https://www.avetta.com/solutions/eweboq](https://www.avetta.com/solutions/eweboq). Questions? Contact us at evaluator.admin@eweboq.com.

**Footnotes**

1. **Deadline is subject to change pending status of COVID-19 case numbers.**
2. **Trainings are subject to change pending state, local, and facility shutdowns or other measures to combat the current pandemic.**

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**MEET THE TEAM - RALPH WEB**

![Ralph Web](image)

Ralph first became involved with eWebOQ in 1999 while he was with OSI. He began working with OSI while he was working as a contractor for then Houston Lighting and Power Company (later renamed Reliant Energy Inc.). “I was hired to develop CBTs (Computer-Based Trainings) using WFI/OSI software,” Ralph says. WFI stood for ‘Warren-Forthought Inc.’ and OSI stood for ‘Overnite Software Inc.’ since the LAN-based training they developed was literally done overnight.

“Of course, these were the days before a commercially available internet,” Ralph says. “So we wrote, packaged, and delivered CBTs within 24-hours. That was OSI’s hallmark.”
Then, in 1999, eWebOQ was formed as a result of a limited partnership between Reliant Energy and OSI. The partnership was one of the first in the US to produce courses and qualification methods to meet the compliance requirements of the Operator Qualification (OQ) rule. eWebOQ developed the Learning Management System (LMS) that would eventually be used to deliver the courses online; Reliant provided the Subject Matter Experts; and OSI provided instructional designers and writers.

"I was recruited from inside OSI to eWebOQ to take on a sales and business management role," Ralph says. This became an important role to play as Reliant sold off its electric assets to remain a mostly regulated energy delivery company as CenterPoint Energy (CNP) in 2002. The partners enjoyed a 14-year relationship when, in 2013, CNP changed its business strategy as a result of several joint ventures to form Enable Midstream Partners. eWebOQ dissolved the partnership and OSI became the sole owner of eWebOQ. But another change was just around the corner.

"As OSI Senior Vice President/Member of the Board, I was contacted in 2016 by an investment firm who was looking for software solutions for one of their portfolio companies," Ralph says. "SaaS Multi-tenant architecture (when multiple independent instances of one or more applications operate in a shared environment) was a key component that they were looking for. eWebOQ's LMS (Worker Management) architecture is multi-tenant," he adds.

The portfolio company, then known as PICs, went through a rebranding effort as Avetta that same year. The next two years involved increasing collaboration between OSI, eWebOQ, and Avetta until, in 2018, they struck a deal that led to Avetta’s acquisition of eWebOQ, eWebOQ's system (Worker Management), and its people, from OSI.

"In this case, it was a win-win situation, for all involved," Ralph says.

Today, eWebOQ is the OQ Compliance Solution of Avetta's and the eWebOQ LMS is now a code-based part of Avetta's risk compliance platform.

Now Regional Director of eWebOQ, Ralph still leads business development and sales. And while he may not be architecting the same kinds of deals as he had while at OSI, he’s still thrilled when he can craft solutions that work for all involved.

"I like to hear a prospective customer’s pain points and develop ways to solve them. Now that we’re with Avetta, crafting solutions to suit is simpler since we tailor one that is fully integrated across the multi-tenant spectrum that is client, supplier, and
worker,” he adds.

A cold weather transplant from Montana, Ralph takes relief in the Galveston, Texas heat and humidity by indulging in everything water oriented. “Fishing, boating, swimming – anything to do with the water! That's where you'll find me when I’m not at work,” he says.

Ralph, an Alumni of the College of New Jersey, and the University of Montana (Go Griz!), also enjoys spending time with his family. His wife, Tanya, his two boys, Jacob and Jack, and his white deaf pit bull – “Brad Pit”.

Tanya, from Cleveland, Ohio, met Ralph 28 years ago in Houston. Coming up on their fourth anniversary, Ralph and Tanya are very proud parents of two incoming freshmen this fall. Jacob at the University of Tennessee and Jack at Clear Creek Highscool in Texas.

Interested in learning more about what eWebOQ and Avetta can do for your company? Contact Ralph Webb at sales@eweboq.com.

NEW COURSES RELEASED

Fully updated to the latest API 1161 task standards, eWebOQ is pleased to announce the following e-Learning releases:

- **API-40.1 – Fit Full Encirclement Welded Split Sleeve**: API-40.1 Fit Full Encirclement Welded Split Sleeve explains the correct installation for Type B sleeves, the proper welding procedures for Type A sleeves, the steps for ensuring a correct fit, and the abnormal operating conditions (AOCs) that may occur while performing the task.

- **API-20.2 – Install Mechanical Bolt-on Split Repair Sleeve**: API-40.2 Install Mechanical Bolt-on Split Repair Sleeve explains how to install the repair device on an in-service pipeline, how to prepare the carrier pipe for a proper fit of the sealing elements, how to install the repair device according to proper sequence and torque, and the abnormal operating conditions (AOCs) that may occur while performing the task.
REGULATORY ROUNDPUP

Pipeline Safety: Gas Pipeline Regulatory Reform

PHMSA proposes to revise the Pipeline Safety Regulations applicable to newly constructed and entirely replaced onshore natural gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines to mitigate ruptures but also to ease regulatory burdens on the construction, maintenance, and operation of gas transmission, distribution, and gathering pipeline systems. PHMSA is also revising the regulations regarding rupture detection to shorten pipeline segment isolation times.

These proposals address congressional mandates, incorporate recommendations from the NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) as necessary, and, per PHMSA, and statutorily mandated advisory committees, GPAC (Gas Pipeline Advisory Committee) and LPAC (Liquid Pipeline Advisory Committee), are aimed to reduce the consequences of large-volume, uncontrolled releases of natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline ruptures. These measures are also the result of an agency initiative to identify appropriate areas where regulations might be repealed, replaced, or modified.

1. The proposed amendments to parts 192 and 195 are as follow:
2. Provide flexibility in the inspection requirements for farm taps
3. Repeal distribution integrity management program (DIMP) requirements for master meter operators
4. Repeal submission requirements for the mechanical fitting failure (MFF) reports
5. Adjust the monetary damage threshold for reporting incidents for inflation
6. Allow remote monitoring of rectifier stations
7. Revise the inspection interval for monitoring atmospheric corrosion on gas distribution service pipelines
8. Update the design standard for polyethylene (PE) pipe and raise the maximum diameter limit
9. Revise test requirements for pressure vessels consistent with American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (ASME BPVC)
10. Revise welder requalification requirements to provide scheduling flexibility and
11. Extend the allowance for pre-tested short segments of pipe and fabricated units to pipelines operating at a hoop stress less than 30 percent of the specified minimum yield strength (SMYS) and above 100 pounds per square inch (psi).
PHMSA is seeking comments on these proposed amendments. Comments are due no later than August 10, 2020 and must reference Docket No. PHMSA-2018-0046, using any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** [https://www.regulations.gov/](https://www.regulations.gov/). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- **Fax:** 1-202-493-2251.
- **Mail:** U.S. DOT Docket Management System, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Hand-deliver/courier: Available between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays.
- **Instructions:** All submissions must include the agency name and docket number for this notice of proposed rulemaking. If you submit your comments by mail, submit two copies. If you wish to receive confirmation that PHMSA has received your comments by mail, include a self-addressed stamped postcard.

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**EWEBQ LMS - NEW FEATURES!**

**What’s New in Version 1.4.9**

**Time and Attendance - Check in/Check out Feature**

**Clients:** Adhere to regulatory requirements through recordkeeping. This feature allows clients to track who was on site and when in case of an incident. It also allows clients to see who’s on site in real time in case there’s an emergency. Comparing job costing among your suppliers based on Time on Site? This feature allows clients to do that.

**Suppliers:** Need to find out when your workers checked into the work site and when they checked out? Need to track productivity rates? Have other timekeeping requirements? This feature was designed for you too.

**Workers:** Show your professionalism and your good track record. This feature is also designed for you.

How do I get there? Only Clients can check workers In. To do this, click the “Accounts” tab and select “Check In and Check Out”.

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![Image of EWEBQ LMS interface](image-url)
A clickable list of workers to be checked in or out appears. Here, Clients can select multiple workers from the list to check in or out.

Worker names display with an icon indicating a compliance color of Red or Green.

Clients can check workers in or out from anywhere they can view Worker Details. To view additional worker details, click the magnifying glass next to the worker name.

Reports: The following reports that include check in/out information are available in the Reports section:

- Workers Currently on Site [For Clients and Suppliers]
- Worker Hours on Site [For Clients and Suppliers]. Client and Supplier Admins can see all workers in the Worker Hours on Site report as well as total hours
- Hours on Site [For Workers]

QR CODE SCANNING FEATURE

Clients: Need to access worker compliance details on site? Just hold your iPhone with equipped QR-scanning capabilities, or download a free QR scanning app, to scan in the Worker Avetta badge code. Here you’ll see the Worker Details page with the worker’s compliance status and history.

Suppliers: Provided there aren’t additional on-site requirements, his capability puts your green-lighted workers at ‘ready-set-go’ status once they arrive on site. Just remember workers must upload a picture first!
Workers: This is your QR code which is tied to your training and compliance records within Avetta WM. It is enabled once you upload your picture! Your unique badge is located in your Worker Details within WM. Access it on your mobile device or print the badge for your records.

VARIANCES - SET WORKER VARIANCES

This Client Only Feature allows clients to override a worker's compliance status for a site, role, or requirement.

Does a worker need more time to complete training or other requirement? This feature allows clients to extend a worker’s compliance timeframe. Are there concerns about a new worker’s compliance history? Here, clients can either temporarily suspend a worker’s compliance status or even revoke status should there be cause for concern.

How do I get there?

Go to the “Accounts” tab and select “Variances”. A ‘Create New’ Action displays in the left-hand navigation bar once “Variances” is selected. Selecting “Create New” allows users to fill out information for the variance. Note a that a reason for why a variance is being applied MUST be included to successfully set the variance. Suppliers see a Forced Status icon of Red or Green when viewing workers with a variance applied.

Reports

Active Variance List: Clients and suppliers can now run a new report to see what open variances exist for their workers.

REPORT ENHANCEMENTS FOR CLIENTS AND SUPPLIERS:

Duplicate User Search: You asked for it, you got it! As Client or Supplier Admins import lists of their workers, they can now view possible duplicates already in the WM system.

WORKER DETAILS ENHANCEMENT FOR CLIENTS AND SUPPLIERS:

In the past, Clients and Suppliers had to pull a Requirements History report to view a
worker’s uploaded documents. Now, document uploads can be viewed with all other worker details on the Worker Details page. Just select History in your Worker Details view.

![Worker Details](image)

**REQUIREMENTS ENHANCEMENT FOR CLIENTS:**
You asked for it and we listened. Now if Clients have a ‘One Time’ requirement, such as a CDL, or a college degree for their workers to complete, you can set a completion date that’s in the past.

**AS AN EQWEBOQ CUSTOMER; WE’D LIKE TO PROMOTE YOU AND YOUR SERVICES**
Give us a shout out if you’d like to be featured in our Customer Spotlight section. This is a free promotional feature for your company and will be distributed, not only through eWebOQ News, but through Avetta channels as well. This includes 30+ verticals, 500 clients, and 96K suppliers worldwide.

Contact us at [Letters to the Editor](mailto:).