

Walter A. Lyon Profile

Walter was born in Cologne, Germany on June 26, 1924, an only child to Jewish parents. Walter fled Nazi Germany in 1939 and came to the United States with his father. Walt served in the U.S. Army as the Yokohama Harbor Master during the occupation of Japan until August of 1946. After the war, he received a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering, as well as a Master's Degree in Sanitary Engineering, from The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. He also studied political science and public administration at American University in Washington, D.C. from 1950-1953.

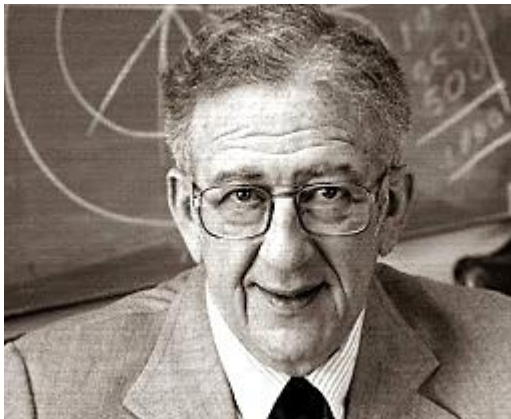
Walter pursued a career on the environmental health and planning side of public service with mentors like Maurice Goddard and Abel Wolman. He began his professional career as a sanitary engineer at the U.S. Public Health Service in Washington D.C., serving as Assistant Chief of the Planning and Development Branch,



Division of Engineering Resources from 1950-1954. He then served for three-years as Assistant Chief of the Environmental Health Section, Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

In 1957, he began his Commonwealth of Pennsylvania service as the Assistant Director of Sanitary Engineering Division, Department of Health, and was promoted to Director in 1958, a post held until 1970. Walter was hired by Karl Mason. In 1971, he became the Director of the Bureau of Water Quality Management in the newly formed Department of Environmental Resources (DER). During the eight years Walter worked in that capacity, he led the Commonwealth's innovative and widely-recognized water pollution and drinking water programs. In addition to heading the water pollution and drinking water programs during his tenure with the Commonwealth, Lyon was responsible for the Commonwealth's Environmental Master Plan, which gives direction to many diverse resources and programs of Pennsylvania's government, the State's Recreation Plan, federal environmental and resources legislation and policy analysis. From 1979 to 1983, Walter served as Deputy Secretary for Planning at DER and retired from Commonwealth service.

From 1983 to 2013, Walter went on to teach and consult in the areas of environmental engineering and water policy. He taught at popular course on the environmental impact assessment at the University of Pennsylvania and water management courses at universities in Puerto Rico, Brazil, Mexico, Japan, and China and consulted for a number of states, the Chicago Sanitary District, the Jamaica Water Commission, the International Joint Commission, the Puerto Rico Public Health Association, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and many other clients. He actively served on numerous technical committees for organizations such as: the American Society of Civil Engineers; the International Joint Commission's Great Lakes Water Quality Board, Science Advisory Board, the Board of Visitors of the University of Pittsburgh, the U.S. Delegation to the International Conference on Water for Peace; and the U.S. Environmental Control Mission to the Netherlands and Eastern Europe. Walt's proudest achievement in recent years was bringing the Johns Hopkins Engineering Innovation [EI] program to the Harrisburg School District; SciTech Campus, now in its seventh year, designed to inspire future engineers.



Walter received numerous professional awards during his long career including the Karl Mason Award in 1980, the Service to the Professional Award of the American Society of Civil Engineer's Water Management Division in 1994, and the Pennsylvania Society of Engineer's 1998 Engineer of the Year Award.

On March 17, 2007 Walter gifted his extensive collection of professional papers to the Pennsylvania State Archives. These documents provide a unique public record of over 60 years of his activities and influence in the field of water quality management at the state, national, and international levels. Also, when he passed away on June 27, 2013 at the age of 89, Walter working on a book entitled, "Governing The Environment."

For many years, Walter participated in the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals (PAEP) conferences and special events and generously shared his knowledge and experience.

He was a strong advocate for employing highly educated, qualified, and experienced environmental professionals in the public and private sectors and serves as a role model for the environmental professionals of today and tomorrow.

When Walter passed away in 2013, the PAEP Board decided to create the Walter A.

Lyon Award to commemorate his distinguished service as a Pennsylvania environmental professional.

The award is presented to an organization in Pennsylvania who makes a unique and creative contribution to the field of environmental management.

(Walter Lyon photos courtesy of Cliff Lyon.)

[Click Here](#) to watch a series of video interviews Lyon did about his life experiences.