

Practical Stats Newsletter for March 2022

Archive of past newsletters <http://practicalstats.com/news/archive.html>

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A. What is happening to PracticalStats?

Our most recent newsletter was back in May 2021. It contained the announcement that registrations for our three one-year courses were closed and that I would be fully retiring on April 1, 2022. Ten months later, that hasn't changed. What do the arrangements for Practical Stats courses and videos look like now?

1. Our Training site, practicalstats.teachable.com, will be closed on April 1 after access for all the currently registered students in the three courses is completed. The courses and videos (the "free courses") at that site will no longer be available there. But wait....
2. I am making all of the "free courses" -- which are recordings of past Practical Stats webinars -- available on the Videos page of practicalstats.com starting on April 1. People who want to view them, or view them again, will be able to do so there.
3. There will be one new video on practicalstats.com, "The Cost of Complacency", a webinar I gave recently to a SETAC workgroup on protocols for water quality data analysis. People still desperately need to understand why they shouldn't continue to substitute fabricated numbers for nondetects and this video describes the major consequences, with examples, of doing so. For several years I've read articles and reports where people substitute one-half DL or some other number, the method I specifically call out as fabrication, and then reference my books or papers as justification! That's dishonest of them, and discouraging to me. So I've made one last attempt to describe the costs of this practice.
4. All of our newsletters from across the years will still be available for download in our News Archive on practicalstats.com.
5. The Nondetects And Data Analysis (NADA) training course previously available for paid registrations will now be available at no charge starting in early April. It will live on the Training page of practicalstats.com. It is the same material that we have presented in the past, with all exercises demonstrating the use of the NADA2 package of R software that I wrote and published in February 2021. The main difference is that the free version of the course does not come with help from me. I will not be available to answer questions about the material. I'm retiring. But hey, its now free.
6. At this time I do not have plans to put the Applied Environmental Statistics (AES) courses that were sold on our Training Site onto practicalstats.com. It takes work to port them over and making the NADA course available was my top priority.
7. After a year or two, practicalstats.com will disappear. I am retiring.

B. Where else can I go for information?

The best alternative to our AES course is the free pdf textbook "Statistical Methods in Water Resources" (2020 edition), available from the US Geological Survey at <https://doi.org/10.3133/tm4A3> .

Approximately 90% of the material contained in the AES course can be found in the book. All exercises were performed using R software and the code to perform them is found in the book. A hardback edition is still available from the USGS for under \$25 if you prefer that to an ebook, though there are no guarantees how long the printed hardback will remain available. Instead of taking a course, read the book and work through the exercises. The latter is important for you to retain the material.

If you're not going to take our NADA online course, perhaps 75% of the material can be obtained by a combination of two sources: the textbook "Statistics for Censored Environmental Data Using Minitab and R" (2012), published by Wiley, and the reference manual (free pdf) for the NADA2 package for R software found at <https://cran.r-project.org/package=NADA2> . For the other 25% you could take the free course that will be available starting in April at <https://practicalstats.com/training/>, or for a quicker method download the course materials (NADA_online_3_6.zip) and look at the exercises in the Handouts.pdf and their solutions in the Solutions.pdf in the course materials. That should provide a more detailed guide through the use of the NADA2 package. Though the course provides a video guide that is even more detailed.

C. Out the door

My hearty thanks to all the people who paid to take our three courses online, or the in-person courses we taught for many many years. Interacting with you has been the best part of the job. Its been a great career. The online courses paid my salary for the recent years, allowing me to work on the 2020 version of the *Statistical Methods in Water Resources* textbook, and to produce the NADA2 package. So those of you who took the classes online, you had a hand in producing those resources that I'm now leaving as I head out the door.

I plan that this will be our final newsletter. Best wishes to all.

Dennis Helsel
Practical Stats LLC
-- Make sense of your data