



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT
OF
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

1110 West Washington Street • Phoenix, Arizona
85007

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AND CAREER PATHS IN THE WATER / WASTEWATER INDUSTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

William P. Reed

Operator Certification Program

1110 West Washington Street, 5415B-2

Phoenix, Az. 85007

Ph 602.771.4638

Fax 602.771.4634

Email wpr@azdeq.gov

www.azdeq.gov

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

This document is designed to describe the nature of working in the fields of water and wastewater treatment and to answer questions about the operator certification program. If read carefully, in conjunction with the rule for *Classification of Treatment Plants and Certification of Operators*, you will find the answers to most questions about this program. If you have additional questions that cannot be found in this document, please contact:

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
1110 W WASHINGTON ST
PHOENIX, AZ 85007
William P. Reed
Ph 602.771.4638
Fax 602.771.4634
Email wpr@azdeq.gov
www.azdeq.gov

The rule for *Classification of Treatment Plants and Certification of Operators* is a matter of public record and may be found in Title 18, Chapter 5, Article 1 of the Arizona Administrative Code at:
http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_18/18-05.htm

A hard copy of this rule may be purchased by directly contacting the office of the Secretary of State.
http://www.azsos.gov/info/contact_us.htm

http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm

From the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* distributed by the:
U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Water and Liquid Waste Treatment Plant and System Operators

Significant Points

- Employment is concentrated in local government and private water supply and sanitary services companies.
- Postsecondary training is increasingly an asset as the number of regulated contaminants grows and treatment plants become more complex.
- Operators must pass written exams certifying that they are capable of overseeing various treatment processes.

Nature of the Work

Clean water is essential for everyday life. *Water treatment plant and system operators* treat water so that it is safe to drink. *Liquid waste treatment plant and system operators*, also known as wastewater treatment plant and system operators, remove harmful pollutants from domestic and industrial liquid waste so that it is safe to return to the environment.

Water is pumped from wells, rivers, streams, and reservoirs to water treatment plants, where it is treated and distributed to customers. Wastewater travels through customers' sewer pipes to wastewater treatment plants, where it is treated and either returned to streams, rivers, and oceans or reused for irrigation and landscaping. Operators in both types of plants control equipment and processes that remove or destroy harmful materials, chemicals, and microorganisms from the water. Operators also control pumps, valves, and other equipment that moves the water or wastewater through the various treatment processes, after which they dispose of the removed waste materials.

Operators read, interpret, and adjust meters and gauges to make sure that plant equipment and processes are working properly. Operators control chemical-feeding devices, take samples of the water or wastewater, perform chemical and biological laboratory analyses, and adjust the amounts of chemicals, such as chlorine, in the water. They employ a variety of instruments to sample and measure water quality, and they use common hand and power tools to make repairs to valves, pumps, and other equipment.

Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators increasingly rely on computers to help monitor equipment, store the results of sampling, make process-control decisions, schedule and record maintenance activities, and produce reports. In some modern plants, operators also use computers to monitor automated systems and determine how to address problems.

Occasionally, operators must work during emergencies. A heavy rainstorm, for example, may cause large amounts of water to flow into sewers, exceeding a plant's treatment capacity. Emergencies also can be caused by conditions inside a plant, such as chlorine gas leaks or oxygen deficiencies. To handle these conditions, operators are trained to make an emergency

management response and use special safety equipment and procedures to protect public health and the facility. During these periods, operators may work under extreme pressure to correct problems as quickly as possible. Because working conditions may be dangerous, operators must be extremely cautious.

The specific duties of plant operators depend on the type and size of the plant. In smaller plants, one operator may control all of the machinery, perform tests, keep records, handle complaints, and perform repairs and maintenance. Operators in this type of plant may have to be on-call 24 hours a day in case of an emergency. In medium-sized plants, operators monitor the plant throughout the night by working in shifts. In large plants, operators may be more specialized and monitor only one process. They might work with chemists, engineers, laboratory technicians, mechanics, labors, supervisors, and a superintendent.

Water quality standards are largely set by two major Federal environmental statutes: the Safe Drinking Water Act, which specifies standards for drinking water, and the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge of pollutants. Industrial facilities that send their wastes to municipal treatment plants must meet certain minimum standards to ensure that the wastes have been adequately pretreated and will not damage municipal treatment facilities. Municipal water treatment plants also must meet stringent standards for drinking water. The list of contaminants regulated by these statutes has grown over time. As a result, plant operators must be familiar with the guidelines established by Federal regulations and how they affect their plant. In addition, operators must be aware of any guidelines imposed by the State or locality in which the plant operates.

Working Conditions

Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators work both indoors and outdoors and may be exposed to noise from machinery and to unpleasant odors. Operators' work is physically demanding and often is performed in unclean locations; they must pay close attention to safety procedures because of the presence of hazardous conditions, such as slippery walkways, dangerous gases, and malfunctioning equipment.

Plants operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In small plants, operators may work during the day and be on-call in the evening, nights and weekends. Medium and large plants that require constant monitoring may employ workers in three 8-hour shifts. Because larger plants require constant monitoring, weekend and holiday work is generally required. Operators may be required to work overtime.

Employment

Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators held about 111,000 jobs in 2006. Almost 4 in 5 operators worked for local governments. Others worked primarily for private water, sewage, and other systems utilities and for private waste treatment and disposal and waste management services companies. Private firms are increasingly providing operation and management services to local governments on a contract basis.

Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators were employed throughout the country, but most jobs were in larger towns and cities. Although nearly all operators worked full

time, those in small towns may work only part time at the treatment plant, with the remainder of their time spent handling other municipal duties.

Education and training

A high school diploma usually is required for an individual to become a water or wastewater treatment plant operator. The completion of an associate degree or a 1-year certificate program in water quality and wastewater treatment technology increases an applicant's chances for employment and promotion because plants are becoming more complex. The majority of such programs may be offered by trade associations, and can be found throughout the country. These programs provide a good general knowledge of water and wastewater treatment processes, as well as basic preparation for becoming an operator. In some cases, a degree or certificate program can be substituted for experience, allowing a worker to become licensed at a higher level more quickly.

Trainees usually start as attendants or operators-in-training and learn their skills on the job under the direction of an experienced operator. They learn by observing and doing routine tasks such as recording meter readings, taking samples of wastewater and sludge, and performing simple maintenance and repair work on pumps, electric motors, valves, and other plant equipment. Larger treatment plants generally combine this on-the-job training with formal classroom or self-paced study programs.

Most State drinking water and water pollution control agencies offer courses to improve operators' skills and knowledge. The courses cover principles of treatment processes and process control, laboratory procedures, maintenance, management skills, collection systems, safety, chlorination, sedimentation, biological treatment, sludge treatment and disposal, and flow measurements. Some operators take correspondence courses on subjects related to water and wastewater treatment, and some employers pay part of the tuition for related college courses in science or engineering.

Licensure

The Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, enforced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, specify national minimum standards for certification of public water system operators. Operators must pass a written examination certifying that they are capable of overseeing water treatment operations. Mandatory certification is implemented at the State level, and licensing requirements and standards vary widely depending on the State. There are generally three to four different levels of certification, depending on the operator's experience and training. Higher levels qualify the operator to oversee a wider variety of treatment processes. Although relocation may mean having to become certified in a new jurisdiction, many States accept other States' certifications through reciprocity.

Other Qualifications

Water and wastewater treatment plant operators need mechanical aptitude and the ability to solve problems intuitively. They should also be competent in basic mathematics, chemistry, and biology. They must have the ability to apply data to formulas that determine treatment requirements, flow levels, and concentration levels. Some basic familiarity with computers also

is necessary, as operators generally use them to record data. Some plants also use computer-controlled equipment and instrumentation.

Certification and Advancement

In addition to mandatory certifications required by law, operators can earn voluntary certifications that demonstrate their skills and knowledge. The Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) offers several levels and types of certification to people who pass written exams and have sufficient education and experience.

As operators are promoted, they become responsible for more complex treatment processes. Some operators are promoted to plant supervisor or superintendent; others advance by transferring to a larger facility. Postsecondary training in water and wastewater treatment, coupled with increasingly responsible experience as an operator, may be sufficient to qualify a worker to become superintendent of a small plant, where a superintendent also serves as an operator. However, educational requirements are rising as larger, more complex treatment plants are built to meet new drinking water and water pollution control standards. With each promotion, the operator must have greater knowledge of Federal, State, and local regulations. Superintendents of large plants generally need an engineering or science degree.

A few operators get jobs as technicians with State drinking water or water pollution control agencies. In that capacity, they monitor and provide technical assistance to plants throughout the State. Vocational-technical school or community college training generally is preferred for technician jobs. Experienced operators may transfer to related jobs with industrial liquid waste treatment plants, water or liquid waste treatment equipment and chemical companies, engineering consulting firms, or vocational-technical schools.

Employment Changes

Employment of water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators is expected to grow by 14 percent between 2006 and 2016, which is faster than the average for all occupations. An increasing population and the growth of the economy are expected to boost demand for water and wastewater treatment services. As new plants are constructed to meet this demand, new water and wastewater treatment plant and system operator new jobs will arise.

Local governments are the largest employers of water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators. Employment in privately owned facilities will grow faster, as Federal certification requirements have increased utilities' reliance on private firms specializing in the operation and management of water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Job Prospects

Job opportunities should be excellent because the retirement of the baby boomer generation will require that many operators with years of experience be replaced. Further, the number of applicants for these jobs is normally low, due primarily to the physically demanding and unappealing nature of some of the work. Opportunities should be best for persons with mechanical aptitude and problem solving skills.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators were \$36,070 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$28,120 and \$45,190. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$21,860, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$55,120. Median annual earnings of water and liquid waste treatment plant and systems operators in May 2006 were \$36,200 in local government and \$34,180 in water, sewage, and other systems.

In addition to their annual salaries, water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators usually receive benefits that may include health and life insurance, a retirement plan, and educational reimbursement for job-related courses.

Related Occupations

Other workers whose main activity consists of operating a system of machinery to process or produce materials include chemical plant and system operators; gas plant operators; petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, and gaugers; power plant operators, distributors, and dispatchers; and stationary engineers and boiler operators.

Sources of Additional Information

For information on employment opportunities, contact State or local water pollution control agencies, State water and liquid waste operator associations, State environmental training centers, or local offices of the State employment service.

For information on certification, contact: For information on Occupational Outlook Handbook
Association of Boards of Certification Internet: <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/#content>
208 Fifth St.
Ames, IA 50010-6259.
Internet: <http://www.abccert.org>

For educational information related to a career as a water or liquid waste treatment plant and system operator, contact:

American Water Works Association
6666 West Quincy Ave.
Denver, CO 80235
Internet: <http://www.awwa.org>

Water Environment Federation
601 Wythe St.
Alexandria, VA 22314-1994
Internet: <http://www.wef.org>

The National Environmental Services Center's (NESC) Drinking Water Operator Certification Web page.

http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/subpages/operator_certification.cfm

ARIZONA OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *What must I do to become a certified operator?*

An applicant must comply with the education and experience requirements for the certification classification and grade for which application is made and achieve a passing score on the certification examination.

2. *Can I still become a certified operator if I didn't finish high school?*

An applicant must have at least a high school graduation or the equivalent pursuant to R18-5-112.D(1) of the Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C.).

3. *I passed a GED test. Does this satisfy the high school requirement?*

The rule refers to “high school graduation or the equivalent”. High school equivalency is accepted as being equal to a high school diploma.

4. *If I have a bachelor's degree in a technical discipline, do I still have to pass an examination and meet the experience requirements?*

Each applicant must pass an examination and meet minimum experience requirements to become a certified operator. However, an applicant may be eligible to take a higher grade examination depending on the amount of post secondary education that an applicant has completed. ADEQ will determine if you are qualified to take an examination at a higher grade level.

5. *Do I have to attend a class to become a certified operator?*

You do not have to attend a mandatory class to become a certified operator. However, a class or refresher course may be very helpful.

6. *How do I apply for an examination?*

ADEQ Operator Certification Program has a contract with Gateway Community College (GWCC) to proctor Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) exams. GWCC will be proctoring exams; Gateway Community College web link.

<http://environment.gatewaycc.edu/> Please contact the contractor directly for exam dates, times and exam fees. The applicant is responsible for any fees associated with taking an examination.

7. *Is there a fee for the certificate that ADEQ issues?*

There is no fee for a certificate. This includes a new or renewed certificate or a certificate gained through reciprocity.

8. Do I have to notify the Department before taking an examination?

No. You may directly contact the contractor and complete an application for examination. The contractor and/or ADEQ will determine if you are qualified to take an examination. After passing an examination, the contractor is required to notify the Department with the results within seven (7) days. The Department then issues the certificate by inputting the data into the operator certification database. The actual certificate is printed at the beginning of each month and mailed to the address on the certificate.

9. What type of examination is required to become a certified operator?

Examinations are 100 questions in length. Questions pertain to operating a water treatment plant, distribution system, wastewater treatment plant, or collection system, and regulatory questions from the appropriate sections of the Arizona Administrative Code. An applicant is required to score a minimum of 70% correct on an examination in order to attain a passing grade.

For all grades of water treatment plant operator or distribution system operator examinations, regulatory questions will be taken from the *Safe Drinking Water*, Title 18, Chapter 4 and *Classification of Treatment Plants and Certification of Operators*, Title 18, Chapter 5, Article 1.

For all grades of wastewater treatment plant operator or collection system operator examinations, regulatory questions will be taken from *Unified Water Quality Permit Rules*, Title 18, Chapter 9, Article 1- 7 and *Classification of Treatment Plants and Certification of Operators*, Title 18, Chapter 5, Article 1.

10. What is a PDH?

PDH means professional development hour.

11. What is a Professional Development Hour?

A professional development hour is equal to one contact hour of continuing education. A total of 30 professional development hours are required for each 3-year renewal period **regardless of the number of certificates that are held by an individual operator**. Ten of the thirty PDHs must be directly related to an operator's job.

The legal definition contained in the Arizona Administrative Code defines a professional development hour as follows:

"Professional development hour" means one hour of participation in an organized educational activity related to

engineering, biological or chemical sciences, a closely related technical or scientific discipline, or operations management.

12. How do I renew my certificate?

To renew a certificate an operator is required to submit a list indicating the date, type of training, and number of PDHs on a PDH Tracking and Renewal form approved by the Department. Mail, fax or email the form to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Operator Certification Program.

Training certificates or other documents should not be attached to the form unless requested by the Department. The Department randomly audits a percentage of renewals and may ask an operator to provide the applicable documentation. Keep your documentation in case you are asked by the Department for verification.

To obtain a copy of the renewal form go to the ADEQ web site at:
<http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/dw/opcert.html>

13. What type of PDHs are acceptable to the Department for certificate renewal?

The type of PDH acceptable to the Department for certificate renewal includes, but is not limited to: an approved college course, a course offered by a Certified Environmental Trainer, regulatory and tribal agency training, certain types of in-house training, technical conferences, correspondence courses, and manufacturer product training. An accredited college course is usually recorded in credit hours. In general, 1 college credit hour = 10 PDHs. If an operator has a question about a specific type of training, please contact the Operator Certification Coordinator for approval before attending the training.

14. Do I have to take continuing education to maintain my certificate?

No, in lieu of continuing education, an operator may take a written examination for the same class and grade or, if eligible, the next higher grade.

15. Will the Department notify me before my certificate expires?

No, since the rule requiring a fee for certification was repealed, an operator will no longer receive an invoice from ADEQ. It is the responsibility of the operator to maintain the requirements associated with certification. This includes notifying the Department of a change of address as well as renewing a certificate on time. If an operator is unsure when a specific certificate expires, the Department will furnish the operator with this information. In addition, the Department has a current database with each **active** operator's information available on the ADEQ website.

<http://www.azdeq.gov/databases/opcertsearch.html>

16. If my certificate expires, do I have to retake a written examination?

Within 90 days after a certificate expires, an operator may be reinstated by meeting all renewal requirements. After 90 days, an operator must take a written examination for the same class and grade to remain a certified operator. An operator may also take an exam for the next higher grade if eligible.

17. All of my certificates expire on different dates.

The rule allows an operator to request, in writing, a common expiration date (month and year), up to 3 years, for each certificate renewed. The Department recommends that each operator take advantage of this option for easier record keeping of certificate expiration dates and PDHs earned toward certificate renewal. We are accepting requests through regular mail, e-mail or fax. Phone requests will not be honored.

18. Can I receive a grandparented certificate under this rule?

The rule does not allow for any grandparenting of certificates. All certificates must be earned by testing or through reciprocity with another recognized jurisdiction. All current grandparented certificates are valid. If a grandparented certificate has expired for more than 90 days, the operator is required to take a written examination under the experience and education requirements of the rule.

19. How can I communicate effectively with ADEQ staff?

All operators are required to notify the Department, in writing, of any changes in employment within 10 days. Operators should also notify the Department of any changes in their personal contact information. Whenever an operator corresponds with the Department in any format, please include the following information (if applicable):

- operator ID # and name
- current mailing address
- day time phone number
- e-mail address
- certificate type, grade, expiration date

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR (T) – Possess a working knowledge of the Safe Drinking Water Act and Title 18, Chapters 4 and 5 of the Arizona Administrative Code (http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm) and OSHA safety requirements. Monitor raw water entering the plant and passing through each treatment process. Maintain and repair equipment and facilities as necessary. Perform periodic operating checks of plant equipment such as pumping systems, chemical feeders, auxiliary equipment and measuring and control systems. Perform routine maintenance such as lubrication, operational adjustments, cleaning, and painting equipment. Load and unload chemicals, such as chlorine cylinders, bulk liquids, powdered chemicals, and other water treatment chemicals using appropriate chemical-handling procedures. Perform minor corrective maintenance on plant equipment. Maintain plant records. Monitor the status of plant operating guidelines such as chemical feeds and pressures. Collect samples and perform laboratory analysis on samples. Estimate budgets. Conduct safety inspections. Make arithmetic calculations to determine chemical feed rates, flow quantities, and detention and contact times.

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM OPERATOR (D) – Possess a working knowledge of the Safe Drinking Water Act and Title 18, Chapters 4 and 5 of the Arizona Administrative Code (http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm), and OSHA safety requirements. Possess a working knowledge of traffic control regulations, Arizona Blue Stake law, and securing work sites to protect both the operator and the general public. Collect water samples. Excavate, install, connect, test, and disinfect, new water mains. Install and maintain meters, services and related connections. Repair, maintain, test, flush and clean existing water mains. Update water distribution “as built”. Adjust, repair, clean, overhaul, operate and maintain pumps, motors, controls, disinfection systems, regulating valves, storage tanks and reservoirs. Regulate system flows, pressures and exercise valves. Troubleshoot electrical and mechanical equipment. Keep records and prepare reports. Manage budgets. Conduct safety inspections.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR (W) – Possess a working knowledge of the Clean Water Act and Title 18, Chapters 5 and 9 of the Arizona Administrative Code (http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm), and OSHA safety requirements. Operate sewage treatment, sludge processing, and disposal equipment in a wastewater treatment plant to control the flow and processing of sewage. Monitor control panels and adjust valves and gates manually or by remote control to regulate the flow of sewage. Observe variations in operating conditions and interpret meter and gauge readings and tests results to determine load requirements. Start and stop pumps, engines, and generators to control the flow of raw sewage through filtering, settling, aeration, and sludge digestion processes. Maintain log of operations and record meter and gauge readings. Give directions in performing routine operations and maintenance. Collect sewage samples, using dipper or bottle and conduct laboratory tests, using testing equipment, such as colorimeter.

WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM OPERATOR (C) – Possess a working knowledge of the Clean Water Act and Title 18, Chapters 5 and 9 of the Arizona Administrative Code (http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm), and OSHA safety requirements. A wastewater collection system gathers the used water from our homes and businesses and conveys it to a wastewater treatment plant. The collection system includes the gravity sewers, force mains, manholes, pumping equipment and other facilities. Operates and inspects the system to keep the wastewater flowing. Inspect/install new service connections using closed-circuit television to inspect sewers. Clean sewers; remove stoppages in sewers, maintain equipment and repair lines, equipment and facilities.

Operator Certification Exam Reference Materials

These reference materials are not the only source of information. In preparing to take an exam you should use any materials that are available to you.

Arizona Administrative Code

Title 18, Chapter 4, Articles 1 -8

Title 18, Chapter 5, Article 1

Title 18, Chapter 9, Articles 1 – 7

These articles can found at the Secretary of Sate website at:

http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Table_of_Contents.htm

Operator Certification Exam Study Guides

The Association of Boards of Certification web page will provide the Need to Know Criteria for Preparing for the Certification Examination. There are also **Study Guides** and **Practice Exams** at <http://www.abccert.org/examinformation.html>

ABC works with AWWA and WEF to develop guides to help operators prepare for the exam. Study guides may be purchased from:

- [American Water Works Association](#) Bookstore
Phone (800) 926-7337
 - [Operator Certification Study Guide](#), Fifth Edition: A Guide to Preparing for Water Treatment and Distribution Operator Certification Exams
- [Water Environment Federation](#) Bookstore
Phone (800) 666-0206
 - WEF/ABC [Wastewater Operators' Guide](#) to Preparing for the Certification Examination
 - WEF/ABC [Collection Systems Operators' Guide](#) to Preparing for the Certification Examination

This list provides an example of some exam reference materials that can be used to prepare for an exam. Any other publications, training, workshops, conferences or web sites can be utilized.

Operator Certification Sacramento Manuals

OFFICE OF WATER PROGRAMS

California State University Sacramento

Phone 916-278-6142, Fax 916-278-5959

<http://www.owp.csus.edu/training/courses/orderform.php>

Water Distribution System Operation and Maintenance

Operation of Water Treatment Plants. Vol

Operation of Water Treatment Plants. Vol. 2

Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems Vol. 1

Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems Vol. 2

Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants. Vol. 1

Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants. Vol. 2

Advanced Waste Treatment

American Water Works Association

1.800.926.7337

<http://www.awwa.org/bookstore/ProductList.cfm>

Water Supply Operations I: Water Sources, Textbook

Water operator training text teaches fundamentals of water sources for drinking water.

ISBN 1-58321-229-9; Catalog Number 1955.

Water Supply Operations II: Water Treatment, Textbook

Water operator training text teaches fundamentals of common water treatment processes and techniques.

ISBN 1-58321-230-2; Catalog Number 1956.

Water Supply Operations III: Water Transmission and Distribution

Basic principles of design, construction, operation, and maintenance of water transmission and distribution systems.

ISBN 1-58321-231-0; Catalog Number 1957.

Water Supply Operations IV: Water Quality, Textbook

Water operator training text teaches fundamentals of water quality analysis and drinking water regulations.

ISBN -58321-232-9; Catalog Number 1958.

Water Supply Operations V: Basic Science Concepts and Applications

Water operator training text teaches fundamental mathematics, hydraulics, chemistry, and electricity as they apply to municipal water supply.

ISBN 1-58321-233-7; Catalog Number 1959.

Operator Certification Examinations

ADEQ has contracted with one of our educational colleagues, Gateway Community College (GCC) to proctor Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) operator certification exams for all operator classifications and grade levels. GCC has the expertise, the testing facilities and the staff to proctor ABC exams that will maintain high professional standards for the Arizona industry. Check the ADEQ OPCERT web page for exam information. <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/dw/opcert.html>

GCC is charging \$70.00 per exam, which is well within the middle range of current national exam fees and within the range of fees that were charged by third-party Arizona entities in 2002-2007. For registration, exam dates and exam locations, visit Gateway Community College (GCC) at <http://environment.gatewaycc.edu/>

ADEQ anticipates a smooth transition and an improved long-term approach to certification for water and wastewater operators in Arizona. ADEQ will be approaching other Community Colleges to inquire if they are interested in proctoring ABC exams.

Operator Certification Exam Study Guides

The Association of Boards of Certification web page will provide the Need to Know Criteria for Preparing for the Certification Examination. There are also **Study Guides** and **Practice Exams** at <http://www.abccert.org/examinformation.html>

Operator Certification Identification Documentation

Effective Oct. 1, 2008, a person sitting for an exam for the purposes of obtaining a certified operators license must present appropriate identification. Such documentation includes, but is not limited to, an Arizona drivers license issued on or after Jan. 1, 1997, a United States Passport or a birth certificate issued in any state, territory or possession of the United States. For any questions concerning proper forms of documentation or other forms of acceptable documentation not previously mentioned, please contact Bill Reed, Operator Certification Coordinator, at wpr@azdeq.gov.

Operator Certification Web Links

To receive updates by email follow the link provided below and open the subscribe banner bar at the top of the page. <http://www.azdeq.gov/>

- 1) Workshops dates, training and stakeholder meetings related to drinking water and wastewater system operator certification and rules,
- 2) Information regarding Renewals, Reciprocity, and
- 3) How to Become a Certified Operator can be found on our web page, <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/dw/opcert.html>



THE DEPARTMENT WILL NOT NOTIFY YOU REGARDING THE EXPIRATION OF YOUR CERTIFICATES.

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION RENEWAL FORM

Professional Development Hours (PDH).

A professional development hour (PDH) is equal to one contact hour of continuing education. A total of 30 professional development hours are required for each 3-year renewal period regardless of the number of certificates that are held by an operator.

The type of PDH acceptable to the Department for certificate renewal include, but are not limited to: an approved college course, a course offered by a Certified Environmental Trainer, regulatory and tribal agency training, certain types of in-house training, technical conferences, correspondence courses, and manufacturer product training. An accredited college course is usually recorded in credit hours. In general, 1 college credit hour = 10 PDHs. If an operator has a question about a specific type of training, please call the Operator Certification Program Coordinator for approval before attending the training. The Department randomly audits renewals and may ask an operator to provide the applicable documentation. Keep your documentation in case you are asked by the Department for verification.

KEEP YOUR DOCUMENTATION OF SUBMITAL OF RENEWAL.

CERTIFICATE RENEWAL REQUESTS ARE PROCESSED DURING THE MONTH THAT THE CERTIFICATES ARE DUE TO EXPIRE.

Certificates are printed at the end of each month. If you have not received your renewed certificate within 30 days after the month it was due to expire please Email wpr@azdeq.gov to confirm your renewal.

CERTIFICATES LAPSE AFTER 90 DAYS; 60 DAYS AFTER EXPIRATION CONTACT THE OPCERT PROGRAM TO CONFIRM CERTIFICATE RENEWAL.

Mail the completed form to:
 Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
 Operator Certification Program
 1110 W. Washington St. Mail Code 5415 B-2
 Phoenix, AZ 85007

Email or FAX:
 Fax 602.771.4634
 Email wpr@azdeq.gov
www.azdeq.gov
 Phone: 602.771.4638

DO NOT MAIL OR FAX THIS INTRODUCTORY PAGE

Operator Certification Renewal Form Operator Certification Renewal Form

Name _____ Operator Number _____ SSN Last Four Digits Only _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____ E-mail _____

System Name and Number _____

Drinking Water Wastewater Employment Start Date _____

Indicate the type, grade, and expiration date for each certificate that you hold.

TYPE	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	EXP
Water Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Water Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Wastewater Collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Wastewater Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Do you want a common expiration date for all your certificates? NO YES Date (month/year) _____

May not exceed 3 years from the current renewal date.

DATE	Technical/Job-related Training	HOURS	DATE	Technical/Job-related Training	HOURS
TOTAL			TOTAL		

If the requested information exceeds this form or you have any additional information, please continue on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this form.

I hereby certify that the above information is complete and correct.

Certified Operator Signature

Date

Do Not Call To Confirm Receipt Of This Form.

If you have not received your renewed certificate within 30 days after the month it was due to expire please

Email wpr@azdeq.gov to confirm your renewal. Rev. January 2009