

INFORMATION FOR OPERATORS TAKING EXAMS

FOR EXAM STUDY MATERIAL AND SUBCLASS DEFINITIONS:

Visit the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) operator website at www.dep.pa.gov/operatorcenter, click on the Training button on right, click on "Department Training Modules" or contact the Operator Training staff at 717.787.0122.

Contact the Exam Provider listed on the exam schedule to sign up for Operator Certification Exams—not DEP.

EXAM FEES:

The exam provider charges an exam session fee (varies per exam provider) and DEP charges \$35 per exam session; however, operators are not charged the DEP \$35 exam fee until they apply for certification or sign up for their 5th exam session. If an operator is signed up for their 5th exam session, they will be notified by letter, phone and email that they are required to bring a check to the exam. If they do not bring a check to the exam, they will not receive exam scores until payment is received.

OPERATOR EXAMS TO TAKE:

- **Part 1 General Exam with the appropriate subclasses (treatment(s) at your system).** Operators who take the general exam cannot become certified without passing both the general knowledge Part 1 and at least one subclass exam(s).

OR

- **Standalone Certifications: WDC and WDN (Small Systems), WE (Distribution), WWE4 (Collections)** – Operators can be certified with one of the above standalone certifications. Do not take the WDC or WDN exam unless your system has been classified or reclassified by DEP as a WDC or WDN.
 - **WE (water distribution):** standalone OR can be combined with Water A, B, C or D Class Size (example – WA,E - 1,2,3,4)
 - **WWE4 (wastewater collections systems):** can be combined with Wastewater A, B, C or D Class Size (example – WWD,E - 1, 4)
 - **WE – Water Distribution:** can be combined with treatment subclasses 7-14 only (example - WE - 7, 8, 10)
 - **WWE4 – Wastewater Collections:** standalone
 - **WDC Certification Standalone certification:** only applicable at small systems that meet all the following conditions:
 - System serves less than 500 people or has no more than 150 connections (whichever is less)
 - Source of water for the system is exclusively groundwater
 - Requires only disinfection treatment, and
 - Not in violation of DEP regulations
 - Provides the ability to operate a WDC system with gaseous chlorine, non-gaseous chemical, ultraviolet disinfection, and distribution
 - WDC is not transferable or upgradable; you must take the water general and various subclasses to upgrade
 - **WDN Certification Standalone certification:** must meet all the conditions of the **WDC with no treatment**. Prior to signing up for either the WDC or WDN exam, contact Operator Certification staff at 717.787.5236 to verify that you work at a WDC or WDN system. There are very few systems designated as WDN.
 - **Neither WDC nor WDN should be taken with other exams**

WDC AND WDN CERTIFICATES ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE to facilities that do not meet the above criteria. DEP recommends that operators take the Part 1 General Exam and subclasses and apply for certification, so they are not limited to working at a WDC or WDN facility. You cannot upgrade these types of licenses. These certifications are only valid at facilities that meet the specific criteria.

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Operators need to know the treatment technologies their system uses so they can take the proper exams. In order to ensure the proper exam(s) are being taken and the appropriate certificate(s) are obtained, operators should check with their system owner, supervisor/superintendent, lead operator, NPDES or PWS Permit or DEP sanitarian/compliance specialist/operator to verify their system's class size (A, B, C, D, E)—water system based on hydraulic design capacity; wastewater system based on permitted average daily discharge flow and/or treatment technologies (subclasses).

Ensure all information is complete, accurate and legible on the registration form. If you have a Client ID, please write it legibly on the exam registration form. The Client ID can be located on previous exam results letters or on your operator certificate if you are already certified. Provide your current address, email address and a valid phone number in case Operator Certification needs to contact you. **PLEASE NOTE: Exam results are provided via email.**

DEP only requires the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number, and it is only needed if you have never taken exams before. If you already have a Client ID, please reflect it on the exam registration forms. Once you have a Client ID, it is used as your DEP identifier and you should have this number readily available when contacting DEP.

Operators can take up to 8 tests in one 4-hour exam session. The exam time on the exam registration form is only an estimation. There are no restrictions on how many exam sessions you can sit for.

If you need to cancel or change exams, contact the exam provider you registered with or DEP's Operator Certification Program at the above number. No additions/changes will be accepted one week prior to the exam unless Operator Certification approves them. DEP exam fees will be waived for cancellations up to 24 hours prior to exam or in case of emergency. **You will be charged by the exam provider and DEP if you do not show up to the exam session.**

DO NOT contact DEP Operator Certification for your exam scores unless it has been one month since you took the exam. If you move or change your email address, you must notify us immediately at the below number or you may not receive your certification paperwork. Operators must keep their address and contact information—including email address--current with DEP or you will not receive operator paperwork.

Operator-in-Training (OIT): Operators may take exams without experience; however, the Board will consider approving them as an Operator-in-Training if you pass the exams and apply. Once you meet the experience requirements, please complete and submit pages 2-3 of the application.

Laboratory Supervisor: To qualify for this certification, you must take and pass the exam, already be a certified operator and have two years of experience in the testing and analysis of environmental samples for water and wastewater systems.

Upgrade Class Size and/or subclass(es): Operators do not need to take exams to upgrade the class certificate (size of system A, B, C, D). Operators **do need to take subclass exams** to upgrade subclass treatment technologies and apply to upgrade your current certificate. To obtain an **application for certification upgrade or downgrade to operate water or wastewater systems** in class only, contact Operator Certification at the below number or go to the Operator Website and click on documents and forms.

You can transfer class A, B, C, or D certificates to other facilities as long as your certificate class matches or is higher than the class of the facility where you are employed. To be an available operator, you must have a certificate matching the class size (or higher class size) and all subclass(es) of the facility where you are employed.

CHECK YOUR FACILITY PERMIT FOR CLASS SIZE AND TREATMENT PROCESSES USED.

For more information, or if you have questions, visit the Operator Certification website at www.dep.pa.gov/operatorcenter or call 717.787.5236 to speak with someone in the Operator Certification Program.