

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2005

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE DIVISION
DRINKING WATER BRANCH**

WATER AND WASTEWATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

Summary of the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Program

Owner Responsibility

The Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act require that the day-to-day operation of all municipal plants be supervised by one or more persons who hold a certificate that authorizes him to operate such a plant.

Plants must be classified in order to determine the level of certification required by the operator. Classification information may be obtained from the Drinking Water Branch.

Most facilities, except large plants, require a minimum of ONE certified operator. Municipal officials should, though, make arrangements for a back-up operator in case the operator leaves for any reason.

Requirements for Certification

The certification requirements are set out in the Alberta Environment Water and Wastewater Operators' Certification Guidelines. These guidelines are available online at:

<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/water/DWQ/certification.html>

Requirements for certification are summarized as follows:

Level I Certification Minimum Requirements:

Grade 12 (or GED) + 1 year experience + successful completion of Mandatory Entry Level Training Course (or Level I Certification Preparation Course) + examination

Level II Certification Minimum Requirements:

Grade 12 (or GED) + 3 years of experience + examination

OR Grade 12 (or GED) + Specialized training** + 2 years of experience + examination

**Equivalent to 1-year post secondary education

Level III and IV Certification. An operator must have additional experience plus some specialized training or education as well as some supervisory experience. The Certification Guidelines provide more details.

Note: *A minimum of 1 year is required between exams in successive levels.*

Once the minimum education, training, and experience requirements have been met, an operator may apply for certification. If approved, an operator may then challenge the appropriate certification exam. If the operator passes the exam a Certificate of Qualification will be issued.

Examinations

To become certified, operators must first qualify and then pass a certification examination. Examination sessions are scheduled 3 times a year at various locations in the province. Exam schedules are available from the Drinking Water Branch.

A Certification application **MUST** be *received* by the Drinking Water Branch no later than the published deadline date. This is necessary to ensure sufficient time for processing so that the Certification Advisory Committee can review the information prior to making its recommendations.

Grade 12 or Alberta GED – The minimum education requirement for certification is successful **completion** of grade 12 or Alberta GED. For those people who do not have a grade 12 diploma, but still wish to become certified information on the GED process can be found at:

<http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/guide.asp?id=063005>

For those operators who have completed their education outside of Canada, you must have your education evaluated for possible equivalencies and relevance to the program. Information on this service can be found at:

<http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/iqas/iqas.asp>

Certification Courses

Information on the Mandatory Entry Level Course, or Level I Certification Preparation Course can be obtained by contacting the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association (AWWOA) toll-free at 1-866-454-7745 or by visiting their website at: www.awwoa.ab.ca.

Study Material

The Drinking Water Branch has prepared two manuals; "Water and Wastewater Operations Manual Level I" and "Water and Wastewater Operations Manual Level II". These are intended to be reference manuals for operators of Class I and Class II facilities. They are also study guides for Level I and Level II examinations.

The AWWOA has prepared Level III and IV Advanced Study Guides. All manuals/studies guidelines are for sale from the Western Canada Water and Wastewater Association in Calgary. Please call 1-877-283-2003 or visit their website at www.wcwwa.ca for more information or to place an order.

Further information regarding certification or to obtain copies of the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Guidelines, applications, or schedules of exams please visit our website at:

www3.gov.ab.ca/env/water/dwq/certification.html