

**COLLECTION SYSTEM OPERATOR  
CERTIFICATION**

**For certification rules and regulations please refer to NWEA's Policies & Procedures which can be accessed online at [www.nvwea.org](http://www.nvwea.org).**

**I. Definitions**

“**Program Administrator**” is a contracted position overseen by the Board to perform certification activities.

“**Assistant Supervisor**” means a person in direct responsible charge of operations in the absence of the supervisor.

“**Board**” means the Nevada Water Environment Association Certification Board.

“**Certificate**” means a certificate of competency issued by the Nevada Water Environment Association stating that the Collection System Operator has met the requirements of a specific operator classification. It specifies the name and grade of the person certified, as well as the date the certificate was issued.

“**Continuing Education Unit (CEU)**” = 10 contact hours.

“**Collection Operator in Training (COIT)**” means a person who has passed the Grade 1 exam but has not yet met the education and/or experience requirements to be certified as a Grade 1 Collection System Operator.

“**Full Time or Equivalent (FTE)**” = qualifying experience.

“**Operator**” means any person, other than a supervisor or assistant supervisor, who is working as an operator of a collection system for sewage conveyance.

“**Responsible Charge**” means a person responsible for all activities associated with collection system operations and compliance with all applicable regulations.

“**Rules and Regulations**” means rules, regulations, and policy for certification of the collection system operators.

“**Supervisor**” means a person in direct responsible charge of the collection system operation.

“**Collection System**” means a system of conveyance pipes, manholes, and lift stations to convey the sewage to a wastewater treatment plant.

**II. Experience and Education Requirements**

Grade	Education & Certification	Experience*
1	High School or equivalent & 6 CEUs (see Section XII)	1 year full-time or equivalent (FTE)
2	Grade 1 Certification	2 years FTE
3	Grade 2 Certification	3 years FTE
4	Grade 3 Certification	4 years FTE

\*Collection System Operator experience includes time spent performing collection system operational duties.

In addition to the above requirements, the applicant must pass a written examination at each grade level.

**III. Collection System Operator in Training**

An individual may take the Grade I exam without first meeting the required education and/or experience requirements. Upon passing the exam, the individual will be issued a Collection System Operator in Training (COIT) certificate. The COIT certificate may be renewed every two (2) years. When the COIT has met all of the requirements for the Grade I, the individual may submit documentation of having met said requirements to the Board. Upon approval of the documentation, the COIT certificate will be converted to a Grade I certificate that expires on the date the COIT certificate previously did.

**IV. How to Apply for Certification**

To apply for certification, an applicant needs to submit a completed application form and a \$150 nonrefundable fee to the Program Administrator. Applications must be postmarked no later than 30 days prior to the posted examination date. Upon approval of the application, the applicant will be notified of the approval and the available examination dates and locations. The Board reserves the right to deny an application for certification if the Board determines that any requirement for such certification is not met. A fee of \$25 may be charged to any person whose check is returned because of a lack of funds.

**V. Certification Exam**

The Board will hold examinations at times and places throughout the year as may be required and convenient to the applicants. Computerized exams are available anytime at locations in Nevada and nationwide for an additional fee of \$64. In the event an applicant fails to pass an examination, the applicant may apply for re-examination upon submission of a new application and filing fee. Applicants for certification will be required to pass a written examination to demonstrate their knowledge in the following areas:

**GRADE 1**

Basic principles and methods of collection system operations and specific knowledge of the procedures involved in operating and maintaining a collection system; safety procedures.

**GRADE 2**

Inspecting and testing collection systems; pipeline maintenance; underground repair; safety procedures; and basics of lift station operation.

**GRADE 3**

Specific knowledge relating to: design of collection systems, lift stations, equipment maintenance and sewer rehabilitation.

**GRADE 4**

Specific knowledge relating to: organization for system operation and maintenance, safety programs for collection system operators, lift stations, equipment maintenance, sewer rehabilitation, underground repair, inspecting and testing.

**VI. Reciprocity with Other States**

Reciprocity will be considered from applicants holding valid certificates from all certification programs in the United States and Canada. The applicant must meet all current education and experience requirements. Upon approval of the applicant's qualifications, reciprocity will be granted one grade lower than the equivalent grade currently held by the applicant, with the exception that if an applicant currently holds the equivalent of a grade one certification that reciprocity will be granted at grade one.

If an applicant has received certification directly from the Association of Boards of Certification reciprocity will be granted as follows: 1) They must hold a valid certificate that was issued by the Association of Boards of Certification. 2) The applicant must meet all current education and experience requirements. 3) Upon approval of the applicant's qualifications, reciprocity will be granted at the equivalent grade currently held by the applicant.

Reciprocity will be considered on a case by case basis from applicants holding valid certificates from certification programs located outside of the United States and Canada.

Certificates issued by reciprocity will be designated as such.

The fee for reciprocity is \$200.

**VII. Certificate Renewals**

Any certificate issued under the present rules and regulations shall be valid for a period of two (2) years from the date of issuance. Any certificate not renewed after two (2) years becomes automatically suspended. No examination shall be required for renewal, provided that the previous certificate shall not have been invalid for a period of more than one (1) year. The renewal application and renewal fee of \$80 should be sent to the Program Administrator for renewal of any Nevada certificate. Any renewal post-marked after the expiration date will be charged a \$20 late fee.

**VIII. Replacement / Duplicate Certificate**

Certified operators desiring a replacement or duplicate certificate may obtain such certificate upon payment of a \$20 fee.

**IX. Decertification**

The NWEA may revoke or refuse to renew the certificate of any operator. All revocation cases will be reviewed by a hearing before the Board of Certification, and a decision will be made by a unanimous vote of the quorum; quorum being five (5) out of seven (7).

A case for decertification may be considered by the Board for, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) The Collection System Operator is incompetent or unable to perform his/her duties properly; or
- 2) The Nevada experience and education requirements for wastewater operator certification have not been satisfied; or
- 3) The operator has practiced fraud or deception; or
- 4) The operator has failed to renew his/her certificate in accordance with these provisions.

**X. Appeals and Protests**

Any appeal or protest made because of the determination of the Program Administrator shall be in writing to the Board Chair. This notification shall be sent within twenty (20) days of receipt of the Administrator's written determination. The Chair shall, within sixty (60) days, make an inquiry of the protest and give an answer in writing. Any appeal of the Board Chair's determination shall be to the Certification Board. Further appeal may be made to the NWEA Executive Board, whose decision shall be final. Appellant must send the original facts again, and state in writing which part of the Committee's decision he/she deems improper, and why.

## XI. Suggested Study Materials

### Suggested ABC Collection Exam References

The following are approved as reference sources for the ABC collection examinations. Operators should use the latest edition of these reference sources to prepare for the exam.

- California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) Foundation, Office of Water Programs
- Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Volume I and II
  - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume I and II
  - Manage for Success

To order, contact: Office of Water Programs  
California State University, Sacramento  
6000 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95819-6025  
Web site: [www.owp.csus.edu](http://www.owp.csus.edu)  
Phone: (916) 278-6142  
Fax: (916) 278-5959  
E-mail: [wateroffice@owp.csus.edu](mailto:wateroffice@owp.csus.edu)

### Water Environment Federation

- Operation of Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants - Manual of Practice No. 11
- Existing Sewer Evaluation and Rehabilitation - Manual of Practice FD-6
- Wastewater Collection Systems Management - Manual of Practice No. 7

To order, contact: Water Environment Federation  
601 Wythe Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1994  
Web site: [www.wef.org](http://www.wef.org)  
Phone: (800) 666-0206  
Fax: (703) 684-2492  
E-mail: [pubs@wef.org](mailto:pubs@wef.org)

## XII. Certification Training

Courses directly related to wastewater treatment will receive full value. Courses indirectly related to wastewater treatment will receive one-half value. Directly related short courses, including those given at the Water Quality Control Institute, are equivalent to one CEU per 8-hour day, with a maximum of three CEUs per week. If the course is considered to be indirectly related, one CEU will be given for each two days, with a maximum of two CEUs per week. College courses (including extension and correspondence courses taken for credit) earn 1.5 CEUs per semester credit. Indirectly related courses earn a half-credit. (Half-credit = 0.7 CEU per semester credit)

### Directly Related Correspondence Courses

California State University, Sacramento

1. Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Vol. I & II (9 CEUs each)
2. Advanced Waste Treatment (9 CEUs)
3. Small Wastewater System Operation and Maintenance, Vol. I & II (9 CEUs each)
4. Industrial Waste Treatment, Vol. I & II (9 CEUs each)
5. Treatment of Metal Wastestreams (4.5 CEUs)
6. Pretreatment Facility Inspection (9 CEUs)
7. Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Vol. I & II (9 CEUs each)

### College Courses Earning Full Credit

(1.5 CEUs per semester credit):

1. College Chemistry - up to 12 CEUs.
2. Mathematics area: Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Statistics – up to 12 CEUs. Does not include basic, introductory, or business math courses.

### Certification Training (continued)

3. Biological Science area: Microbiology, Pathogenic Bacteriology, etc. - up to 9 CEUs.
4. General Physics - up to 9 CEUs.
5. Engineering courses: Fluid Mechanics, Hydraulics, and Engineering courses not directly related.

### College Courses Earning Half Credit

(0.7 CEU per semester credit):

1. Technical Writing - up to 3 CEUs.
2. Public or Business Administration - up to 9 CEUs in the areas of Organization, Management, Finance, Supervision, Budgeting, etc.
3. Public Speaking - up to 3 CEUs.

### Courses Accepted by WWET for CEUs

1. One-day training seminars, safety conferences, or NWEA, CWEA, or WEF-sponsored conventions will receive one CEU per day attended, up to 3 CEUs, provided that an education program is offered.
2. Other extension courses or training of any type which might relate to the operator's duties will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. CEUs will be allowed based on the material covered, the depth of the coverage, and the time required to complete the course.

*Other Wastewater Certification Programs available through NWEA:*

- *Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator*
- *Wastewater Quality Analyst*
- *Industrial Waste Inspector*
- *Industrial Waste Operator*
- *Plant Maintenance Technologist*

06/15

# Nevada Wastewater Certification Programs



## *Collection System Operator*

### **Nevada Water Environment Association**

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Las Vegas, Nevada 89193

775-465-2045

[www.nvwea.org](http://www.nvwea.org)