



NEVADA BOARD OF CERTIFICATION FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATORS



POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

Except as otherwise noted, the policies & procedures contained herein apply to all certification disciplines administered by the Nevada Water Environment Association.

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Job Definition and Duties

Definition for “Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator”

A wastewater treatment plant operator is a trained professional whose primary responsibility is to monitor and control the treatment processes and equipment at their facility to ensure that the water quality requirements in the facility’s permit are continuously met in order to protect human health and the environment.

Included below are examples of job duties that may be performed on a daily basis by an operator. No one task will be deemed full time operations experience because an operator performs a variety of the duties listed below on a daily basis.

Examples of operator job duties:

An operator performs a variety of the duties listed:

- Operates pumps, valves, and other equipment via computer, hand or mechanical means to regulate the flow of wastewater through various treatment processes.
- Inspects plant equipment and reports any failures or operating difficulties.
- Initiates work orders and requests repairs to equipment.
- Performs repairs on equipment when necessary.
- Stops and starts equipment as required for operation and repairs.
- Takes samples of wastewater, scum, grit, sludge and other materials and properly fills out the chain of custody for samples and delivers the samples to the laboratory for analysis.
- May perform lab analyses to determine the efficiencies of treatment processes and online instrumentation.
- Operates solid processing equipment to de-water wastewater solids before disposal.
- Operates, adjusts and performs basic maintenance on chemical mixing and feed equipment to ensure compliance with established guidelines.
- Reads meters, gauges, charts and instruments documenting all required information.

- Receives and unloads bulk chemicals, some of which may be hazardous, for plant operations and stores when and where appropriate.
- Reads and follows safety information on material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals used on site.
- May drive heavy equipment on plant grounds such as, but not limited to, front-end loader, backhoe, forklift, street sweepers, tractor-trailers, dump-trucks and various other types of vehicles as needed.
- Cleans, lubricates and performs routine preventive maintenance of plant equipment and facilities.
- Performs record keeping functions by logging information on the plant operation, test results from process lab, maintenance work performed and unusual operating conditions in the logbook.
- Cleans equipment by using high-pressure water sprayers and associated cleaners, cleans weirs on clarifiers when necessary.
- Uses proper hand and power tools to complete assigned tasks.
- Performs basic facility and grounds maintenance.
- Must use a computer in the course of the work to monitor plant equipment.
- Must be trained on confined spaces and may be required to assist in confined space entries, or may be part of a confined space entry team.
- Drives company vehicles to work sites, transports materials and assists other staff as required. May supervise or be in responsible charge of operations staff in performing the duties listed above.

Testing Eligibility

An individual may be approved to take a Grade One certification examination without first meeting the education and/or experience requirements. Upon passing the examination, the individual will be issued an in-training certificate. The in-training certificate may be renewed every two (2) years. Upon meeting the education and experience requirements for the Grade One, an individual holding an in-training certificate may apply to be upgraded to a Grade One by submitting an upgrade form and all required documentation to the Board. Upon approval of the documentation, the in-training certificate will be converted to a Grade One certificate that expires on the date the in-training certificate previously did.

An individual may be approved to take a Grade Two, Grade Three or Grade Four certification examination up to 90 days prior to meeting the experience requirement, but not before meeting the education and sequential examination requirements. Upon passing the examination, the individual will be issued a certificate on the date he/she meets the experience requirement at the Grade level for which he/she was approved to test. The effective date of the certification will be the date that he/she has met the experience requirement, which shall be verified by the Program Administrator.

An individual may be approved to take a Grade One, Grade Two, Grade Three or Grade Four certification examination upon meeting the education, experience and sequential examination requirements. Upon passing the examination, the individual will be issued a certificate at the Grade level for which he/she was approved to test.

Computerized Testing

Exam candidates applying to take a certification exam may be offered the option to take a computerized certification exam through the Association of Boards of Certification. Available computerized testing centers will be as currently approved by the Association of Boards of Certification. This option shall not be available for Nevada Water Environment Association certifications for Industrial Waste Inspectors.

Exam candidates approved to take a computerized certification exam shall be responsible for registering to take the computerized exam upon receiving approval notification from the Association of Boards of Certification. Exam candidates shall also be responsible for paying a separate computerized exam fee when they register to take the exam, which is in addition to the normal testing fee submitted for pencil and paper exams.

Exam candidates will be provided with a date specific 90-day window to register and take the exam. If an exam candidate does not register and take the exam during the approved 90-day window, he/she forfeits all testing fees that were submitted and will need to reapply and submit new testing fees to retake the exam.

Exam candidates who fail a computerized exam may retake the exam no sooner than 30 days after failing the exam. Retesting within 30 days is contingent upon timely receipt of a new application and exam fees and also contingent upon testing slot availability at each computerized testing center.

The Nevada Water Environment Association is not responsible for lost or misdirected mail.

Experience

DIRECT EXPERIENCE

Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator: Hands-on operation or direct responsible charge of the operation of a system/facility or major segment of a system/facility.

NWEA Certifications: Hands-on operation, plant maintenance, laboratory or industrial inspection experience of the certification discipline being sought.

EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

The board may grant credit for work experience that does not meet the requirements of direct experience, but is related to the certification being sought. The board has sole discretion in determining what constitutes acceptable related experience and what constitutes acceptable direct experience for each type of certification.

Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required for any given level of certification. The remainder of the experience requirement must be from direct experience in the type of certification being sought. The breakdown for each grade of certification shall be as follows:

In-Training

No experience required.

Grade One

One year of total experience required, at least six months of which must be from direct experience.

Grade Two

Two years of total experience required, at least one and one-half years of which must be from direct experience.

Grade Three

Three years of total experience required, at least two and one-half years of which must be from direct experience.

Grade Four

Four years of total experience required, at least three and one-half years of which must be from direct experience.

Individuals participating in the College of Southern Nevada's Environmental Safety and Health Program with Wastewater Emphasis may receive related experience as follows:

Three months of related experience upon completion of a Certificate of Achievement (31 Credits).

Six months of related experience upon completion of an Associate of Applied Science Degree (60 Credits).

Multiple Certification Experience

Individuals seeking certification in more than one certification discipline are subject to the following experience policy, which shall be in addition to other existing policies. Please refer to the Related Experience Policy for the definition of direct experience.

No more than fifty percent of the direct experience that has been credited by the Board towards an existing certification may be applied towards the experience requirement for an additional certification. If an individual is seeking more than one additional certification, direct experience applied towards one additional certification may not be applied again towards another additional certification. The total direct experience from an existing certification being applied towards one or more additional certifications may never exceed fifty percent.

Duties related to the experience from an existing certification being applied towards another certification shall be documented by the applicant and verified by the applicant's supervisor. Acceptable duties that may be applied from one certification towards another certification shall be determined by the Board.

EXAMPLES

(For individuals seeking dual certification)

If an individual whose primary job duty is plant operations seeks certification as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, the individual may take a Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator certification exam when the requirements set forth in the Testing Eligibility Policy have been met. If the same individual's secondary job duty is laboratory analysis and the individual also seeks Wastewater Quality Analyst certification, the individual may apply up to 50% of their total experience towards Wastewater Quality Analyst certification, as documented by actual duties being performed. Thus, if an individual claiming 50% of their total time is spent on laboratory analysis, it would take the individual two years to qualify for the Grade 1 Wastewater Quality Analyst certification.

(For individuals seeking more than two certifications)

If an individual whose primary job duty is plant operations seeks certification as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, the individual may take a Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator certification exam when the requirements set forth in the Testing Eligibility Policy have been met. If the same individual's secondary job duties include laboratory analysis and plant maintenance and the individual also seeks certification in both additional job disciplines, the individual may apply up to 50% of their total experience towards those corresponding certifications. Thus, if an individual claiming 25% of their total time is spent on laboratory analysis and 25% on plant maintenance, it would take the individual four years to qualify for Grade 1 certifications in both of those disciplines.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity will be considered from applicants holding valid certificates from certification programs in the United States and Canada. Persons applying for reciprocity 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.

Reciprocity will be considered from applicants holding valid certificates from the Association of Boards of Certification. Persons applying for reciprocity must meet all current education and experience requirements. 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.

Applicants who are granted reciprocity one grade lower than the equivalent grade originally held by the applicant may obtain certification at the equivalent grade by applying for and passing the certification exam at that grade.

Renewal

Certificates shall be renewed for a period not to exceed two (2) years beyond the current term of an active certificate. To renew a certificate, a renewal application, renewal fee and any required documentation must be submitted to the Certification Administrator and be postmarked no later than the certification expiration date.

Renewals postmarked after the certificate expiration date become automatically suspended. A person shall not be deemed certified upon suspension of their certificate. A suspended certificate may be reinstated upon request up to one year following the certification expiration date. To reinstate a suspended certificate, a renewal application, renewal fee, any required documentation and a late fee must be submitted to the Certification Administrator and be postmarked no later than one year past the certification expiration date. Upon reinstatement, the certificate shall be valid for two (2) years from the original certification expiration date. Reinstating a certificate does not retroactively certify a person during the period when their certificate was suspended.

A person holding a suspended Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator certificate may be deemed decertified by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection one year past the certification expiration date. A person holding a suspended Nevada Water Environment Association Voluntary certificate shall be automatically decertified one year past the certification expiration date. A person who is decertified shall be required to retest and meet all current education, experience and testing requirements for recertification at that level.

Renewal Notification

NDEP MANDATORY CERTIFICATION (Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators)

At Least 30 Days Prior to Expiration

A renewal application will be mailed that includes the holder's expiration date. The application will also state the following information:

1. The fee required for renewal.
2. The late fee that will be required if the renewal application is not postmarked by the certification expiration date.
3. Notification that the holder of the certificate may be deemed decertified by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection if the certificate is not renewed within one year after the expiration date.

Three Months Past Expiration

A second and final renewal application will be mailed via Certified Mail (Return Receipt Requested) that includes the holder's expiration date. A final notice form letter will also be included stating that the holder may be deemed decertified by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection if the certificate is not renewed within one year after the expiration date and also stating the late fee required for renewal.

Four Months Past Expiration

A telephone call will be placed to the holder of the expired certificate to the last known telephone number on record. The telephone call will be documented.

Six Months Past Expiration

Notification, including mailed letters and telephone call(s) placed to the certified Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, will be made to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection for action as they deem appropriate.

One Year Past Expiration

Individuals deemed decertified by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection shall not be allowed to renew their certification. Retesting at the grade level the individual held at the time of decertification will be required for the individual to become certified again. It is permissible for the individual to retest at a lower grade level to obtain a lower grade certification instead.

NWEA VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATIONS

At Least 30 Days Prior to Expiration

A renewal application will be mailed that includes the holder's expiration date. The application will also state the following information:

1. The fee required for renewal.
2. The late fee that will be required if the renewal application is not postmarked by the certification expiration date.
3. Notification that the holder of the certificate shall be automatically decertified if the certificate is not renewed within one year after the expiration date.

Three Months Past Expiration

A second and final renewal application will be mailed via Certified Mail (Return Receipt Requested) that includes the holder's expiration date. A final notice form letter will also be included stating the holder shall be automatically decertified if the certificate is not renewed within one year after the expiration date and the late fee required for renewal.

Four Months Past Expiration

A telephone call will be placed to the holder of the expired certificate and documented.

One Year Past Expiration

The individual shall be automatically decertified. The letter mailed three months past expiration shall serve as notification of the decertification.

Voluntary Continuing Education

Certified individuals may voluntarily pursue continuing education as part of their certification renewal. Individuals meeting the continuing education criteria set forth in this policy will be recognized by the Certification Board with a Continuing Education Endorsement in conjunction with their certification renewal(s). The minimum voluntary continuing education requirements for each 2-year renewal period are listed below. For reference, ten contact hours are equivalent to one continuing education unit (CEU):

Grades I (1) & II (2):	5 contact hours
Grades III (3) & IV (4):	10 contact hours
Grade V	10 contact hours

In order for the certified individual to be recognized with a Continuing Education Endorsement an individual must check the continuing education box on their renewal form and submit acceptable documentation of the training. Examples of documentation are: copies of the course material with the number of hours listed and a sign in sheet with the individuals name listed, or copies of certificates that have the individual's name, the name of the class, and the number of training hours. Training that occurs outside of the 2-year renewal period window will not be accepted.

Individuals meeting the continuing education requirements will receive a Continuing Education Endorsement sticker to place on their certificate. The sticker will denote that the individual met the minimum number of continuing education hours for the renewal period.

If an individual does not submit the required continuing education documentation for their certification they will not receive a Continuing Education Endorsement until such time that the documentation is submitted.

If an individual holds multiple certifications they must submit documentation for each type of certification they hold. At least 50% of the training must be directly related to the type of

certification that is being submitted. Up to 50% of the training may be indirectly related to the type of certification that is being submitted. Only 20% of the total training hours may come from safety classes. The Certification Board has sole discretion in determining what constitutes directly related training and what constitutes indirectly related training for each type of certification. For example a Grade I Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator submits documentation of 2 classes he attended. The first class is a wastewater math class that was 3 hours long. The second class is for a water treatment class that was 2 hours long. Since at least 50% of the training submitted is directly related, the wastewater operator will meet the continuing education requirement for this renewal period. Training credited towards one certification may also be credited towards another certification if the Certification Board deems the training relevant to both certifications.

Courses do not have to be preapproved; however, trainers can have their courses approved by the Certification Board. The trainer must provide the following information:

- Name of the course
- An outline, syllabus or agenda of the training course
- Location of training (in person or on-line)
- Length of course, in hours
- Sample of “Certificate of Completion” that will be issued to participants

After course approval the Certification Board will assign a tracking number to the course. A listing of pre-approved courses will be available on the NWEA website. In-house training may be approved by the Certification Board on a case by case basis.

Continuing Education Review

An individual taking a grade one exam must submit documentation of 6 continuing education units (CEUs) or 60 contact hours in addition to meeting the experience requirement.

The CEUs are reviewed by the Program Administrator. If necessary the information may be passed to the Certification Board officers or subject matter experts for review.

Courses directly related to the type of certification the applicant is applying for will receive full value. Courses indirectly related to the type of certification will receive one half value. One CEU is equal to 10 contact hours. 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)

Preapproved courses are as follows:

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.
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 contact hour for each hour attended.
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.

Code of Conduct

Wastewater Professional Code of Conduct

The Wastewater Professional Code of Conduct requires certificants holding Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Collection System Operator, Industrial Waste Operator, Industrial Waste Inspector, Plant Maintenance Technologist and Wastewater Quality Analyst certifications to act honestly, competently, and with integrity and to use their knowledge and skill for protection of the environment. As a condition of holding and maintaining a Nevada certification, I agree to:

- Be truthful and accurate in what I say, do, and write.
- Adhere to all laws and regulations applicable to the profession.
- Promote and encourage the highest quality of wastewater facility/system operation within the industry.
- Not misrepresent nor permit misrepresentation of my qualifications or the qualifications of my associates.
- Not conduct myself in a manner that subverts or attempts to subvert the minimum certification requirements, application processes, or examination processes.
- Uphold and follow all certification policies and procedures.

By signing the application and/or renewal form the applicant agrees to adhere to this Code.

Disciplinary

NDEP Mandatory Certification (Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators)

The Certification Board serves an advisory role in the disciplinary process. Disciplinary review can be initiated by both the Certification Board and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP). Suspension or revocation of a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator certification is the responsibility of NDEP.

Certain administrative actions, per Board policy, are the responsibility of the Certification Board unless otherwise specified by NDEP on a case-by-case basis. Administrative actions include assessing late fees for failing to renew a certificate, suspending a certificate that has become expired and decertifying an expired certificate after one year.

When NDEP determines that a wastewater treatment facility has violated its discharge permit and has also determined that the violation is due to operator negligence, NDEP may submit documentation for Certification Board review. The Certification Board will review the facts in the case and recommend possible disciplinary action to NDEP. NDEP will review the Certification Board's recommendation(s) and make the final disciplinary determination. NDEP will carry out disciplinary action that it deems to be appropriate with the support and assistance of the Certification Board.

When the Certification Board learns of egregious negligence by an operator, it will immediately notify NDEP of the alleged negligence, review the facts in the case and recommend possible disciplinary action to NDEP. NDEP will review the Certification Board's recommendation(s) and make the final disciplinary determination. NDEP will carry out disciplinary action that it deems to be appropriate with the support and assistance of the Certification Board.

NWEA Voluntary Certifications

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

1. A case for decertification may be considered by the Certification Board for, but not limited to, the following:
2. The certified individual is incompetent or unable to perform his/her duties properly, or
3. The Certification Board's experience and education requirements for the certification have not been satisfied; or
4. The certified individual has practiced fraud or deception; or
5. The certified individual failed to renew his/her certificate in accordance with Certification Board policy.

Invoice Approval

All Certification Board invoices shall be processed through the Program Administrator for accurate tracking within the Certification Board's budget. The Program Administrator shall confirm invoice amounts and code each invoice before submitting them for approval and payment.

Upon confirming invoice amounts and coding each invoice, the Program Administrator shall submit invoices to the Vice Chairman, Chairman and NWEA President for approvals.

Invoices for contracted Program Administrator services shall include a breakdown of total hours being invoiced and documentation of reimbursable operating expenses.

The NWEA Treasurer shall process payment for Certification Board invoices after they have been approved by the Vice Chairman, Chairman and the NWEA President.

NWEA contract invoices for administering the mandatory certification program for the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection shall be prepared by the Program Administrator. Upon approval by the Vice Chairman and Chairman, the Program Administrator shall submit each contract invoice to the NWEA President for approval, signing and submission to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

The NWEA Treasurer shall provide a monthly summary of Certification Board revenue and expenditures to the Program Administrator. The summary shall include a breakdown of expenditures that includes the payee name and the amount and date of each check.

Information Request

Public certification information provided on the NWEA website (www.nvwea.org) includes current name, certification grade, certification status, certification expiration date, certification type, and employer. Information requests by other certification programs to confirm reciprocity eligibility requirements will be provided upon request.

Third-party requests for additional information specific to certified Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators will be referred to the State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection.

Third-party information requests for information specific to NWEA certifications will be referred to the Certification Board Chair and the NWEA President.

Credit Card Processing

The Nevada Water Environment Association is accepting credit cards for the voluntary program fees. **This does not include the mandatory Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator fees.**

The voluntary fees are as follows:

- \$150.00 Certification Examination Fee
- \$80.00 Certification Renewal Fee
- \$20.00 Late Fee
- \$200.00 Reciprocity Certification Fee
- \$25.00 Return Check Fee

If an applicant chooses to pay with a credit card they must check the paying with a credit card box on the exam application or renewal form. The applicant must provide a current phone number on the application. Once the Program Administrator receives the application the applicant will be contacted to get the credit card information. After the transaction has been processed the credit card information will be destroyed.

Examination Proctoring Policy

All certification exams administered by the Nevada Board of Certification shall be taken under the supervision of an impartial and well trained proctor. The proctor ensures the credibility of the certification process by administering and monitoring the testing of individuals.

The Certification Board Chairman and Certification Board Vice Chairman shall be responsible for selecting local proctors to administer certification exams and for selecting appropriate testing locations. In the absence of the Certification Board Chairman or Certification Board Vice Chairman, another board member may act in their proxy.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Certification Board, proctoring selections shall be made in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Proctors shall have no vested interest in a testing candidate's exam performance. Sources of a conflict of interest include the following relationships with the testing candidate: coworker, employer, trainer, instructor, relative and/or any relationship that has reasonable potential to create an appearance of preferential or differential treatment.

Proctors shall disclose all affiliations that may constitute a potential conflict of interest prior to administering the exam. If a potential conflict of interest is disclosed by the proctor or is determined by the Certification Board, the Certification Board Chairman and Certification Board Vice Chairman will select an alternative proctor to proctor said exam(s). In the absence of the Certification Board Chairman or Certification Board Vice Chairman, another board member may act in their proxy.

To serve as an exam proctor, an individual shall agree to execute the following duties:

- Comply with *ABC Test Administration Instructions*.
- Agree to avoid disclosing, using or exploiting confidential exam information and exam content.

- Carefully monitor testing candidates and testing room conditions during the exam session.
- Ensure that testing candidates do not receive any assistance while taking the exam; all certification exams are closed book.
- Enforce all certification program and exam procedure rules.
- Adhere to high standards of ethical conduct.

Examinations shall be administered according to the terms provided in the *ABC Test Administration Instructions*. It is the responsibility of the proctor to aggressively ensure the security of the examination at all times and to immediately report any security breaches that occur before, during or after an examination to the Program Administrator. The proctor shall ensure the security of all testing material at all times, which shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Securely store examinations prior to and following administration.
- Require picture identification of all testing candidates and ensure that no one other than the actual testing candidate is permitted in the testing site.
- Ensure that examination material, including all scratch paper, is not removed from the test site at any time during the examination.
- Ensure that no cheating is permitted during an examination.
- Ensure that examination material is not stolen, reproduced, copied, photographed or recorded.
- Ensure that all exam material, including all scratch paper, is collected and accounted for prior to testing candidates leaving the test room.
- Maintain the security of all exam materials and ensure that all exam materials, including all scratch paper, are returned to the Program Administrator by secure traceable carrier no later than one day following the exam session.

Proctors are not permitted to view the content of exam books at any time other than when transcribing a challenged question onto the exam administrator report.

All proctors shall sign a form stating that they agree to comply with this policy and the *ABC Test Administration Instructions*. This form shall be kept on file by the Nevada Board of Certification.

A breach in examination security has significant repercussions for the Certification Program, including the costs of replacing questions and developing new exams. The Nevada Water Environment Association reserves the right to pursue damages from a security breach, including remuneration for the costs of replacing compromised questions and developing new exams arising from security breaches while the examination material was in the proctor's possession.

All computerized testing centers and computerized exam proctors approved for use by the Association of Boards of Certification, both within and outside of Nevada, are approved for administering all computerized ABC standardized certification exams offered by the Nevada Water Environment Association.



NEVADA BOARD OF CERTIFICATION FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATORS



Examination Proctoring Agreement

I have read and understood the Nevada Board of Certification's *Examination Proctoring Policy* and the *ABC Test Administration Instructions*. I agree to comply with all duties and requirements stated therein when proctoring certification exams.

My signature below signifies my agreement to the above conditions in all respects.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (Print/Type) _____

Home Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Home E-mail (optional) _____

Agency/Organization where employed _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Work Phone _____ Work Fax _____

Work E-mail _____

Instructions for Administering ABC Exams

Thank you for serving as proctor for this exam. All ABC certification exams must be taken under the supervision of a proctor. The proctor is responsible for supervising the entire exam administration process. As a proctor, you must:

- Ensure that only authorized items are allowed into the testing room
- Verify the identity of candidates scheduled to take the exam
- Monitor candidates during the exam session
- Maintain a quiet, secure and professional testing environment
- Ensure that no unauthorized materials leave the testing room

Below are the procedures a proctor must follow before, during and after the certification exam. The proctor must review the following instructions before administering any ABC certification exam. Familiarity with all examination materials is essential and will make exam administration easier.

PRELIMINARY PLANNING

Because examination results often affect the careers of candidates, adequately preparing for an exam session and selecting an environment conducive to concentration are essential. The following are several elements necessary for a successful exam session.

Staffing

One proctor is needed for every 25 examinees. For groups larger than 25, an assistant may be used for each additional 25 examinees being tested. Please remember that each assistant must review all examination instructions prior to the exam session.

Scheduling

The time limit for the ABC 100-question standardized exam is three hours. The chart below shows recommended time limits for longer exams. In addition, a minimum of one extra hour should be scheduled to allow sufficient time to admit examinees to the site, read exam

instructions to the examinees, distribute and administer exams, and collect exam materials. The proctor must ensure that exams are completed within the allowed time limit. Examinees must not be given additional time to complete the exam.

Exam Length	Recommended Time Limit
100 questions	3 hours
120 questions	3 hours
150 questions	4 hours
180 questions	4 hours

Closed Book Exams

All ABC standardized exams are closed book. No reference material is allowed in the examination site. No electronic devices for the storage, display, or transmission of data, such as cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), programmable calculators, computers, or cameras are allowed in the examination site. Candidates should only bring photo identification, a non-programmable, non-graphical calculator that has no text storage capability, two sharpened soft-lead (#2 or HB) pencils and an eraser to the examination site. Any other material must be left outside the examination site. All notes must be written in the exam book or on scratch paper provided by the proctor. Candidates are not allowed to take any written material from the examination site. Candidates are absolutely prohibited from recording examination content in any format. Candidates who violate these rules may be asked to leave the site and may be disqualified from the exam as well as future exams.

Test Site

Make certain the area where the exam will be administered is quiet and free from distractions. ABC recommends that all exams be administered in a classroom or similar room where outside activities which may distract examinees are the least likely to occur. To prevent interruptions, post the "Do Not Disturb—Exam in Progress" sign provided by ABC on the door. The proctor must also ensure that the lighting and ventilation are adequate and the temperature is comfortable. If unsatisfactory conditions inside or outside the testing room arise, they should be remedied as soon as possible.

Examinees should have a flat surface that supplies sufficient working room, such as a table. The surface should be large enough to accommodate an open exam book and an answer sheet. If space is available, please seat examinees in a checkerboard or alternate row seating arrangement. Do not seat examinees close together or directly facing one another. It is also important to allow enough room between the rows or tables for the proctor to move easily about the room.

Examinees may leave the room during the exam session if they receive an emergency phone call or to use the restroom. Examinees will not receive additional time to complete the examination for time lost during a break. Also, only one examinee at a time will be allowed to leave the room during testing. While examinees may take as many restroom breaks as needed, each restroom break should not last longer than 10 minutes. Examinees should never freely roam the building; please inform examinees about any areas of the building that are “off-limits” to them. Monitor the length of time examinees spend on a restroom break and if an examinee exceeds the 10-minute limit, send another proctor (if available) to check on the examinee. Closely observe examinees after they have returned from the restroom –in particular, pay attention to determine if they have returned to the testing room with any prohibited personal item or display suspicious or unusual behavior.

Examination Security

Maintaining the security of ABC exam material is essential to uphold the integrity of the testing service. Security breaches can occur before, during, or after an examination. Conduct that may violate the security of an examination includes, but is not limited to:

- Theft of portions of, or entire, examination
- Removing examination material from a test site without authorization
- Reproducing examination material without authorization
- Using paid test takers for the purpose of reconstructing an examination
- Using improperly obtained test questions to prepare persons for examination
- Cheating during an examination
- Impersonating an examinee or having an impersonator take an examination
- Loss of a shipment of examination booklets

It is the responsibility of the proctors to aggressively ensure the security of the examination at all times and to immediately report any security breaches to ABC. A breach in examination security has significant repercussions for ABC, including the costs of replacing questions and developing new exams. ABC reserves the right to pursue damages from a certification program, including remuneration for the costs of replacing compromised questions and developing new exams, arising from security breaches while the examination material was in their possession.

EXAMINATION MATERIALS

Materials Provided By ABC Prior to the Exam Session

1. Printed test books, or test book masters. Only one certification level is included in each test book. *Examination Instructions* and the *ABC Formula/Conversion Table* are provided in each test book as references for the examinee.
2. Scannable answer sheets and *Answer Sheet Instructions* for each examinee.
3. "Do Not Disturb—Exam in Progress" sign.
4. Examinee Log(s): Provided to record the name, identification number, exam category, and test book number for each examinee. You can either use the form provided by ABC or provide your own form that includes all of the information on ABC's Examinee Log.
Note: Accurate completion of this form is important because it allows ABC to verify that examinees are scored for the correct exam category and certification level.
5. Exam Administrator Report(s): Provided for the proctor to report any problems that were identified during the exam session or to note any exam questions for ABC to review.
6. Question Comment Form: Provided for each examinee to record specific comments or concerns about exam questions.

Materials the Examinee Should Bring to the Exam

1. Photo ID for identification purposes
2. Two sharpened soft-lead (No. 2 or HB) pencils and an eraser
3. Identification number assigned by the certification program
4. Non-programmable, non-graphical calculator that has no text storage capability (optional, but recommended)

EXAM ADMINISTRATION

Step 1—Process Admittance Slips

It is very important that candidates are properly identified. Only scheduled candidates are permitted into the examination room. Verifying the identity of each scheduled candidate is crucial to ensuring the security of the examination. Therefore, the exam proctor must check each person's identification carefully. Review the photo ID of each candidate to verify his/her identity before the candidate enters the examination room. Anyone who does not have a photo ID may *not* enter the examination room or take the certification exam. The candidate must be informed that proper identification is required and without such identification he or she cannot be admitted into the examination.

Ask the examinee to print his/her name, identification number and the exam being taken (e.g. Water Treatment Class I) on the Examinee Log. The proctor should complete the test series and book number columns on the Examinee Log when the test books are passed out (see Step 3). The test book number is found in the upper right hand corner of the test book.

Step 2—Complete Identification Data on the Answer Sheet

Following are detailed instructions that contain notes to the proctor and text to be read to the examinees. All instructions that the proctor should read aloud to the examinees are italicized. Start the exam instructions by reading:

All ABC standardized exams are closed book. No reference material is allowed in the examination site. No electronic devices for the storage, display, or transmission of data, such as cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), programmable calculators, computers, or cameras are allowed in the examination site. Please clear your work areas except for two sharpened soft-lead (No. 2 or HB) pencils, erasers, and a non-programmable calculator. First, I will give each of you an answer sheet and a copy of the Answer Sheet Instructions. Please do not write on the answer sheet until I tell you to do so.

Distribute one answer sheet and one copy of the Answer Sheet Instructions to each examinee.

Read the Answer Sheet Instructions along with me as I explain how to correctly complete your answer sheet.

Hold up a copy of the Answer Sheet Instructions for the examinees to see.

Use only a soft-lead (No. 2 or HB) pencil to fill out the answer sheet. Fill in each circle completely with your pencil, making a dark, heavy mark. Any erasing should be done carefully and should not leave smudge marks.

Under the section "Name," please print your name: Last name, first name, middle initial. Leave a blank space between your last name, first name, and middle initial. Do not use commas or periods. Fill in the circles below the boxes that correspond to the letters of your name.

At this point, the proctor should check to make sure that all examinees are printing their names in the correct place and filling in the circles correctly. Also, make sure examinees are using a pencil and are printing only one letter in each box. This information is critical to processing exam results. If this section is not filled in correctly, exam results may be delayed.

Under the section "Identification Number," print your ID number starting with box A. Do not put spaces, hyphens, or slashes between the numerical groups of this number. Any extra boxes should be left blank. Fill in the corresponding circles below the boxes.

Again, make sure examinees are printing their numbers in the correct boxes and filling in the circles as instructed.

Under the section "Special Codes," below the letter K, print the number that represents the category of the exam you are taking today. Please refer to Table 1 below to determine this code, and fill in the appropriate circle. If you have any questions, please raise your hand.

Table 1

<u>Number</u>	<u>Category</u>
0	Water Treatment
1	Distribution
2	Collection
3	Wastewater Treatment
4	Wastewater Laboratory
5	Industrial Waste
6	Cross-Connection Control
7	Very Small Water System
8	Water Laboratory
9	Other

Check to see that the examinees complete the appropriate circle under the letter K.

Next, below the letter L, print the number of the level of the exam you are taking today. Refer to Table 2 below to determine this code. Fill in the appropriate circle. Again, if you have any questions please raise your hand.

Table 2

<u>Number</u>	<u>Level</u>
1	Class I or D
2	Class II or C
3	Class III or B
4	Class IV or A
5	Class V
6	Class VI
7	OIT
8	Other

Step 3— Administer the Examination

The following steps detail procedures for administering the actual certification exam. Again, all instructions that the proctor must read aloud to the examinees are italicized. Please read instructions exactly as written. If you make a mistake in reading the instructions, say "No that was wrong. Please listen again," and read through the instructions again. If necessary, you may explain directions in your own words, but proctors must not help on specific exam questions.

I am going to give you a test book and Question Comment Form. If you have any specific concerns about exam questions, write your comments on this form. Do not break the seal on your book until I tell you to do so.

Distribute all of the test books and Question Comment Forms. Record the test book numbers on the Examinee Log as test books are distributed. The test book number is found in the upper right hand corner of the test book.

Please check the title of your test book to make sure you have the correct test.

Now below the letters M and N on the answer sheet, print the last two digits of your test book number. These digits are printed on the upper right hand corner of your test book. Fill in the corresponding circles. Again, please let me know if you have questions.

Next, break the seal of the test book and fold back the front cover to the Examination Instructions. Has everyone found this page?

Please read the examination instructions to yourself as I read them aloud.

- 1. Read each question carefully before choosing the best answer. There is only one correct answer for each question. If you mark more than one answer, the question will be counted wrong. Unanswered questions will also be counted wrong, so answer all questions.*
- 2. Use a soft-lead (No. 2 or HB) pencil to mark your answers on the answer sheet. Be sure that the number of the question in your test book matches the number on your answer sheet, then fill in the corresponding circle. If you must erase, do so carefully and thoroughly.*

3. *The time limit for completing an exam is 3 hours for a 100 to 120 question exam and 4 hours for a 150 to 180 question exam. Work as quickly and as carefully as you can. Do not spend too much time on any one question—you can come back to that question later.*
4. *A Formula/Conversion Table, which is to be used when making calculations, is included in the front of the test book.*
5. *When you are finished with the exam, turn in all exam materials to me. Only one examinee will be allowed to return his or her materials at a time. Please wait in the room while I check over your materials. After I finish reviewing your materials, please leave the room quietly.*
6. *If you must leave the room during the session, turn in all your exam materials to me. Authorized reasons for leaving the room include receiving an emergency phone call or using the restroom. You will not receive additional time to complete the examination for time lost during a break. Also, only one examinee at a time will be allowed to leave the room during testing.*
7. *Any attempts to cheat on any examination will result in the immediate termination of your examination. Furthermore, examinees are absolutely prohibited from recording examination content in any format. Examinees who violate the security of any examination will have their examinations terminated and may face additional consequences from the certification board or agency.*

Are there any questions?

After answering all questions, allow the examinees to begin the exam. The proctor should begin timing the exam.

Step 4— Monitor Examinees during Exam Session

Maintain a classroom atmosphere while administering the exam. During the examination session, the proctor is responsible for carefully monitoring the examinees as well as the testing room conditions. It is very important to ensure that both the lighting and temperature of the testing room continue to be acceptable during an examination session.

Check periodically to make sure that examinees are correctly marking their answers on the answer sheet and that they are using No. 2 pencils. The proctor must not help any examinee with specific exam questions.

Do not leave the examinees alone while taking the exam. The proctor is responsible for both the standardized administration and security of the examination. Be certain that the examinees do not receive any outside assistance while taking the exam. This includes help from other persons, prepared notes, and reference material. When monitoring examinees, if the proctor observes any suspicious activity, which may indicate cheating or the recording of examination content, he/she should watch the examinees carefully to verify the suspicious behavior. The following actions may be evidence of examinee cheating:

- Examinees are whispering or talking during the examination.
- Examinees appear to be exchanging notes with one another.
- Examinees appear to be using notes – either in written or electronic format.
- Examinees switch seats during the examination.

Another form of cheating may involve the writing down or recording of examination content by one examinee to later be shared with another examinee. Because miniature recording devices are so widely available and affordable, it is possible for examinees to sneak such devices (such as voice recorders, cameras and video recorders) into the testing room and attempt to remove examination content by these means. Recording devices can be hidden in many everyday personal items, such as hats, pens, watches, eyeglasses, and even perhaps jewelry.

Step 5— Collect Examination Materials

The proctor must ensure that exams are completed within the allowed time limit. Examinees must not be given additional time to complete the exam. Only one examinee is allowed to turn in exam material at a time. All materials handed out must be turned in to the proctor. This includes exam books, answer sheets, Question Comment Forms and Answer Sheet Instructions. Please check each answer sheet to verify that all identification boxes have been marked correctly.

Note: Answer sheets must be grouped according to exam category *and* class level. If this is not done, scoring will be delayed and scoring errors may occur. The answer sheets should not be creased, folded, torn, or stapled.

Immediately following each examination session, the proctor must complete the Exam Administrator Report. Record pertinent information on this report, such as the exam date, the number of examinees tested, name(s) of assistant(s), and any deviations from regular procedures. Also, record the name(s) of any examinee(s) involved in unusual circumstances and an account of those circumstances.

Step 6—Shipping Examination Materials

All answer sheets and examination materials must be returned to ABC. These include:

- Test Books
- Exam Administrator Report completed
- Examinee Log(s) completed
- Answer Sheets sorted by *certification category and level* – Please keep a photocopy of the answer sheets to protect against possible loss during shipping.
- Question Comment Form(s) – Please keep a photocopy of the completed forms so that the state/provincial certification program can review examinee comments. ABC also reviews comment forms as time permits.

A mailing label is provided for your convenience. Please take extra care when packing answer sheets because if any answer sheets are damaged, the processing of results will be delayed. For security reasons, all examination materials must be returned to ABC by a secure, traceable shipping method requiring signature upon delivery, such as United Parcel Service, FedEx, or US Postal Service Certified Mail, to the address listed below:

Testing Service
Association of Boards of Certification
2805 SW Snyder Blvd., Suite 535
Ankeny IA 50023

HOW TO CONTACT ABC

If you have any questions about administering an ABC exam please contact us, by phone: (515) 232-3623 or e-mail: testing@abccert.org.

Nevada Administrative Code 445A.287-292

NAC 445A.287 Plants for sewage treatment: Persons required to be certified as operators; application and fees for certification; renewal of certificate. (NRS 445A.425)

1. A person responsible for the operation and maintenance of a plant for sewage treatment must be certified as an operator of a plant for sewage treatment.
2. To apply for certification as an operator of a plant for sewage treatment, a person must submit an application to the Division or its approved designee that is accompanied by the appropriate fee.
3. The following fees must be paid to the Division:

Certification	Fee	Period
Initial.....	\$60	2 years
Reciprocal.....	75	2 years

4. The holder of a certificate must pay to the Division a fee of \$20 for each duplicate certificate he requests. A fee of \$25 will be charged to any person whose check is returned to the Division because of a lack of funds.
5. A holder of any certificate issued pursuant to the provisions of NAC 445A.286 to 445A.292, inclusive, may renew the certificate by submitting a fee of \$30 to the Division not later than the expiration date of the certificate. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 6, the holder of a certificate may renew his certificate after the expiration date of the certificate if he pays, in addition to the renewal fee, a late fee of \$20. If the holder of a certificate does not renew the certificate within 1 year after the expiration date of the certificate, the holder of the certificate shall be deemed decertified.
6. The holder of a certificate who is decertified may not renew his certificate.
7. The renewal of a certificate is effective for 2 years.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n, eff. 5-27-92; A 3-1-94; R037-02, 10-18-2002)

NAC 445A.288 Plants for sewage treatment: Agreement to operate program for certification of operators. (NRS 445A.425)

1. If the Division chooses not to operate the program for the certification of operators of plants for sewage treatment, the Division shall enter into an agreement with an approved designee pursuant to which the designee agrees to operate the program.
2. Any agreement entered into pursuant to subsection 1 must provide that the designee will:
 - (a) Distribute application forms;
 - (b) Evaluate applications;
 - (c) Conduct examinations;
 - (d) Evaluate the training, education and experience of the applicants;
 - (e) Inform an applicant that the Division has denied his application for certification or recommend that the Division certify the applicant; and
 - (f) Perform any other duty specified in the agreement.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n, eff. 5-27-92; A by R037-02, 10-18-2002)

NAC 445A.289 Plants for sewage treatment: Schedule for classification. (NRS 445A.425)

1. For the purpose of the certification program operated pursuant to the provisions of NAC 445A.284 and 445A.288, a plant for sewage treatment must be classified in accordance with the following schedule:

PLANT CLASSIFICATION based on the type of treatment process and plant capacity:

	0-0.1 MGD	0.11-1.0 MGD	1.1-5.0 MGD	5.1-10.0 MGD	10.1-20.0 MGD	Greater than 20.0 MGD
Stabilization Pond	I	I	I	I	II	III
Primary	I	I	II	III	III	IV
Biofiltration	II	II	III	III	IV	IV
Activated Sludge	III	III	III	IV	IV	IV
Tertiary and Reuse	III	III	IV	IV	IV	IV

2. As used in this section, "MGD" means millions of gallons per day.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n, eff. 5-27-92; A by R037-02, 10-18-2002)

NAC 445A.290 Plants for sewage treatment: Minimum grades of certification for operators. (NRS 445A.425)

1. The minimum grades of certification for operators of plants for sewage treatment are as follows:

GRADES OF CERTIFICATION based on the classification of the plant:

	Plant Classification I	Plant Classification II	Plant Classification III	Plant Classification IV
Supervisor	I	II	III	IV
Assistant Supervisor	I	I	II	III

2. Any person, other than a supervisor or assistant supervisor, who is working as an operator of a plant for sewage treatment must be certified as at least a Grade I operator of a plant for sewage treatment, or obtain such certification within 1 year after the date on which he begins his employment at the plant for sewage treatment as such an operator.
3. As used in this section:
 - (a) “Assistant supervisor” means the person in direct responsible charge of the operations of a plant for sewage treatment in the absence of the supervisor.
 - (b) “Person in direct responsible charge” means a person who is responsible for all activities associated with the operations of a plant for sewage treatment and compliance with all applicable provisions of NRS and NAC relating to the operations of such a plant.
 - (c) “Supervisor” means the person in direct responsible charge of the operations of a plant for sewage treatment.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm’n, eff. 5-27-92; A by R037-02, 10-18-2002)

NAC 445A.292 Plants for sewage treatment: Provisional certification of operator. (NRS 445A.425)

1. The Division shall renew a provisional certificate as an operator of a plant for sewage treatment, without examination, only to a person who:

- (a) Held a provisional certificate on July 1, 1991;
 - (b) Pays the appropriate fee; and
 - (c) Submits the proper application for certification.
2. A provisional certificate is valid until:
- (a) The applicant's employment by that plant ceases for any reason; or
 - (b) The applicant assumes a position of employment at the plant that is different from the position he held on July 1, 1991.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n, eff. 5-27-92; A by R037-02, 10-18-2002)