

Wastewater Operator Certification Newsletter

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op_cert/index.html

Professional Growth Recommendation goes into Effect January 1, 2007

To maintain a current wastewater treatment plant operator certification, an operator must earn and document three college credits or continuing education units (CEU) every three years. Three college credits or CEUs are equivalent to thirty hours of training. Beginning on January 1, 2007, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) will change the way it counts these credits.

Ecology determines the relevance of training on a case by case basis by using the definition of "professional growth" as a guide. Professional growth is defined as, "of, pertaining to, engaged in, or appropriate for a profession" and "the process of growing." The following types of training could qualify for an operator's professional growth requirement: 1) relevant to daily operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment facility, 2) required for a safe work

environment, and 3) professional advancement.

The Wastewater Operator Certification Program Advisory Committee (Committee) agrees that these types of trainings are of some value. However, in order to protect public health and the environment, the Committee makes the following recommendation:

The Committee strongly recommends that while choosing training that will meet an operator's professional growth requirement, the operator and/or the employer should ensure that one out of the required three credits/CEUs (ten hours) be specific to wastewater treatment. The other two credits/CEUs (20 hours) may include water treatment or distribution, management, computer, safety, and other relevant training on a case by case basis.

Based on the advisory committee's recommendation,

operators will be required to earn 1 credit/CEU that is specific to wastewater.

Examples of wastewater treatment specific training include courses on: operation, wastewater treatment process, wastewater lab, collection systems, and pumps. Examples of other relevant training include courses on: drinking water, computers, safety, management, driver training, general chemistry, and instrumentation.

The certified operator is on the front line for protecting public health and the environment. To achieve optimum operation and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities, an operator must receive appropriate training to maintain and enhance his/her knowledge. This new requirement will ensure more consistent training in the continuing education of operators.

Certificate Number Must be Provided on Professional Growth Documentation

Beginning in 2006, all documents submitted for professional growth to the Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator must include the operator's wastewater certification number on the document.

There are approximately 2000 operators. Duplicate names, nicknames, and middle names make proper identification challenging.

If you do not include your wastewater certification number with professional

growth documentation, the document will be returned without being applied toward your professional growth. This, in turn, may impede your ability to meet your renewal requirements.

December 2005

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Special points of interest:

- *Current Professional Growth Period Ends December 2006*
- *Application has been updated—go online and print a copy or call 360-407-6449 to have an application packet sent to you.*
- *Exam days have been changed to the First Thursday in February, June and October.*

Kudos to Washington State Wastewater Operators

Congratulations to the winners of the “2004 Outstanding Wastewater Treatment Plant Awards”:

- ☆ Holmes Harbor Sewer District Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Birch Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Lynnwood Wastewater Treatment Facility
- ☆ Town of LaConner Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Redondo Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Lakota Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Monroe Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Seattle City Light-Diablo Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Mount Vernon Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Oak Harbor’s Wastewater Treatment Facilities
- ☆ Taylor Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Skagit County Sewer District No.2 (Big Lake) Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Miller Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Salmon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Tacoma Wastewater Treatment Plant #1
- ☆ City of Aberdeen Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Hoquiam Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Harstene Point Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Rustlewood Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Lake Mayfield Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Naselle Youth Camp Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Ocean Shores Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Satsop Development
- ☆ Chambers Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Port Ludlow Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Port Townsend Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Port Townsend Biosolids Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Toutle Sewage Treatment Plant
- ☆ Larch Correctional Center Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Stevenson Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Vancouver Westside Treatment Facility
- ☆ Washougal Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Wilkeson Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Ridgefield Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Town of Naches Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ City of Okanogan Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Omak Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Palouse Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Newport Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Grand Coulee Wastewater Treatment Plant
- ☆ Ephrata Water Reclamation Facility



Way to go Washington Operators!

Congratulations to Washington State Wastewater Operators.

You are the BEST!

Special congratulations to **Manchester (Kitsap County) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)**. Manchester is the only treatment plant to have received the *Outstanding Wastewater Treatment Plant Award* every year since 1995. It is a sig-

nificant accomplishment to meet all of the discharge limits, sampling and reporting requirements, and overall operational demands of a wastewater treatment plant permit. To operate at such a high level for ten years in a row is unprecedented.

Congratulations to all of the operators at the Manchester plant. Thank you for your dedication to protecting the waters of the Puget Sound, and for being a model for every plant in Washington State. Read more about Manchester WWTP on page 5.



Congratulations to Washington State operators who passed the ABC Wastewater Treatment Standardized exam in 2004. Washington State operators have proved once again how amazing they are! The table to the right shows

the average passing rates for ABC exams throughout the nation and Washington. You should all be very proud of your exam results. You have exceeded the national passing rate in every certification level.

	<u>ABC</u>	<u>WA</u>
Group I	67%	85%
Group II	54%	81%
Group III	37%	81%
Group IV	45%	67%



Poppy Carre, Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator

*Have a Voice...
Advisory committee
members needed for
Treatment Plant
Operators and Sewer
District
Commissioner*



Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator

August 9, 2005, marks one year since I began coordinating the Wastewater Operator Certification Program. For those of you that I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet, my name is Poppy Carre. I have worked for the Department of Ecology since 1998. I began as a section secretary for the Water Quality Program and assisted both Myra Barker and Tammie McClure with wastewater operator certification. In 2002, I took a position with the Water Resources Program working on water right issues and "cleaning" the water rights database. In August 2004 I returned to the

Water Quality Program as the wastewater operator certification coordinator. The first year has been an exciting year for me. I have learned so much about wastewater and have developed a deep respect for wastewater operators.

I have attended several Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association (PNCWA) section meetings, Washington Environmental Training Center (WETRC) courses, the Washington Water/Wastewater Operations Workshop (WOW) in Wenatchee, and the Evergreen Rural Water of Washington Conference in

Yakima. I also toured several wastewater treatment plants and look forward to seeing many more.

My goals are to communicate with you as often as possible and to provide you with the best customer service possible. I have spoken with and met many of you and look forward to eventually meeting or speaking with everyone. If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact me by phone 360-407-6449 or by email poca461@ecy.wa.gov. I look forward to working with all of you!

Wastewater Operator Certification Advisory Committee Membership

Participating on the wastewater operator certification advisory committee offers many advantages. Advisory committee members make recommendations to Ecology that potentially affect all operators. The certification coordinator utilizes the knowledge and expertise of committee members and proposes changes based on committee recommendations. As a committee member, you will have a voice in proposed policies and changes that will affect operator certification.

There are 14 members on the advisory committee, ideally two operators from each certification level (Groups I—IV). One represents the eastside of the state, the other represents the westside of the state. Ecology asks members to attend two meetings a year and make a five year commitment.

If you are interested in having a voice in program decisions and would like to become an advisory committee member, please send a resume, letter of

interest, and commitment letter from your supervisor or Public Works Director to:

Department of Ecology
Wastewater Operator Certification
PO Box 47696
Olympia, WA 98504-7696

We are currently seeking individuals to fill the following advisory committee vacancies:

- Treatment Plant Operators
- Sewer District Commissioner

Application Fee Change

Starting with the October 2005 exam, Ecology will no longer offer a reduced application fee to retake an exam. August 15, 2005, Ecology changed the reapplication fees

to \$50.00. Now the \$50.00 fee applies to the following actions: exams, retakes of an exam, automatic upgrades, reciprocity, and temporary certifications. Please mail all

applications to:

Department of Ecology
Cashiering Unit
PO Box 47611
Olympia, WA 98504-7611

ABC Executive Director Visits Advisory Committee

Stephen W. Ballou, executive director of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC), attended our November advisory committee meeting.

We were greatly honored to have Mr. Ballou attend our meeting, and the committee took full advantage of his presence.

Mr. Ballou gave a brief overview of what ABC does and what ABC can do for Washington operators.

He also gave the committee an idea of Washington's standing in the nation, which was very encouraging.

The committee focused its questions on ABC's examina-

tions and new electronic exams. Mr. Ballou provided suggestions for maximizing the competency of the ABC exam for Washington State and approaching reciprocity issues. He suggested contacting ABC's manager of testing, Suzanne De la Cruz, to obtain more information about customizing a Washington specific exam. The committee agreed to look into customizing the exam and possibly inviting Ms. De la Cruz to a future advisory committee meeting.

We were also fortunate to have the current ABC president attend our meeting — Washington Department of Health's Cheryl Bergener.

Cheryl briefed the committee on ABC's current work and answered committee questions. One topic which is near and dear to her heart is professional growth relevancy. ABC is currently working on a professional growth relevancy recommendation. The recommendation will be discussed further at ABC's annual conference in Las Vegas, NV in January 2006. The committee will also review and discuss the recommendation at the next advisory committee meeting in April. Ecology will use the committee's input to decide how to implement the professional growth relevancy recommendation.

For more information about ABC visit their web site:

<http://www.abccert.org/index.html>

Check the OpCert web site for training opportunities. Links have been added for approved correspondence training that is specific to wastewater.

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op_cert/index.html

Wastewater Operator Certification Exam Day is Changing starting in 2006

Beginning with the February 2006 exam, the wastewater operator certification exam will be given on the first **Thursday** of February, June, and October. The application deadlines will remain the same.

Application Deadline	Exam Date
December 15, 2005	February 2, 2006
April 15, 2006	June 1, 2006
August 15, 2006	October 5, 2006
December 15, 2006	February 1, 2007
April 15, 2007	June 7, 2007
August 15, 2007	October 4, 2007
December 15, 2007	February 7, 2008

Certification Renewal

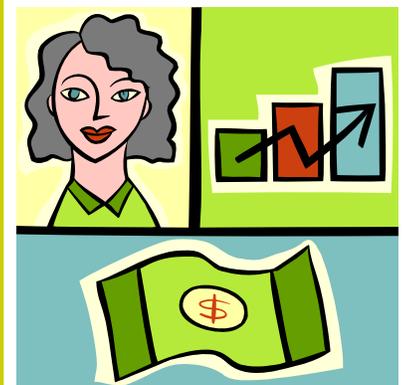
Wastewater Operator Certification renewal notices were mailed the third week in October. Renewal payments are due by December 31, 2005. If payment is not received on or before December 31st, your certification is suspended until Ecology receives payment. A suspension notice will go out to your employer and Ecology's enforcement

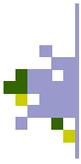
coordinators.

Please make sure that Ecology has your current mailing address and that you return a copy of your renewal notice with your payment.

Send renewal payment to:

Department of Ecology
Cashiering Unit
PO Box 47611
Olympia, WA 98504-7611





Manchester Wastewater Treatment Plant Highlight

Written by Todd Carlson

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E-mail: poca461@ecy.wa.gov
http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op_cert/index.html



Manchester Treatment Plant Recognition

VISIT THE
WASTEWATER
OPERATOR
CERTIFICATION WEB
SITE:

[HTTP://
WWW.ECY.WA.GOV/
PROGRAMS/WQ/
WASTEWATER/
OP_CERT/INDEX.HTML](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/op_cert/index.html)



Publication Number 05-10-099

The Kitsap County Public Works Wastewater Division operates four wastewater treatment plants on the Kitsap Peninsula. Of the four plants, the Manchester Wastewater Treatment Plant is unique. It is the only plant in Washington to receive the "Outstanding Wastewater Treatment Plant Award" for ten consecutive years.

Ralph DeClements is the Operations Supervisor for Kitsap County and credits the well trained operational staff for this significant accomplishment. Kitsap County rotates its operational staff among the four wastewater treatment plants, which gives the operators a variety of operational experience. Don Johnson is currently the Manchester Wastewater Treatment Plant Foreman. Robert Simpson and Marvin Romburg make up the operational staff. In addition, many operators have rotated through the plant during the past ten years, which makes the ten consecutive awards a true "team" effort.

Manchester Wastewater Treatment Plant receives primarily domestic wastewater from residential and light commercial users in the town of Manchester. The design capacity for the Manchester plant is 0.46 million gallons a day (MGD) average flow for

the maximum month. The average flow for 2004 was 0.194 MGD.

The plant has two aeration basins, followed by two secondary clarifiers. Manchester WWTP uses ultra-violet disinfection before discharging the final effluent into Puget Sound. The plant thickens solids with a gravity thickener and trucks them to Central Kitsap Wastewater Treatment Plant for further processing.

Operators at the Manchester plant work 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

On the weekends, the plant is checked by operators that travel to the three smaller plants in Kitsap County. During the off hours, a dial-up alarm system notifies on-call personnel of any abnormal situations.

The population of the Kitsap peninsula continues to grow and with this growth comes a variety of new challenges. However, the operators at Kitsap County Public Works prove they are ready for the challenge. They have set a high standard for the rest of Washington to follow.

