

**NYWEA**

LEADING THE WAY IN  
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

# Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification Manual

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**Primary Contact:**

For the latest information on certification and training.

NYWEA

525 Plum Street, Suite 102

Syracuse, NY 13204

Phone: (315) 422-7811, x 4

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

**Reference Documents Used For This Manual Are:**

- 1) Title 6 NYCRR, Chapter X, Part 650 "Qualifications of Operators of WWTP's".
- 2) "Wastewater Treatment Operators Certification" from the Technical Guidance Series (TOGS 5.1.6).

Both documents can be downloaded from <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8707.html>.

- 3) NYSDEC Regions are also attached as part of this document.

**Acknowledgment:**

This manual has been prepared by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water, Bureau of Water Compliance, and the New York Water Environment Association. In a Cooperative Agreement effective September 1, 2011, NYWEA has been designated the official administrator of the NYS Operator Certification Program.

The purpose of this document is to compile all relevant information on operator certification into one complete and easy to use source.

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## How Do I Get Certified?

The certification grades are divided into four levels, 1, 2, 3, and 4, with 1 being the lowest and 4 the highest grade. All *activated sludge* wastewater treatment plant certifications will further be designated with the letter "A" (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A). *Other treatment process* certifications have no letter designation. The "A" certification can be in responsible charge of either type wastewater treatment plant and a non "A" can only be in responsible charge of "*Other treatment process*".

Every operator in New York State who wishes to be certified at any level (Grade 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3, 3A, 4 or 4A) must satisfy the minimum qualifications. The qualifications consist of education, experience at a wastewater treatment plant, training, laboratory proficiency (except Grades 1 and 1A), and passage of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) exam.

**New Operator Application Fees** – This is a \$195 fee due with the operator's initial application to become certified. This fee is in addition to the \$112 charge that is paid to PSI for the ABC examination. If the Operator fails the exam, they are only responsible for the \$112 exam fee to PSI to re-take the same Grade exam. If the operator decides to re-apply for another certification grade, a \$195 fee will be charged again with each new application.

**Certification Renewal Fee** – There will be a \$205 fee due with the operator's five-year renewal application (this works out to \$41 per year).

The requirements for each grade and what should be included in your application are outlined on pages 2 - 5. Page 6 summarizes what happens after you submit your application to NYWEA and the testing procedures involved. The certification applications and forms can be found in Forms section, starting on page 16. If you decide to apply for another Grade certification exam, you must send in your application and payment with your *new* application

### Exemption

Wastewater treatment plants consisting solely of the following treatment schemes are **exempt** from having a certified chief operator or assistant/shift operator:

1. Septic systems followed by subsurface leaching facilities with eventual discharge to the ground waters, regardless of design capacity.
2. Septic tanks followed by open or buried intermittent sand filters, with a design capacity of less than 50,000 gallons per day.
3. Wastewater treatment plants which treat industrial wastes exclusively.

### Scoring System for Wastewater Treatment Plants

A WWTP Scoring System is used to determine the required Grade of Chief Operator and Assistant/Shift Operator. The system is based upon design flow, type of treatment, and operational complexity. The system is similar to that used by the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC).

Most municipal wastewater treatment plants have been scored. If your plant has not been scored, there is a "Scoring Sheet" located in the Forms section, starting on page 16 in this manual. This sheet is used to estimate your wastewater treatment plant score for appropriate operating experience. The final score will be determined by the NYSDEC. If you are unsure of your WWTP score, call 518-402-8177. Counties by NYSDEC Region are listed in the forms section of this manual.

### Certification Grades

The table below illustrates the point score classifications for wastewater treatment plants along with the minimum required certification Grades for the Chief Operator and Assistant/Shift Operator.

Total Wastewater Treatment Plant Score	30 and less	31 - 55	56 - 75	76 and greater
Grade of Chief Operator Required	1/1A	2/2A	3/3A	4/4A
Grade of Assistant/Shift Operator Required	1/1A	1/1A	2/2A	3/3A

## Grade 1 & 1A Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator Certification

**Your certification exam application must be received with a \$195 fee payment to NYWEA and contain all of the following:**

1. A completed and signed *Application for Approval of Qualifications for WWTP Operator*.
2. A completed and signed (you and your supervisor) *WWTP Operator Statement of Experience*
  - a. You must have at least 6 months of approved hands-on operations experience (see explanation below) to qualify for Grade 1 or 1A certification.
    - i. Grade 1 - at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit
    - ii. Grade 1A - at any Activated Sludge WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit
  - b. Hands-on Experience defined
    - i. Full Time Operator - Minimum 50% hands-on experience in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form
    - ii. Non-Operator Title - 520 hours in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form. These hours do not include maintenance, supervision, lab work (unless analysis is used by the operator to make process adjustments), paperwork, building and grounds upkeep, etc. These hours can be listed in a spreadsheet, designated in the timesheet for operator experience, or provided in a different format approved by the operator certification representative.
3. A copy of your high school diploma or transcript, GED, or college diploma or transcript.
4. A copy of your required certification training course completions:
  - a. Basic Operations or Home Study course. The home study is only accepted for a Grade 1 or 1A certificate. The home study options include:
    - i. Sacramento Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants Volume 1 and 2 or
    - ii. Sacramento Small Wastewater Operation and Maintenance, Volume 1 and 2 or
    - iii. Florida Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations
  - b. Grade A Designated Certificates - Activated Sludge course
5. A check or money order (payable to NYWEA) in the amount of \$195.
6. Mail your exam application packet to:

**NYWEA  
525 Plum Street, Suite 102  
Syracuse, NY 13204**

If you have questions, contact NYWEA's Operator Certification Administrator at 315-422-7811, ext. 4

## Grade 2 & 2A Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator Certification

**Your certification exam application must be received with a \$195 fee payment to NYWEA and contain all of the following:**

1. A completed and signed *Application for Approval of Qualifications for WWTP Operator*.
2. A completed and signed (you and your supervisor) *WWTP Operator Statement of Experience*
  - a) You must have at least one (1) year of approved hands-on operations experience to qualify for Grade 2 or 2A certification.
    - i. Grade 2 - at any Grade 2 or higher WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and a facility point score of 31 or higher.
    - ii. Grade 2A - at any Grade 2A or higher Activated Sludge WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and a facility point score of 31 or higher.
  - b) Hands-on Experience defined
    - i. Full Time Operator – Minimum 50% hands-on experience in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form
    - ii. Non-Operator Title – 1040 hours in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form. These hours do not include maintenance, supervision, Lab work (unless analysis is used by the operator to make process adjustments), paperwork, building and grounds upkeep, etc. These hours can be listed in a spreadsheet, designated in the timesheet for operator experience, or provided in a different format approved by the operator certification representative.
3. A copy of your high school diploma or transcript, GED, or college diploma or transcript.
4. A copy of your required certification training course completions:
  - a) Basic Operations course
  - b) Basic Laboratory course or letter showing you passed the DEC Laboratory proficiency exam
  - c) Grade A Designated Certificates - Activated Sludge course
5. A check or money order (payable to NYWEA) in the amount of \$195
6. Mail the exam application packet to:

**NYWEA  
525 Plum Street, Suite 102  
Syracuse, NY 13204**

If you have questions, contact NYWEA's Operator Certification Administrator at 315-422-7811, ext 4.

## Grade 3 & 3A Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator Certification

Your certification exam application must be received with a \$195 fee payment to NYWEA and contain all of the following:

1. A completed and signed *Application for Approval of Qualifications for WWTP Operator*.
2. A completed and signed (you and your supervisor) *WWTP Operator Statement of Experience*
  - b) You must have at least 1.5 years of approved hands-on operations experience at a WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and facility point score of 56 or higher. If you are seeking a Grade 3A, the 1.5 yrs. of approved hands-on operating experience must be at an Activated Sludge WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and facility point score of 56 or higher. Depending on your education level, you may need additional experience.
    - i. High School graduate - you need an additional 3.0 years at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit. *Total Operations Experience needed is 4.5 years.*
    - ii. Associate of Science (with 30 hours of Math and Science) or Associate of Arts (with 30 hours of Math and Science) or Associate of Applied Science (AAS) graduate - you need an additional 1.5 years at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit. *Total Operations Experience needed is 3.0 years.*
    - iii. Approved AAS, Bachelor of Science (with 30 hours of Math and Science), or Bachelor of Arts (with 30 hours of Math and Science) graduates do not need any additional time. *Total Operations Experience needed is 1.5 years.*
  - c) Hands-on Experience defined
    - i. Full Time Operator - Minimum 50% hands-on experience in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form
    - ii. Non-Operator Title – Hours (listed below based on education) in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form. These hours do not include maintenance, supervision, lab work (unless analysis is used by the operator to make process adjustments), paperwork, building and grounds upkeep, etc. These hours can be listed in a spreadsheet, designated in the timesheet for operator experience, or provided in a different format approved by the operator certification representative.
      1. High School Graduate – 4680 hours
      2. Associates – 3120 hours
      3. Approved AAS and Bachelors – 1560 hours
3. A copy of your high school diploma or transcript, GED, or college diploma or transcript.
4. A copy of your required certification training course completions:
  - b) Basic Operations course
  - c) Basic Laboratory course or letter showing you passed the DEC Laboratory exam
  - d) Grade 3 Supervision and Technical Operations Course or Basic Supervision home study option plus the 7.5 hour Technical Operations Module
  - e) Grade A Designated Certificates – Activated Sludge course
5. A check or money order (payable to NYWEA) in the amount of \$195.
6. Mail your exam application packet to:  
**NYWEA**  
**525 Plum Street, Suite 102**  
**Syracuse, NY 13204**  
If you have questions contact NYWEA's Operator Certification Administrator at 315-422-7811, ext. 4

## Grade 4 & 4A Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator Certification

Your certification exam application must be received with a \$195 fee payment to NYWEA and contain all of the following:

- 1 A completed and signed *Application for Approval of Qualifications for WWTP Operator*.
2. A completed and signed (you and your supervisor) *WWTP Operator Statement of Experience*
  - a) You must have at least 2.0 years of approved hands-on operations experience at a WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and facility point score of 76 or higher. If you are seeking a Grade 4A, the 2.0 years of approved hands-on operating experience must be at an Activated Sludge WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit and facility point score of 76 or higher. Depending on your education level, you may need additional experience.
    - i. High School graduate - you need an additional 6.0 years at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit. *Total Operations Experience needed is 8.0 years.*
    - ii. Associate of Science (with 30 hours of Math and Science) or Associate of Arts (with 30 hours of Math and Science) or Associate of Applied Science (AAS) graduate - you need an additional 3.0 years at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit. *Total Operations Experience needed is 5.0 years.*
    - iii. Approved AAS graduate - you need an additional 1.5 yrs. at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit. *Total Operations Experience needed is 3.5 years.*
    - iv. Bachelor of Science (with 30 hours of Math and Science) or Bachelor of Arts (with 30 hours of Math and Science) graduates do not need any additional time. *Total Operations Experience needed is 2.0 years.*
  - b) Hands-on Experience defined
    - i. Full Time Operator - Minimum 50% hands on experience in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form
    - ii. Non-Operator Title –Hours (listed below based on education) in all processes listed on the Statement of Experience Form. These hours do not include maintenance, supervision, lab work (unless analysis is used by the operator to make process adjustments), paperwork, building and grounds upkeep, etc. These hours can be listed in a spreadsheet, designated in the timesheet for operator experience, or provided in a different format approved by the operator certification representative.
      1. High School Graduate – 8320 hours
      2. Associates/AAS – 5200 hours
      3. Approved AAS – 3640 hours
      4. Bachelors – 2080 hours
3. A copy of your high school diploma or transcript, GED, or college diploma or transcript.
4. A copy of your required certification training course completions:
  - a) Basic Operations course
  - b) Basic Laboratory course or letter showing you passed the DEC Laboratory exam
  - c) Grade 3 Supervision and Technical Operations Course or Basic Supervision home study option plus the 7.5 hour Technical Operations Module
  - d) Grade 4 Management Course
  - e) Grade A Designated Certificate – Activated Sludge course
6. Mail the exam certification packet, along with a \$195 check or money order payable to NYWEA to:

**NYWEA**

**525 Plum Street, Suite 102  
Syracuse, NY 13204**

If you have any questions, contact NYWEA at 315-422-7811 ext. 4



## **After Your Application Has Been Approved by NYSDEC/NYWEA (*This will take 3-4 weeks*)**

NYWEA will send you a letter of approval for you to take your Grade certification exam. **You cannot schedule your exam until NYWEA approves your application.** The letter will contain instructions on registering and paying for the exam with PSI. The cost of the exam is \$112.

After you receive your approval letter from NYWEA, **schedule your exam and send payment directly to PSI.** Payment can be made online or by phone with a credit/debit card. You can also register by mail with a company or municipality check or money order payable to PSI. No personal checks are accepted. To schedule the exam, call PSI at (833) 256-1420 or go to their website at <https://test-takers.psiexams.com/abc-ny>. Examination centers have times available Monday through Saturday, in the morning or afternoon. The PSI website will show the exam centers closest to you. Note that the closest testing center may be in a neighboring state. You can choose any listed PSI testing center.

Bring photo identification and any admittance paperwork with you to the test site. Operators will take their certification exam on a computer at one of several proctored locations throughout New York State (or other locations nationwide). The test is an Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) certification exam. The format is three hours duration and for Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 4A has 100 multiple-choice questions. For Grades 1A, 2A and 3A, the exam has 110 multiple-choice questions. Ten of the 110 questions are not included in the candidate's score, but are used by ABC to collect statistics on new questions before they are considered for future exams. The ABC formula sheet for calculations is provided. You must bring a non-programmable calculator. The passing grade is 70%.

After completion, the exam is instantly graded. You will know your result when you leave the testing center. If you pass the exam, you are certified immediately. You don't have to do anything else. NYWEA will process your application, and send you a wall document suitable for framing your Certificate/Blue Card. It will take 6-8 weeks to receive your certificate.

If you do not pass the exam, contact PSI directly to re-take the exam. Do not contact NYWEA. You simply schedule a new exam date and make payment to PSI. The new test date must be at least ninety (90) days since your last exam.

For further information on web based testing and the test center experience, go to <https://psi.wistia.com/medias/3321yp1ic8> or call NYWEA at 315-422-7811, x 4.

## **Is There Reciprocity for Out-of-State Applicants?**

New York State does not have a formal reciprocity agreement with any other state. However, as a member of the Association of Boards of Certification, New York does accept the result of any ABC or equivalent certification exam. Many states currently utilize ABC for testing or have their exams deemed equivalent by ABC. For more information, contact ABC at (515) 232-3623 or visit the website at: <http://www.abccert.org/>

Any non-New York State operator must meet the same education and training requirements as resident operators. These are detailed in **Certification Requirements** starting on page 7. For a summary on obtaining New York State certification, please refer to the "Guidelines for Out-of-State Applicants." This document can be found on-line at: NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/operator-certification/reciprocity/>

## Plant Scoring for Out-of-State Applicants

Applicants must score the facility where their experience was gained using the "Scoring Sheet" (see Forms and Tables starting on page 16) and attach the scoring sheet to their application. Applicants must also include a schematic of the treatment plant, NPDES number, and telephone numbers of the Chief Operator, and a State representative who is familiar with the treatment processes at the facility. NYWEA will verify the information with NYSDEC.

## Detailed Certification Requirements

### 1. Education:

**Minimum** education qualifications for wastewater treatment plant operator certification vary according to the Grade desired. For grades 3, 3A, 4 and 4A, an approved advanced degree may substitute for operating experience.

#### Education Options for Grades 1, 1A, 2, and 2A:

Grades 1, 2, 1A, and 2A require a High School Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

Education Options for Grades 3, 3A, 4, and 4A: Grades 3, 3A, 4, and 4A can use any one of the following options to meet the **minimum** education requirement:

- 1) A High School diploma or High School Equivalency, General Equivalency Diploma (GED); or
- 2) An Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree from a duly accredited university or school. An Associate of Science (AS) degree with 30 credit hours of math and/or science or an Associate of Arts (AA) degree with 30 credit hours of math and/or science is considered equivalent to a A.A.S. Degree; or
- 3) An "Approved Associate in Applied Science" (A.A.S.) degree from a duly accredited university or school in one of the following curriculums approved by NYSDEC:
  - Ecology and Environmental Technology from Paul Smith's College
  - Water Quality Monitoring and Environmental Control/Hazardous Waste from Ulster County Community College
  - Environmental Technology or Public Health Technology from SUNY-Morrisville
  - Water/Wastewater Technology from Crowder College
  - Science Lab Technology from SUNY Cobleskill; or
- 4) A Bachelor of Arts degree with thirty (30) credit hours of math and/or science from a duly accredited university or school; or
- 5) A Bachelor of Science degree with thirty (30) credit hours of math and/or science from a duly accredited university or school. This degree is not restricted to an engineering or natural science major.

### 2. Wastewater Operation Experience:

The regulations require applicants to have hands-on operations experience of **all** unit processes at a WWTP. It is not enough to be employed at the facility; you must document operating experience at each unit process. Two types of experience are evaluated, Approved Operating Experience, and general Operating Experience. As required by the grade level of certification, Approved Operating Experience is required at the appropriate facility plant score.

General Operating Experience may be obtained at any WWTP with a SPDES (State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit.

The ***approved operating experience*** consists of operating experience of all unit processes at the required wastewater treatment plant with a SPDES Permit and appropriate facility score. A minimum period of ***approved operating experience*** is required in a wastewater treatment plant of the same grade (or higher) for which you are seeking certification. If you are seeking certification as an activated sludge or "A" operator, your ***approved operating experience*** must be at an activated sludge treatment plant with the same or higher grade for which the certification is being sought.

The ***operating experience*** must be gained at any wastewater treatment plant with a SPDES Permit regardless of type or facility score. This experience must include a minimum of fifty (50) percent hands-on operation of all unit processes at the WWTP. The other 50% experience can consist of General Operating Experience or Administrative duties (recordkeeping, ordering, budget development, etc.) Proof of operating experience requires the completion and submittal of the form "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Statement of Experience" with the candidate's certification package. The form must be signed by the applicant and the applicant's supervisor attesting the experience is true and accurate. A "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Statement of Experience" must be completed for each facility from which the candidate is claiming operating and/or approved operating experience. .

The Statement of Experience form, Operations Experience section is broken down by treatment process. *A minimum of fifty percent (50) of the required, operating and approved operating experience must be hands-on operation of all unit processes at the WWTP.* This experience must be detailed in the appropriate treatment process listing on the form.

\* If the applicant has acquired his/her operating experience at more than one WWTP, a Statement of Experience form must be submitted for each facility. The table within Forms, starting on page 16 shows the experience requirements needed for each grade. Please note the grayed-out areas for ***operating experience*** for grade levels where an approved advanced degree may be used to substitute for this element only. This experience must include a minimum of fifty (50) percent hands-on operation of all unit processes at the WWTP.

### 3. Certification Training Courses

Each applicant is required to complete the training requirement(s) for the grade he or she is applying for. The training requirements for New York State wastewater treatment plant operators are a progressive process. For example, a Grade 4 applicant must complete the training required for the Grade 2, 3 and 4 levels. Grade 2, 3, and 4 candidates start at the Basic Operations Course and progress to their desired certification training level. All candidates for activated sludge, or "A" certificates, are also required to complete a NYSDEC approved activated sludge course. The current schedule for certification training courses can be found on the NYWEA website at <https://www.nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/>

The table below illustrates the required certification training required for each Certification Grade:

	1	1A	2	2A	3	3A	4	4A
Home Study Introductory Course	√	√						
Basic Operations Course	√*	√*	√	√	√	√	√	√
Activated Sludge Course		√		√		√		√
Laboratory Proficiency			√	√	√	√	√	√
Supervision and Technical Operations Course					√	√	√	√
Management Course							√	√

\* Optional for this level

Grade 1 candidates have the option of either completing the Basic Operations Course or by completing one of the approved home study courses listed below:

- 1) California State University "Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants" Volumes I & II or California State University "Small Wastewater System Operation & Maintenance" Volumes I & II  
Office of Water Programs, CSU, Sacramento  
6000 J Street Sacramento, California, 95819-2694  
P - (916) 278-6142 F - (916) 278-5959  
<http://www.owp.csus.edu>
- 2) University of Florida "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation" (Class "C" Home Study Course)  
Department of Independent Study by Correspondence  
Division of Continuing Education, University of Florida  
2209 NW 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite D  
Gainesville, Florida 32609  
P - (352) 392-1711  
<https://xms.dce.ufl.edu/reg/groups/treeo/course.aspx?c=10510>

**Note: Home Study Grade 1, 1A courses do not satisfy the Grade 2/2A, 3/3A, and 4/4A Basic Operations training requirements.**

## **Basic Operations Course:**

For a Basic Operations Course approved by NYSDEC, current offerings can be found on the NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/> or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. 315-422-7811, x 4.

## **Activated Sludge Course**

All candidates applying for certification for an activated sludge or "A" facility, must also complete a NYSDEC approved "Activated Sludge Operations Course". Current offerings can be found on the NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/> or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. 315-422-7811, x 4

## **Laboratory Proficiency**

Each applicant seeking certification at the Grade 2 or 2A level or higher must demonstrate the ability to conduct the laboratory tests necessary for the control of the operation of a wastewater treatment plant. Candidates must either successfully complete a laboratory exam conducted by NYWEA, or complete a NYSDEC approved laboratory course. Westchester Community College Environmental Control Degree, Ulster County Community College Environmental Control/Hazardous Waste and Ulster County Community College Water Quality Monitoring A.A.S. Degrees are approved substitutes and meet the laboratory proficiency requirement. Applicants with professional lab experience (chemist or lab technician) may be exempt from this requirement. To be considered for the exemption, you must document your lab duties and experience and submit it with your certification application. Call NYWEA at 315-422-7811 x 4 for further information.

## **Grade 3 Supervision and Technical Operations Options:**

Applicants are required to complete a five (5) day NYSDEC approved "Supervision and Technical Operations Course" or complete an approved home-study course and the 7.5 hour "Technical Operations Module" (TOM). Current offerings can be found on the NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/> or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. 315-422-7811, x 4

### *Home-Study Course Options plus 7.5 hour Technical Operations Module:*

The following courses are approved for the Supervision requirement:

#### "Manage for Success: Effective Utility Leadership Practices"

California State University - Sacramento

P - (916) 278-6142

<https://www.owp.csus.edu/courses/management/manage-for-success-effective-utility-leadership-practices.php>

#### "Supervisory Management in the Water/Wastewater Field"

Michigan State University

P - (800) 356-5705

<https://execed.broad.msu.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do;jsessionid=3DF45C3B4FE0E33ADF1D44E50A5FD80D?method=load&courseId=1029550>

#### "Basic Supervision and Basic Management"

Indiana State University

P - (800) 234-1639 Extension 2522

e-mail: [extwarne@ruby.instate.edu](mailto:extwarne@ruby.instate.edu)

In addition to these home-study options, you also must complete the 7.5 hour training course entitled "Technical Operations Module" which consists of Multimedia Issues, Odor Control, Nutrient Removal, and Toxicity. Refer to the NYWEA website for upcoming certification training courses at <https://nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/>.

#### **Grade 4 Management Course**

Refer to the NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/pre-certification-schools/> for current offerings or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204, Phone 315-422-7811, x 4 for more information.

#### **4. Examination:**

Applicants are required to successfully complete an Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) exam. ABC is the national certification organization that NYSDEC/NYWEA use for wastewater operator exams. These Exams are administered by PSI at several testing sites located around the State. The computer-based exams are 100 multiple choice questions for Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 4A and 110 multiple choice questions for Grades 1A, 2A and 3A. Ten of the 110 questions are not included in the candidate's score, but are used by ABC to collect statistics on new questions before they are considered for future exams. You will have three (3) hours to complete the exam. Candidates will know their exam score after completing the test. A passing grade is 70%. You may retake the same grade exam after ninety days. A \$112 exam fee payable to PSI is required each time you take an exam.

## Supplemental Information Regarding Operator Certification

### What is Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification?

Certification in New York State is a mandatory system whereby an individual is determined to be qualified as a chief operator or assistant/shift operator for the complete and actual operation of a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) for the purpose of meeting the requirements of its State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (SPDES).

### Why Is There Certification?

Billions of dollars have been spent on the abatement of water pollution. Thousands of WWTP's have been built or upgraded in the quest for clean waters. These complex, expensive WWTP's are useless without competent, well-trained individuals to direct and maintain the process and machinery used in modern wastewater treatment. The operator is the first line of defense against waterborne diseases, guardians of water quality, and at the forefront of safeguarding public health. We, in New York State, recognize the value of our operators and utilize the certification system to ensure that all operators are educated, trained, and experienced individuals.

### Why are there fees?

Prior to September 2011, NY State taxpayers supported the certification program by paying the salaries for NYSDEC employees involved in operator certification. The new certification program (administered by NYWEA) established a fee structure to support NYWEA's Operator Certification Administrator and the resources that person requires.

**New Operator Application Fees** – This is a \$195 fee payable to NYWEA with the operator's initial application to become certified. This fee is in addition to the \$112 charge that is paid to PSI when the operator schedules the examination. If the Operator schedules a retake, they are responsible for another \$112 exam fee payable to PSI. If the operator decides to apply for a higher certification grade, the \$195 application fee will be charged again.

**Certification Renewal Fee** – This is a \$205 fee due with the operator's five-year renewal application (this works out to \$41 per year).

This program does not generate a profit for NYWEA but is designed to make the program self-funded. NYWEA has and will continue to make every effort to keep the costs down as much as possible for the operators.

### Definitions

#### *1. Activated Sludge Process:*

Is defined as a biological wastewater treatment process in which a mixture of wastewater and return activated sludge is agitated and aerated. The activated sludge is subsequently separated from the treated wastewater (mixed liquor) by sedimentation and wasted or returned to the process as needed.

#### *2. Assistant/Shift Operator:*

Is defined as an individual who is employed or appointed by any county, city, village, town, district, or by any State department, agency or authority, or by any sewer company, corporation, person or group of persons, or by any industry or institution, and who is designated by appointing officials as a person who, under the direction of the chief operator, is in responsible supervision of the wastewater treatment plant during a shift or in the absence of the chief operator.

### *3. Chief Operator:*

Is defined as an individual who is employed or appointed by any county, city, village, town, district, or by any state department, agency or authority, or by any sewer company, corporation, person or group of persons, or by any industry or institution, who is designated by the appointing officials as the person in responsible supervision of the complete and actual operation of any wastewater treatment plant. It is not intended to include city managers, superintendents of public works or municipal or other officials unless their duties include the actual hands-on operation of a wastewater treatment plant.

### *4. Contact Hour:*

Is defined as one hour of acceptable instruction or training in a course or seminar relevant to the operation, maintenance, or management of a wastewater treatment plant.

### *5. Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP):*

Is defined as any plant or facility owned or maintained by any county, city, village, town, district, or by any State department, agency or authority, or by any sewer company corporation, person or group of persons, or by any industry or institution, which subjects wastewater to a process for removing or altering the objectionable constituents of wastewater for the purpose of meeting the requirements of its State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (SPDES) and making it less offensive or dangerous. Pretreatment facilities (sewer users) are not required to have a certified operator and any operational experience acquired at a pretreatment plant **does not** qualify for certification.

### *6. Operating Experience:*

Is defined as work experience at a wastewater treatment plant with a SPDES permit. A minimum of fifty (50) percent of the work experience must include hands-on operation of all unit processes at the WWTP.

### *7. Approved Operating Experience:*

Is defined as work experience at a wastewater treatment plant with a SPDES permit having the same or higher point score for which certification is being sought. Candidates for "A" certification must acquire this experience at an activated sludge WWTP having the same or higher point score for the grade in which certification is being sought. A minimum of fifty (50) percent of the experience must include hands-on operation of all unit processes at the WWTP. The other 50% experience can consist of such as General Operating Experience, Administrative duties (recordkeeping, ordering, budget development, etc.)

### *8. Other Treatment Processes:*

Is defined as all biological, physical, and chemical treatment processes other than the activated sludge process. It is intended to include, but is not limited to, treatment processes such as trickling filters, rotating biological contactors, sand filters, biofilters, oxidation ponds, stabilization ponds, activated carbon or any other device or processes performing similar functions.

### *9. Responsible Supervision:*

Is defined as the accountability for and performance of active, daily on-site operation of the wastewater treatment plant.

### *10. State Pollutant Elimination Discharge System (SPDES)*

Wastewater treatment plant permitting process establishing pollutant parameters to protect receiving streams.

## **Industrial operators**

Industrial plants treating industrial wastewater exclusively **do not** require a certified operator. However, operating experience at an industrial wastewater plant with a SPDES permit may satisfy the operating experience



requirements. Industrial operators who desire certification must meet all requirements (i.e. education, training, laboratory proficiency, and examination).

Industrial operator certification packages must include a schematic of the WWTP where their experience was acquired. Industrial operators may experience a delay in the certification process due to the lack of facility scoring information. Industrial operators are encouraged to complete the WWTP scoring form included in this manual, starting on page 16 and submit it with their certification package. The WWTP final scoring will be determined by NYSDEC.

Wastewater pretreatment facilities (sewer users) are excluded and are not included under these regulations. Any operating experience gained at a pretreatment facility does not qualify as operating experience or approved operating experience for the purpose of wastewater treatment plant operator certification.

### **Renewal Requirements**

All Certified Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators in New York State are required to renew their certificates every five (5) years. The requirement for an operator to renew their certificate is based on the completion of the required contact hours of approved training related to the field of wastewater treatment. A Renewal fee of \$205 is required.

The following table summarizes the contact hours needed during the five (5) year period for each Grade:

<b>Renewal Training Requirements</b>	
<b>Certificate Grade</b>	<b>Renewal Hours Required</b>
Grades 1 & 1A	20
Grades 2 & 2A	40
Grades 3 & 3A	60
Grades 4 & 4A	80

Each course or seminar attended for the purpose of certification renewal must be verified by a course completion certificate designating the training hours involved and signed by the instructor. All training used for renewal training must be approved by NYSDEC. A copy of the Request for Approval of Renewal Training can be found at: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water\\_pdf/renewtrng.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/renewtrng.pdf)

The organization or trainer providing the renewal training should receive approval prior to conducting the course or seminar. Renewal Training Course Guidelines can be obtained by calling the NYSDEC Bureau of Water Compliance, Phone (518) 402-8177, Fax (518) 402-8082 or visit the Renewal Guidelines on the DEC's website: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23821.html>

## **Renewal Procedures**

The operator must complete a Renewal Application and attach the training certificates for each course or seminar attended. A copy of the Renewal Application is available in this manual under Forms starting on page 16 or on the NYWEA website at <https://nywea.org/operator-certification/renewal/>

The training certificate must have the date(s) of the training, document the number of contact hours of training received, and must be signed by the instructor.

The Renewal Application, payment fee of \$205 as well as supporting documentation, must be sent to:

**NYWEA  
525 Plum Street, Suite 102  
Syracuse, NY 13204**

The renewal application should be received by NYWEA ninety (90) days prior to expiration of the old certificate and include the \$205 renewal application fee. This is to assure that if there should be a problem with a renewal course approval, the applicant has time to take additional training prior to the expiration date.

If an operator does not renew his/her certificate in the specified time or fails to attain the proper amount of approved contact hours of training, his/her certificate will be expired. To reinstate the certificate, the operator must attain the required contact hours of training and remit a late fee of \$50 in addition to the \$205 renewal application fee. If a certificate has expired for more than one (1) year, the operator must complete the required renewal training, pay the late and renewal fees *and* also retake and pass the ABC exam. For expired operators, only the most recent five (5) years of training from the date of your submittal will be credited towards renewal.

# **Forms and Tables**

Plant Scoring Sheet  
Experience Summary Table

# **Certification Forms**

Application for Approval of Qualifications  
Statement of Experience  
Renewal of Certificate Form

**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SCORING SHEET**

Facility Name \_\_\_\_\_ SPDES # \_\_\_\_\_ Chief Operator \_\_\_\_\_

Facility phone number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_ Regional Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Circle units/items that apply \_\_\_\_\_

Design Flow - 3 points per MGD or part (Minimum 1 point - Maximum 50 points) 3 points x _____ MGD = _____ Flow Points			
Unit or Item	Points	Unit or Item	Points
<b>Preliminary Treatment (Maximum 8 points)</b>		Phosphorus Removal (required by permit), 4K	8
Bar Screens and/or Comminutor, 1A	2	Chemical Addition for neutralization, 4L	3
Manual Grit Removal, 1B	2	<b>Advanced Treatment Subtotal<sub>4</sub></b>	
Mechanical or Aerated Grit Removal, 1C	3	<b>Disinfection (Maximum 8 points)</b>	
Pre-aeration, 1D	2	Chlorination:	
Raw sewage or Effluent pumping, 1E	3	Gas Chlorination, 5A	5
Flow equalization basin, 1F	3	Other Chlorination, 5B	2
<b>(Preliminary Score) Subtotal<sub>1</sub></b>		Dechlorination, 5C	3
<b>Primary Treatment (Maximum 5 points)</b>		Ultraviolet, 5D	5
Primary Treatment Including: Primary Clarifiers, Imhoff tanks, Spirogesters, Clarigesters, Fixed Screens, and Hydroscreens, 2A	5	Ozonization, 5E	5
		Bromine Chloride, 5F	5
<b>Primary Treatment Subtotal<sub>2</sub></b>		<b>Disinfection Subtotal<sub>5</sub></b>	
<b>Secondary Treatment (Maximum 25 points)</b>		<b>Solids Handling / Disposal (Maximum 25 points)</b>	
Lagoon (unaerated), 3B	3	Gravity Thickener, 6A	5
Intermittent sand filters without recirculation, 3C	3	Dissolved air floatation thickener, 6B	8
Intermittent sand filters with recirculation, 3D	5	Centrifugation, (includes all modifications) 6C	8
Aerated Lagoon, 3E	7	Aerobic Digestion, 6D	5
Trickling Filter / Biological Filter without recirculation, 3F	9	Single Stage Anaerobic Digestion (unheated), 6E	5
Trickling Filter / Biological Filter with recirculation, 3G	11	Single Stage Anaerobic Digestion (heated), 6F	8
Rotating Biological Contactors, 3H	11	Two Stage Anaerobic Digestion, 6G	10
Activated Sludge (includes all process modifications), 3I	20	Sludge Drying Beds, except vacuum assisted drying bed, 6H	3
Chemical Coagulation with rapid mix, flocculation, clarification, 3J	20	Belt Filter Press, 6I	8
<b>Secondary Treatment Subtotal<sub>3</sub></b>		Plate & Frame Press, 6O	8
<b>Advanced Waste Treatment / Tertiary Treatment (Maximum 20 points)</b>		Vacuum Filters, 6P	8
Polishing pond, 4A	2	All other dewatering units, 6J	5
Microscreens, 4B	3	Land Application, 6K	5
Intermittent sand filter, 4C	3	Composting:	
Rapid sand filter, 4D	5	In vessel, 6L	10
Activated carbon columns or beds, 4E	5	Static Pile, 6M	5
Reverse osmosis, electrodialysis, ion exchange, 4F	5	Solids Reduction (incineration, wet oxidation), 6N	15
Nitrification required by permit (Ammonia, TKN, or UOD limit):		<b>Solids Handling/Disposal Subtotal<sub>6</sub></b>	
by Activated Sludge, 4G	8	<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Nitrification by other process, 4H	5	Nutrient addition (nitrogen and/or phosphorus), 7A	3
Denitrification required by permit (Nitrate or Total Nitrogen limit):		Carbon Regeneration (onsite), 7B	10
Nitrification by Activated Sludge and Denitrification, 4I	13	<b>Miscellaneous Subtotal<sub>7</sub></b>	
Nitrification by other process and Denitrification, 4J	10	<b>Total Score (add subtotals 1 thru 7 plus Flow Points)</b>	

## Total Operating and Approved Operating Experience Required Based on Education and Plant Score

Grade	Types of Experience	Facility Type	B.S. Degree*	Approved A.A.S.**	A.A.S.***	High School
4A	Operating Experience	May be acquired at any WWTP.		1½ Years	3 years	6 Years
	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at an activated sludge WWTP with a point score of 76 or greater.	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years
		<b>Total ****</b>	<b>2 Years</b>	<b>3½ Years</b>	<b>5 Years</b>	<b>8 Years</b>
4	Operating Experience	May be acquired at any WWTP.		1½ Years	3 Years	6 Years
	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at a WWTP with a point score of 76 or greater.	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years
		<b>Total ****</b>	<b>2 Years</b>	<b>3½ Years</b>	<b>5 Years</b>	<b>8 Years</b>
3A	Operating Experience	May be acquired at any WWTP.			1½ Years	3 Years
	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at an activated sludge WWTP with a point score of 56 or greater.	1½ Years	1½ Years	1½ Years	1½ Years
		<b>Total ****</b>	<b>1½ Years</b>	<b>1½ Years</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>4½ Years</b>
3	Operating Experience	May be acquired at any WWTP.			1½ Years	3 Years
	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at a WWTP with a point score of 56 or greater.	1½ Years	1½ Years	1½ Years	1½ Years
		<b>Total ****</b>	<b>1½ Years</b>	<b>1½ Years</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>4½ Years</b>
2A	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at an activated sludge WWTP with a point score of 31 or greater.	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
2	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at a WWTP with a point score of 31 or greater.	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
1A	Approved Operating Experience	Must be acquired at an activated sludge WWTP.	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months
1	Approved Operating Experience	May be acquired at any WWTP.	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months

\* B.S. Degree must include 30 credit hours of math and/or science, B.A. Degree with 30 credit hours of math and/or science is considered equivalent to a B.S. Degree

\*\* See *Detailed Certification Requirements- Education* for “Approved A.A.S. Degrees”

\*\*\* A.S Degrees with 30 credit hours of math and/or science or A.A Degrees with 30 credit hours of math and/or science are considered equivalent to an A.A.S. Degree.

\*\*\*\* Applicant must meet the combined experience requirements listed as Operating Experience plus Approved Operating Experience.



**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
and New York Water Environment Association, Inc.  
Application for Approval of Qualifications for  
Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator 10/2024**



**Mail application packet and \$195 exam application fee to: NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204**

**Personal Information - To be completed by applicant. Please print clearly.**

First Name and MI																										
Last Name, Suffix (Jr, Sr, III, etc.)																										
Postal Address																							Apt #			
City											State						Zip			-						
DEC Region for WWTP Location						County						Work Phone														
Current SPDES						Grade Sought						If certified in NY, list grade and cert number														
E-Mail																										
Cell Phone																										

**The table below is for NYWEA use only**

Certification Grade				Approval Letter Sent				Approval Letter Date						
Assigned Identification Number	N	Y	W	W										
Reviewer Signature								Exam Score				DD/MM/YY		
												Exam Date		
New Certification Number				Status	First	Upgrade						Vacate Old Number		
First Expiration Date														

**Wastewater Treatment Plant Operating Experience (list most recent first)**

*Please note:*

- (1) Each **job title** at a facility must be listed **separately**. For example, if your title or position at one facility was “Maintenance Staff” and later “Operator Trainee” and later “Assistant Operator,” then there would be three different entries for those positions on this form, even though work for all three titles took place at the same facility.
- (2) Use additional sheets as necessary.

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor’s Name and Title	
Employer		Employer’s Address		
Facility Name		Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #	
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor’s Name and Title	
Employer		Employer’s Address		
Facility Name		Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #	
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

From	To	Your Title or Position	Supervisor's Name and Title	
Employer			Employer's Address	
Facility Name			Facility Point Score	Facility SPDES #
Facility Telephone Number ( )		Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.)		

## Education and Wastewater Training Courses

ATTACH Copy of Diploma, Transcript, or Completion Notice		Graduated?		Graduation or Completion Date	Type of Degree	Column for DEC or NYWEA Use Only
Name of School	School Location	Yes	No			
High School or GED						
College (highest degree)						
Basic Operations Course						
Laboratory Proficiency (or test)						
Activated Sludge Course						
Grade 3 Combined Supervision & Technical Operations Course						
Grade 3	Supervision Course; and					
	Technical Operations (1 day)					
Grade 4 Management Course						

**CERTIFICATION:** I understand that Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) §17-3-0301(1)(bb),3-0301(2)(m) and 17-0303 and Section 650 of the Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) require that WWTPs be under the responsible supervision of an appropriately certified operator and that ECL § 71-1933 provides that any person who, having any of the culpable mental states defined at Section 15.05 of the New York Penal Law, willfully violates any provision of ECL Article 17 or any regulation promulgated thereto, any permits or any order of the Commissioner issued pursuant to ECL Article 17, is punishable as a misdemeanor.

Furthermore, I understand that, pursuant to ECL §71-1933(7) that any person who, with intent to deceive, makes any false material statement, representation or certification in any application, record, report, plan or other document filed or required to be maintained pursuant to Title 7 or 8 of Article 17 of the ECL, shall be guilty of a Class E Felony.

I affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the information I have entered on this application and on all supplemental material (including any application supplements, operational logs, and other application-related material requested by DEC or NYWEA) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

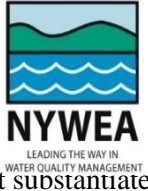
**Mail your completed Application and Statement of Experience documents, high school/college diploma or transcript or GED, copies of pre-certification course completion certificates/letters and \$195 exam application fee to: NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204.**





Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
and New York Water Environment Association, Inc.  
Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator  
Statement of Experience – 10/2024**



**Instructions:** This form is to be **completed by the supervisor** under whom the applicant worked and must **substantiate** the wastewater operational experience of the applicant. This form is to be included in the applicant’s certification package. Supervisors, please supply as much information as possible attesting to the applicant’s experience, duties, and/or responsibilities in the operation of the wastewater treatment plant (use additional sheets if necessary). All applicants must have the required approved operational experience detailed in Title 6 NYCRR Section 650.

**If operating experience was acquired at more than one WWTP, a Statement of Experience form must be submitted for each facility. In addition, if the applicant worked in more than one job title at a facility, a separate Statement of Experience Form must be completed for each job title.**

**Applicant Information:**

Applicant Name:	
Applicant Job Title (this wastewater facility):	
Applicant Employment Dates for this Job Title (this wastewater facility):	
Were the applicant’s duties at this wastewater facility for this title <b>full-time</b> (at least 37.5 hours per week)? If not, please list days per week and hours per day for <b>wastewater</b> duties at this facility.	
Percentage of Time <b>in this Title</b> Spent in Hands-On Operation of <u>all</u> Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Unit Processes _____% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not include time spent working in a Water Treatment Plant or Collection System.</li> <li>Do not include time spent working on the following tasks: maintenance, supervision, lab work (unless the analysis is used by the operator to make process adjustments), paperwork, or building and grounds upkeep.</li> </ul>	Applicant’s Completed Education Level:
WWTP Where Experience was Acquired:	WWTP SPDES #:
WWTP Phone #:	WWTP Score & Secondary Process:
Supervisor’s Name:	Supervisor Job Title:

**Operations Experience:** Operations experience must demonstrate experience in the actual hands-on operation of all unit processes at a wastewater treatment plant with a SPDES permit. Provide a detailed description of all job duties. The applicant may provide and/or the Department may request a copy of the applicant's job description to support the Statement of Experience. **If additional space is required, the supervisor and the applicant must sign and date the separate statement(s) and attach the additional documentation to the statement(s) of experience.** This application may be returned if the operations experience does not provide adequate detail of all job duties and/or demonstrate experience in all unit processes at the wastewater treatment plant.

Preliminary Treatment Job Duties (if applicable):
Primary Treatment Job Duties (if applicable):
Secondary Treatment Job Duties (if applicable):
Advanced/Tertiary Treatment Job Duties (if applicable):
Disinfection Job Duties (if applicable):
Solids Handling Job Duties (if applicable):
Other Treatment Process Job Duties (if applicable):

**Additional Information:**

**Have you ever had a wastewater operator license or certification suspended or revoked in any state?**

**If so, please explain:**

**Attestations:**

**CERTIFICATION:** I understand that Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) §17-3-0301(1)(bb),3-0301(2)(m) and 17-0303 and Section 650 of the Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) require that WWTPs be under the responsible supervision of an appropriately certified operator and that ECL § 71-1933 provides that any person who, having any of the culpable mental states defined at Section 15.05 of the New York Penal Law, willfully violates any provision of ECL Article 17 or any regulation promulgated thereto, any permits or any order of the Commissioner issued pursuant to ECL Article 17, is punishable as a misdemeanor.

Furthermore, I understand that, pursuant to ECL §71-1933(7) that any person who, with intent to deceive, makes any false material statement, representation or certification in any application, record, report, plan or other document filed or required to be maintained pursuant to Title 7 or 8 of Article 17 of the ECL, shall be guilty of a Class E Felony.

I affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the information I have entered on this application and on all supplemental material (including any application supplements, operational logs, and other application-related material requested by DEC or NYWEA) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

**Attesting to Operations Experience which the Applicant and/or Supervisor knows is false, can lead to civil and/or criminal action including, but not limited to, revocation of the Applicant's and/or Supervisor's wastewater treatment plant operator's certificate.**

Applicant's Signature:	Date:
Supervisor's Signature:	Date:





# APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATE: WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
and New York Water Environment Association, Inc.

Date Stamp Here

Mail application, copies of contact hour completion certificates and the \$205 renewal fee to:  
NYWEA 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204  
A \$50 late fee applies to certificate holders who seek reinstatement of an expired certificate. See reverse side.

Section I. Applicant Information: Complete all information. Please type or print in ink. Instructions are on the reverse side.

1. Name (Last, First, MI):		6. Certificate No.:	7. Cert. Grade:	8. Cert. Expires:
2. Postal Address:		3. Email:		4. County of Residence:
		9. Day Phone:		5. Cell Phone:
10. Plant SPDES Permit Number	11. Plant Name		<b>THIS BOX FOR ADMIN. USE ONLY</b>  Approved By: _____  Date: _____  QR <span style="float: right;">CR</span>	
	Primary Plant			
13. NYSDEC Region you work in:		12. Are you the Chief Operator?		
		YES or NO		
		YES or NO		
		YES or NO		

Section II. Renewal Training Contact Hours: Enter all training received towards certificate renewal. **All training is subject to audit for five (5) years following current certificate expiration date.** Maintain the original course completion certificate for five (5) years following current certificate expiration date.

14. Course Title	15. Course Sponsor or Name of Organization Providing Training	16. Location of Training (city, state)	17. Date Training Completed	18. NYSDEC Approved	
				RTC No.	Contact Hrs.

19. Total contact hours on this page:

Section III. CERTIFICATION: I understand that Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) § 17-3-0301(1)(bb), 3-0301(2)(m) and 17-0303 and Section 650 of the Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) require that WWTPs be under the responsible supervision of an appropriately certified operator and that ECL § 71-1933 provides that any person who, having any of the culpable mental states defined at Section 15.05 of the New York Penal Law, willfully violates any provision of ECL Article 17 or any regulation promulgated thereto, any permits or any order of the Commissioner issued pursuant to ECL Article 17, is punishable as a misdemeanor. Furthermore, I understand that, pursuant to ECL § 71-1933(7) that any person who, with intent to deceive, makes any false material statement, representation or certification in any application, record, report, plan or other document filed or required to be maintained pursuant to Title 7 or 8 of Article 17 of the ECL, shall be guilty of a Class E Felony.

I affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the information on this form is true and that I have completed all of the renewal courses listed in Section II.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

See instructions and information on reverse side. **Mail completed application and \$205 certificate renewal application fee to:**  
New York State Water Environment Association, Inc., 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204

**YOUR APPLICATION MUST BE POSTMARKED AT LEAST NINETY (90) DAYS BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE OF YOUR CERTIFICATE.**

## ANSWERS TO SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

### **Why do I need to renew my certificate?**

The wastewater treatment plant operator certification regulations (6 NYCRR Part 650) state that your operator certificate is valid for a period of five (5) years. For renewal of your certificate, you will need to meet the renewal requirements and submit an application and \$205 certificate renewal application fee to NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. If you have questions, call 315-422-7811, ext. 4.

### **What are the renewal requirements?**

During the five-year period which precedes the expiration date of your certificate, you must complete a minimum number of contact hours of NYSDEC approved training related to the field of wastewater treatment. Only the most recent five (5) years of training will be considered for renewal. The number of contact hours you need depends on the Grade of your certificate: Grades 1 & 1A need 20 hours, Grades 2 & 2A need 40 hours, Grades 3 & 3A need 60 hours, and Grades 4 & 4A need 80 hours. For renewal of your certificate, you do not need to be working at a wastewater treatment plant.

### **What happens if I do not get the minimum renewal training contact hours or if I do not file an Application for Renewal of Certificate?**

Your certificate has an expiration date. If you do not renew your certificate by the expiration date, your certificate will expire, and the certificate is no longer valid – **you are not certified!** NYWEA will not issue a new certificate until they receive an application for renewal with documentation showing that you have received the minimum required contact hours of NYSDEC approved training and the \$205 certificate renewal application fee. To re-instate a certificate that is expired for one year or longer, you will need to complete the renewal training requirement, pay the \$205 certificate renewal application fee, the \$50 late fee and retake the certification exam for your grade certificate. Candidates who seek to reinstate a certificate within one year of their expiration date are also subject to the \$50 late fee.

### **What kind of training is eligible for renewal contact hours?**

The training must be relevant to the operation, maintenance, or management of a wastewater treatment plant. Some examples include: operations, maintenance, management, laboratory, safety & first aid, collection systems, process control, computers, accounting, public relations, mathematics, biology, chemistry. In addition to NYSDEC sponsored seminars, training provided by other government agencies, colleges & universities, NYWEA and other professional associations, equipment vendors, consultants, or in-plant training coordinators & training officers may be eligible for renewal contact hours.

### **How can I find out if a course I plan to take has been approved by NYSDEC for renewal contact hours?**

The best way is to check the training notice or ask the course sponsor/provider for the NYSDEC Course Approval Number (RTC number). The RTC number is assigned by NYSDEC to courses which have been approved for renewal contact hours. The RTC number uniquely identifies a training course's content, date, location, and contact hours. If the course sponsor/provider can't tell you the RTC number for the course, then chances are it has not been approved.

### **Does NYSDEC need to approve the training before I can take it?**

NYSDEC approval is not needed before you attend any training program. The training can be approved for contact hours before or after you attend the training. *HOWEVER ALL TRAINING USED FOR MEETING THE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS MUST BE APPROVED BY NYSDEC.*

### **How do I get NYSDEC to approve my training courses for renewal contact hours?**

The course sponsor/provider should submit a "Request for Approval of Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Renewal Training" (form 92-16-1) and a course agenda or time line to NYSDEC for review. Information about the renewal training approval process and the necessary forms can be found in the NYSDEC "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification Renewal Training Guidelines". Copies of the Guidelines can be obtained by calling (518) 402-8177. You can also visit our Operator Outreach website (see below). All training must be approved for renewal contact hours before you submit your Application for Renewal of Certificate.

### **When should I submit my application for renewal?**

You can submit your application any time after you accumulate the minimum renewal training contact hours **up until ninety (90) days before your current certificate expires**. Since you can't "bank" hours in excess of the minimum, it is best for you to apply for renewal as soon as you reach the minimum hours required for your certificate grade. The new five-year period does not begin until your current certificate expires. Renewing early gives you peace of mind and does not penalize you in any way.

### **Where do I send my application?**

Mail your completed Application for Renewal of Certificate, copies of contact hour renewal certificates and the \$205 certificate renewal application fee to: New York Water Environment Association, Inc., 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204.

### **Who do I call if I have questions?**

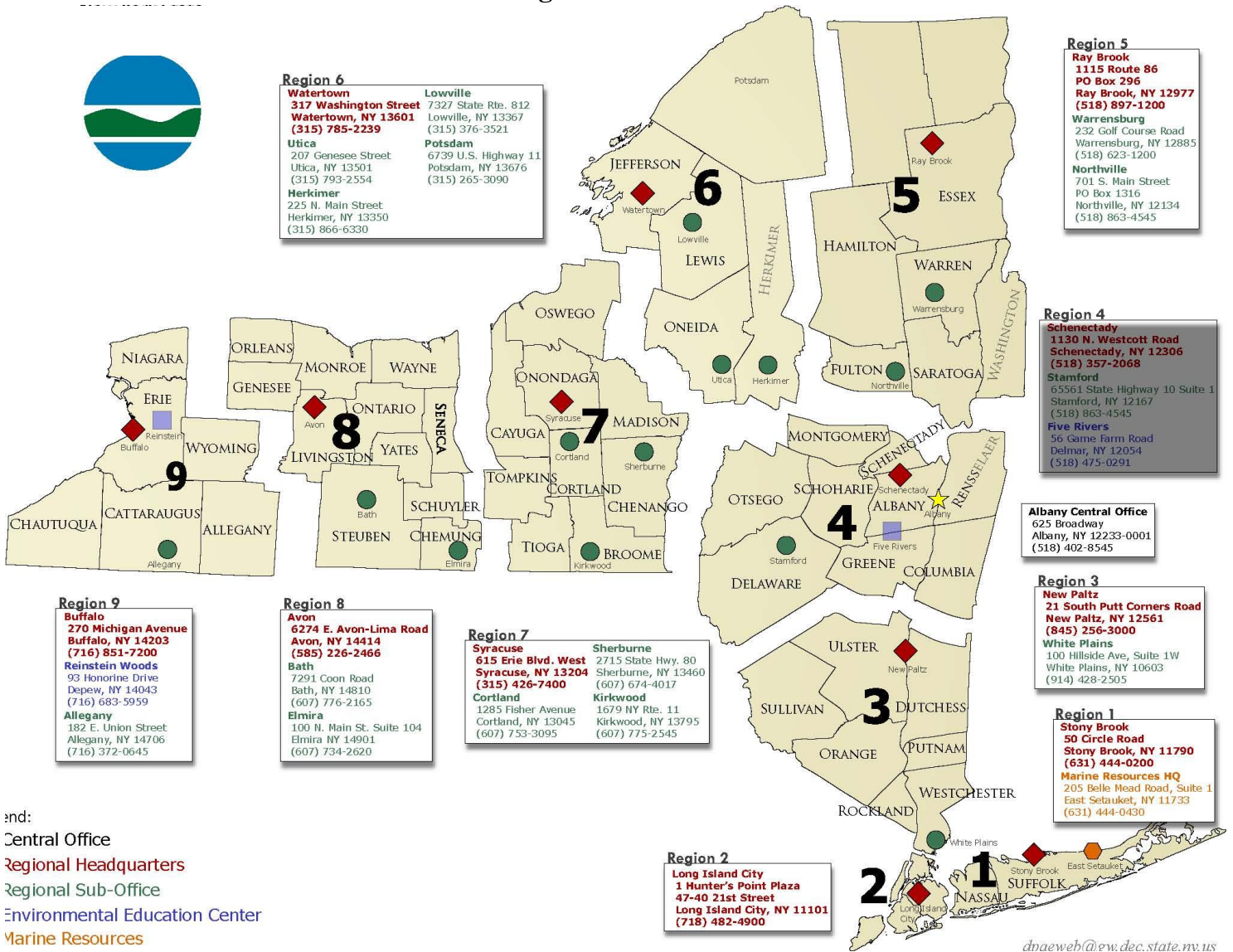
If you have any questions about certificate renewal requirements, renewal training, or if you need help completing the renewal application form, please call NYWEA at (315) 422-7811, ext 4. You can also get all the renewal information at the Operator Certification area of the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org).

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATE

- |        |  |   |   |
|--------|--|---|---|
| 1.     | Enter your name: last name, first name, middle initial   | <b>IMPORTANT: ALL TRAINING MUST BE NYSDEC APPROVED.</b> |   |
| 2 - 5. | Enter your mailing address, the county of residence, e mail and cell phone number.   |   |   |
| 6 - 8. | Enter your operator certificate number, your certificate grade, and and the expiration date. This information can be found on your certificate "wallet card".  | 15.   | Enter the course sponsor or the name of the organization providing the training. If the training was developed or delivered by an in-plant trainer, enter "In-plant" in this box. |
| 9.     | Enter your day phone number.   | 16.   | Enter the city and state where the training was held.   |
| 10-13. | Enter the name and SPDES Permit number of <u>all</u> the wastewater treatment plants at which you are currently working, listing your primary plant first. <b>If you work at more than three plants, attach an additional sheet with the name(s) and SPDES number(s) of the remaining plants at which you work.</b> For each plant, answer YES or NO to the question, Are you the Chief Operator? If you are not currently employed at a wastewater treatment plant, enter "none". Enter the NYSDEC Region that you work in. | 17.   | Enter the date that the training was completed.   |
| 14.    | Enter the name or title of the training course or program.   | 18.   | Enter the course RTC number and the contact hours. Pre-approved and NEIWPCC training does not require a RTC approval number.  |
|        |  | 19.   | Enter the total contact hours of NYSDEC approved training.  |

**Attach copies of contact hour certificates to the application**

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
**Regions and Counties**



- and:
- Central Office
- Regional Headquarters
- Regional Sub-Office
- Environmental Education Center
- Marine Resources

[dnaeweb@sw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:dnaeweb@sw.dec.state.ny.us)

**REGION 1 Counties:**

Nassau  
 Suffolk

**REGION 4 Counties:**

Albany Otsego  
 Columbia Rensselaer  
 Delaware Schoharie  
 Green Schenectady

**REGION 6-Suboffice**

**Counties:**  
 Herkimer  
 Oneida

**REGION 2 Counties:**

Queens New York  
 Richmond King

**REGION 5 Counties:**

Bronx  
 Clinton  
 Hamilton  
 Essex

**REGION 7 Counties:**

Broome Onondaga  
 Cayuga Oswego  
 Chenango Tioga  
 Cortland Tompkins  
 Madison

**REGION 3 Counties:**

Sullivan  
 Ulster

**REGION 5-Suboffice**

**Counties:**  
 Saratoga  
 Warren  
 Fulton  
 Washington

**REGION 8 Counties:**

Chemung Schuyler  
 Genesee Seneca  
 Livingston Steuben  
 Monroe Wayne  
 Ontario Yates

**REGION 3-Suboffice**

**Counties:**  
 Rockland Putnam

Dutchess Westchester

Orange

**REGION 6 Counties:**

Lewis  
 Jefferson  
 St. Lawrence

**REGION 9 Counties:**

Allegany Cattaraugus  
 Erie Chautauqua  
 Niagara

