

Oregon Wastewater Operator Certification Exam Update

Overview

Oregon law requires that wastewater collection and treatment systems be managed by trained and certified operators. This ensures the systems are managed in a way that protects public health and the environment. To become certified, prospective operators must pass an exam approved by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

The exams

Beginning in January 2019, prospective operators must pass the 2017 Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) Standardized Wastewater Operator Exams. There are four levels (I-IV) of certification for both collection and treatment, each with its own exam, for a total of eight exams.

The application process, fees, and passing score (70%) are the same as the previous exam version.

Find more information about ABC's exams:

www.abccert.org/testing_services/2017StandardizedExams.asp

How is the 2017 version of the exam different from the older (2012) version?

- **An exam for all jurisdictions**

ABC has developed the 2017 standardized exams to serve both United States and Canadian certification programs. To accommodate both jurisdictions, weights and measures will be provided in both U.S. customary and metric units. For example, the exam will include both: feet and meters, psi and kPa.

- **Additional questions**

Each 2017 standardized exam includes 10 more questions than previous versions of the exam (110 questions rather than 100). These are known as "pre-test" items and aren't included in the candidate's final exam score. These additional questions allow ABC to gather valuable data about new questions before they are included as scored questions on future exams. Pre-test items are unidentified and scattered throughout the

exam to ensure candidates answer them with the same care in which they address scored items.

- **Updated score reports**

Programs implementing the standardized exams will benefit from updated score and mastery reports. These reports are mapped to the new Need-to-Know Criteria and offer diagnostic information about candidate performance on specific exam content areas.

Candidates can utilize their score reports to determine which exam content areas they should focus on for future preparation efforts, and then consult the Need-to-Know Criteria for a complete list of testable operator job tasks included in that content area.

Exam length

Candidates have three hours to take the exam. ABC continues to recommend a three-hour time allotment with the addition of the 10 pre-test items. The three-hour allotment is well above the testing industry's standard two hours for a 100-110 question exam and should allow each candidate sufficient time to complete the exam.

Exam preparation

Exam preparation materials, including Need-to-Know Criteria and Formula/Conversion Tables, are available under "Exam information" on DEQ's website at <http://bit.ly/DEQ-WOCP>

Alternative formats

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.



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