All water systems must have an operator who is designated as the operator in Direct Responsible Charge (DRC). The DRC:

- Is certified at the appropriate level required at the water system;
- Supervises the system and is ultimately responsible for how it is operated; and
- Is available during periods of time when treatment process and operational decisions that affect public health are made.

In addition to the DRC, a system may use other operators as needed, as long as a written protocol addresses the following elements:

- Describes operational decisions the operator is allowed to make;
- Describes the conditions under which the operator must consult with the DRC, and when and how contact is made;
- Takes into account the certification level of the operator, their knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- Takes into account the range of expected operating conditions of the water system;
- Is signed and dated by the DRC and the other operator(s) and is available for inspection by DHS-DWP.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. Does the DRC need to be on call at all times in case a decision that may affect public health needs to be made?

   *No, if the protocol details what decisions the other operator(s) may make, the DRC does not need to be on call. If a circumstance comes up that is not covered under the protocol and the operator is not sure what to do, the DRC should be contacted.*

2. What if our system has more than one operator certified at the level of the system – does the protocol need to cover them as well?

   *The protocol just needs to cover operators certified at a level lower than that required of the system.*

3. Is there a specific format we need to use?

   *You can use whatever format best fits your system. If you have several operators at different levels, you may wish to have a protocol for each operator. An example format is included on the following page that you may use.*

4. What if I have questions on how to develop this protocol?

   *Contact your regional engineer or sanitarian at the county or state DWP for assistance.*
Written Operator Protocol
For operators certified at a level lower than required for the water system.

Water System Name: ___________________________  PWS ID: ___________________________

Protocol should take into account the certification level of the operator, the operator’s knowledge, skills, and abilities; and the range of expected operating conditions of the water system.

Operational tasks and/or changes the operator is allowed to perform:

1) __________________________________________________________________________
2) __________________________________________________________________________
3) __________________________________________________________________________
4) __________________________________________________________________________
5) __________________________________________________________________________
6) __________________________________________________________________________
7) __________________________________________________________________________
8) __________________________________________________________________________

Conditions when the operator must consult with the Operator in Direct Responsible Charge (DRC):

1) __________________________________________________________________________
2) __________________________________________________________________________
3) __________________________________________________________________________
4) __________________________________________________________________________
5) __________________________________________________________________________
6) __________________________________________________________________________
7) __________________________________________________________________________
8) __________________________________________________________________________

Operator Name: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________  Date: ____________

DRC Name: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________  Date: ____________