

**NYWEA**

LEADING THE WAY IN  
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

# Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification Manual

Revised August 5, 2011

**Primary Contact:**

For the latest information on certification and training.

NYWEA

525 Plum Street, Suite 102

Syracuse, NY 13204

Phone: (315) 422-7811

[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 the right column navigation bar at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8707.html>, these forms can also be found on the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)
- 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.

# Table of Contents

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| <b>Primary Contact:</b> .....  | ii     |
| <b>How Do I Get Certified?</b> .....   | 1      |
| Exemption .....  | 1      |
| Scoring System for Wastewater Treatment Plants .....                                   | 1      |
| Certification Grades .....   | 1      |
| Grade 1 & 1A .....   | 2      |
| Grade 2 & 2A .....   | 3      |
| Grade 3 & 3A .....   | 4      |
| Grade 4 & 4A .....   | 5      |
| After Your Application Has Been Approved .....   | 6      |
| Reciprocity for Out- of- State Applicants .....  | 6      |
| Plant Scoring for Out-of-State Applicants .....  | 6      |
| <b>Detailed Certification Requirements</b> .....                                       | 7      |
| Education .....  | 7      |
| Wastewater Operation Experience .....  | 8      |
| Certification Training Courses .....   | 9      |
| Laboratory Proficiency.....  | 10     |
| Regional Recommendation .....  |        |
| Examination .....  | 11     |
| <b>Supplemental Information Regarding Operator Certification</b> .....                 | 12     |
| What is Certification? .....   | 12     |
| Why is there Certification? .....  | 12     |
| Why are there Fees? .....  | 12     |
| Definitions.....   | 12     |
| Industrial operators.....  | 13     |
| Renewal Requirements.....  | 14     |
| Renewal Procedures .....   | 15     |
| <b>Forms and Tables</b> .....  | 16     |
| Plant Scoring Sheet .....  | 17     |
| Total Operating and Approved Operating Experience .....                                | 18     |
| Application for Approval of Qualifications .....                                       | 19-20  |
| Statement of Experience .....  | 21-22  |
| Application for Renewal of Certificate .....   | 24     |
| Answers to Some Common Questions.....  | 25     |
| <br>New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Regions and Counties ..... | <br>26 |

## 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 Grade 1), and passage of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) exam.

**New Operator Application Fees** – This is a \$150 fee due with the operator's initial application to become certified. This fee is in addition to the \$87 charge that is paid to Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) for the ABC examination. If the Operator fails the exam they are only responsible for the \$87 exam fee to AMP. If the operator decides to re-apply for another certification grade, a \$150 fee will be charged again with each new application.

**Certification Renewal Fee** – There will be a \$160 fee due with the operator's five year renewal application (this works out to \$32 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

1. You must have at least 6 months of approved hands on operations experience. Please see page 7-8 for more information on hands on operations experience.
  - a) Grade 1 - at any WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit
  - b) Grade 1A - at any Activated Sludge WWTP with a SPDES discharge permit
2. You must have completed the necessary certification training requirements. Please see page 9 for more information on certification training requirements and courses.
  - Basic Operations Course or
  - One of the Home Study Options:
    - Sacramento Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants Volume 1 and 2 or
    - Sacramento Small Wastewater Operation and Maintenance, Volume 1 and 2 or
    - Florida Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations
    - Note: Home Study options are only good for Grade 1 or 1A
  - Grade 1A - Activated Sludge Course
3. You must have a minimum high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Any foreign diplomas must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service and must identify what U.S. diploma the foreign diploma is equivalent to. The evaluation service must be either the U.S. Embassy from your country of origin or an approved evaluation service in the United States.

### **Your certification exam application must be received with the \$150 payment 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* form.
3. A copy of your high school diploma, GED, or college diploma.
4. A copy of your Basic Operations or Home Study course completion notice.
5. Grade 1A only - A copy of your Activated Sludge course completion notice.
6. Mail the complete certification packet to:

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

If you have any questions, call 315-422-7811.

A listing of Pre-Certification courses is available on the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org).

When your application is approved, we will provide instructions on how to register and pay for your exam.

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

1. You must have at least 1 year of approved hands on operations experience. Please see page 7-8 for more information on hands on operations experience.
  - a) Grade 2 - a WWTP with a SPDES Discharge Permit and a facility point score of 31 or higher
  - b) Grade 2A - an Activated Sludge WWTP with a with SPDES Discharge Permit and facility point score of 31 or higher
2. You must have completed the necessary certification training requirements. Please see page 9 for more information on certification training requirements and courses.
  - Basic Operations Course
  - Basic Laboratory Course
  - Grade 2A - Activated Sludge Course
3. You must have a minimum high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Any foreign diplomas must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service and must identify what U.S. diploma the foreign diploma is equivalent to. The evaluation service must be either the U.S. Embassy from your country of origin or an approved evaluation service in the United States.

### **Your certification exam application must be received with the \$150 payment 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* form.
2. A copy of your high school diploma, GED, or college diploma.
3. A copy of your Basic Operations and Basic Laboratory course completion notices.
4. Grade 2A only - A copy of your Activated Sludge course completion notice.
6. Mail the complete certification packet to:

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

If you have any questions, call 315-422-7811.

A listing of Pre-Certification courses is also available on the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

When your application is approved, we will provide instructions on how to register and pay for your exam.

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

1. 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. Please see page 7-8 for more information on education requirements and hands on operations experience. Depending on your education level, you may need additional experience.
  - a) 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.*
  - b) 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.*
  - c) Approved AAS, Bachelor of Science, or any 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.*
2. You must have completed the necessary certification training requirements. Please see page 9 for more information on certification training requirements and courses.
  - Basic Operations Course
  - Basic Laboratory Course
  - Grade 3 Supervision and Technical Operations Course or Home Study Option plus the one day Technical Operations Module
  - Grade 3A - Activated Sludge Course
3. You must have a minimum high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Any foreign diplomas must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service and must identify what U.S. diploma the foreign diploma is equivalent to. The evaluation service must be either the U.S. Embassy from your country of origin or an approved evaluation service in the United States.

**Your certification exam application must be received with the \$150 payment 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* form.
3. A copy of your high school diploma, GED, or college diploma.
4. A copy of your Basic Operations, Basic Laboratory, and Grade 3 Supervision & Technical Operations course completion notices.
5. Grade 3A only - A copy of your Activated Sludge course completion notice.
6. Mail the complete certification packet to:

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

If you have any questions, call 315-422-7811.

A listing of Pre-Certification courses is also available on the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

When your application is approved, we will provide instructions on how to register and pay for your exam.

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

1. 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 yrs. 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. Please see page 7-8 for more information on hands education requirements and on operations experience. Depending on your education level, you may need additional experience.
  - a) 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.*
  - b) 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.*
  - c) 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.*
  - d) Bachelor of Science, or any 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.*
2. You must have completed the necessary certification training requirements. Please see page 9 for more information on certification training requirements and courses.
  - Basic Operations Course
  - Basic Laboratory Course
  - Grade 3 Supervision and Technical Operations Course or Home Study option plus the one day Technical Operations Module
  - Grade 4 Management Course
  - Grade 4A - Activated Sludge Course
3. You must have a minimum high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Any foreign diplomas must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service and must identify what U.S. diploma the foreign diploma is equivalent to. The evaluation service must be either the U.S. Embassy from your country of origin or an approved evaluation service in the United States.

**Your certification exam application must be received with the \$150 payment 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* form
3. A copy of your high school diploma, GED, or college diploma.
4. A copy of your Basic Operations, Basic Laboratory, Grade 3 Supervision & Technical Operations and Grade Management course completion notices.
5. Grade 4A only - A copy of your Activated Sludge course completion notice.
6. Mail the complete certification packet to:

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

If you have any questions, call 315-422-7811

A listing of Pre-Certification courses is also available on the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

When your application is approved, we will provide instructions on how to register and pay for your exam.

## **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 Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP). The cost of the exam is \$87.

After you receive your approval letter from NYWEA, **schedule your exam and send payment directly to AMP.** Payment can be done online or by phone with a credit/debit card. You can also register by mail with a company or municipality check or personal money order payable to AMP. No personal checks are accepted. To schedule the exam, call AMP at (888) 519-9901 or go to their website at <http://www.goamp.com/>. Examination centers have times available Monday through Saturday, in the morning or afternoon. The AMP 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 AMP 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 100 multiple-choice questions. 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 AMP directly to re-take the exam. Do not contact NYWEA. You simply schedule a new exam date and make payment to AMP. The new test date must be at least ninety (90) days since your last exam.

For further information on web based testing, go to the ABC website at: [http://www.abccert.org/web\\_test.html](http://www.abccert.org/web_test.html) or call NYWEA at 315-422-7811.

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

## 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 Arts (AA) degree with 30 credit hours of math 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 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 such as General Operating Experience, 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 the candidate is claiming operating and/or approved operating experience at.

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

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  
<http://www.correspondencestudy.ufl.edu>

**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/NYWEA, refer to the NYWEA website for current offerings, or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. 315-422-7811 or [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

## **Activated Sludge Course**

All candidates applying for certification for an activated sludge or "A" facility, must also complete a NYSDEC/NYWEA approved "Activated Sludge Operations Course". This course is offered at different locations throughout the state. Refer to a recent Training Announcement or call the NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204 or phone 315-422-7811 for more information.

## **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/NYWEA 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. Degree 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 for further information.

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

- 1) 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 one (1) day "Technical Operations Module" (TOM). Contact one of the providers below or refer to the NYWEA website for course availability at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

### *Classroom Course Options (5 Day):*

Great Lakes Laboratory at Buffalo State College  
P - (716) 878-5422

SUNY Morrisville Environmental Training Center  
P - (315) 684-6082  
<http://etc.morrisville.edu/>

New York City Department of Environmental Protection  
P - (212) 860-9316

*Home-Study Course Options plus One (1) Day Technical Operations Module:*

The following courses are approved for the Supervision requirement:

"Manage For Success"

California State University - Sacramento

P - (916) 278-6142

<http://www.owp.csus.edu>

"Supervisory Management in the Water/Wastewater Field"

Michigan State University

P - (800) 356-5705

<http://www.bus.msu.edu>

"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 one (1) day classroom training 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 [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org)

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

Refer to the NYWEA website at [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org) for current offerings or contact NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204, Phone 315-422-7811 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 Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) at several testing sites located around the State. The computer based exams are 100 multiple choice questions. 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 every ninety days. An \$87 exam fee is required.

## 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 insure 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) must establish a fee structure to support the new NYWEA staff member and the resources that person will require.

**New Operator Application Fees** – This is a \$150 fee due with the operator's initial application to become certified. This fee is in addition to the \$87 charge that is paid to Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) for the examination. If the Operator fails the exam they are only responsible for the \$87 exam fee to AMP. If the operator decides to re-apply for a higher certification grade, the \$150 fee will be charged again.

**Certification Renewal Fee** – There will be a \$160 fee due with the operator's five year renewal application (this works out to \$32 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 \$160 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 Renewal Guidelines on our 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 15 or on the NYWEA website at: [www.nywea.org](http://www.nywea.org).

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 \$160 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 \$160 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. If a certificate has expired for more than one (1) year, the operator must complete the required renewal training, pay the renewal fee *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.A. Degree with 30 credit hours of math or science is considered equivalent to an A.A.S. Degree.

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



## NYSDEC/NYWEA Application for Approval of Qualifications for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator

**Personal Information** - To be completed by applicant, please **print clearly**. **Do not send payment with application.**

|                                      |  |  |  |              |  |       |  |  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|--------------|--|-------|--|--|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| First Name and MI                    |  |  |  |              |  |       |  |  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Last Name, Suffix (Jr, Sr, III, etc) |  |  |  |              |  |       |  |  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Address                              |  |  |  |              |  |       |  |  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| City                                 |  |  |  |              |  | State |  |  | Zip   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| DEC Region WWTP is Located In        |  |  |  | County       |  |       |  |  | Phone |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Current SPDES                        |  |  |  | Grade Sought |  |       | If certified in NY, list grade and cert number |  |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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

|                                |   |   |                     |       |            |                      |  |             |                      |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------|-------|------------|----------------------|--|-------------|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Exam Class                     |   |   | Certification Grade |       |            | Approval Letter Sent |  |             | Approval Letter Date |  |  |  |
| Assigned Identification Number | N | Y | W                   | W     |            |                      |  |             |                      |  |  |  |
| Reviewer Signature             |   |   |                     |       | Exam Score |                      |  | MM/YY Enter |                      |  |  |  |
| New Certification Number       |   |   | Status              | First | Upgrade    | Vacate Old Number    |  |             |                      |  |  |  |
| Comments                       |   |   |                     |       |            |                      |  |             |                      |  |  |  |

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

|                                  |    |   |                             |
|----------------------------------|----|---|-----------------------------|
| 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<br>( ) |    | 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<br>( ) |    | 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<br>( ) |    | Secondary Treatment Process (i.e. Activated Sludge, Trickling Filter, etc.) |                             |

## Education and Wastewater Training Courses

| Name of School - Attach Copy of Diploma or Completion Notice |                              | School Location | Graduated ? |    | Graduation or Completion Date | Type of Degree | Column for FOAS Use Only |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
|  |                              |                 | 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 WWTP's 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 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Privacy Law Notification

- **The Personal Privacy Protection Law, which became effective on September 1, 1984 states that certain administrative procedures and guidelines be implemented and maintained by state agencies to maximize the protection of individual privacy while providing governmental agencies access to information required to accomplish authorized program goals. The information that is form 31-19-1 (05/94), "Application For Approval Of Qualifications For Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator" elicits is subject to law.**
- **The information collected will be in a system of records called "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Qualifications." The statutory authority for obtaining the information is Section 3-0301 of the Environmental Conservation Law.**
- **The main purpose of eliciting the information is to determine your qualifications to operate a wastewater treatment plant. No routine uses or transfer of the information will be made to other governmental units. The consequence of not providing the information is that we will not be able to properly judge your qualifications to be an operator of such plant.**
- **The department official who is responsible for collecting and maintaining the system of records is the Director of the Bureau of Water Compliance, 625 Broadway, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Albany, New York 12233-3506, (518) 402-8177.**

Modified October 03, 2007



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
 New York Water Environment Association, Inc.  
 Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Statement of  
 Experience



**Instructions:** This form is to be completed by the supervisor under whom the applicant worked and must substantiate the 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 applicants 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.

**Applicant Information:**

|   |                                 |                                     |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Applicant Name:   |                                 | Applicant Job Title:                |
| Applicant Employment Dates - From: _____ To: _____                          |                                 | If part-time specify hours per day: |
| Percentage of Time Spent in Operating <u>all</u> WWTP Unit Processes _____% |                                 | 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, please attach 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):   |
|   |
|   |
|   |
|   |

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |

**Operations Experience (continued)**

|   |
|---|
| 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):     |
|   |
|   |
|   |

**We affirm, under penalty of perjury, that the information we have entered on this form is true to the best of our 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: |



## 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 \$160 certificate renewal application fee to NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204. If you have questions, call 315-422-7811.

### **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 \$160 certificate renewal application fee. If the certificate is expired for one year or longer you will need to complete the renewal training requirement, pay the \$160 certificate renewal application fee and take the next available certification exam for your grade certificate (\$87 exam 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, and the \$160 certificate renewal application fee to: New York Water Environment Association, Inc., 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204.

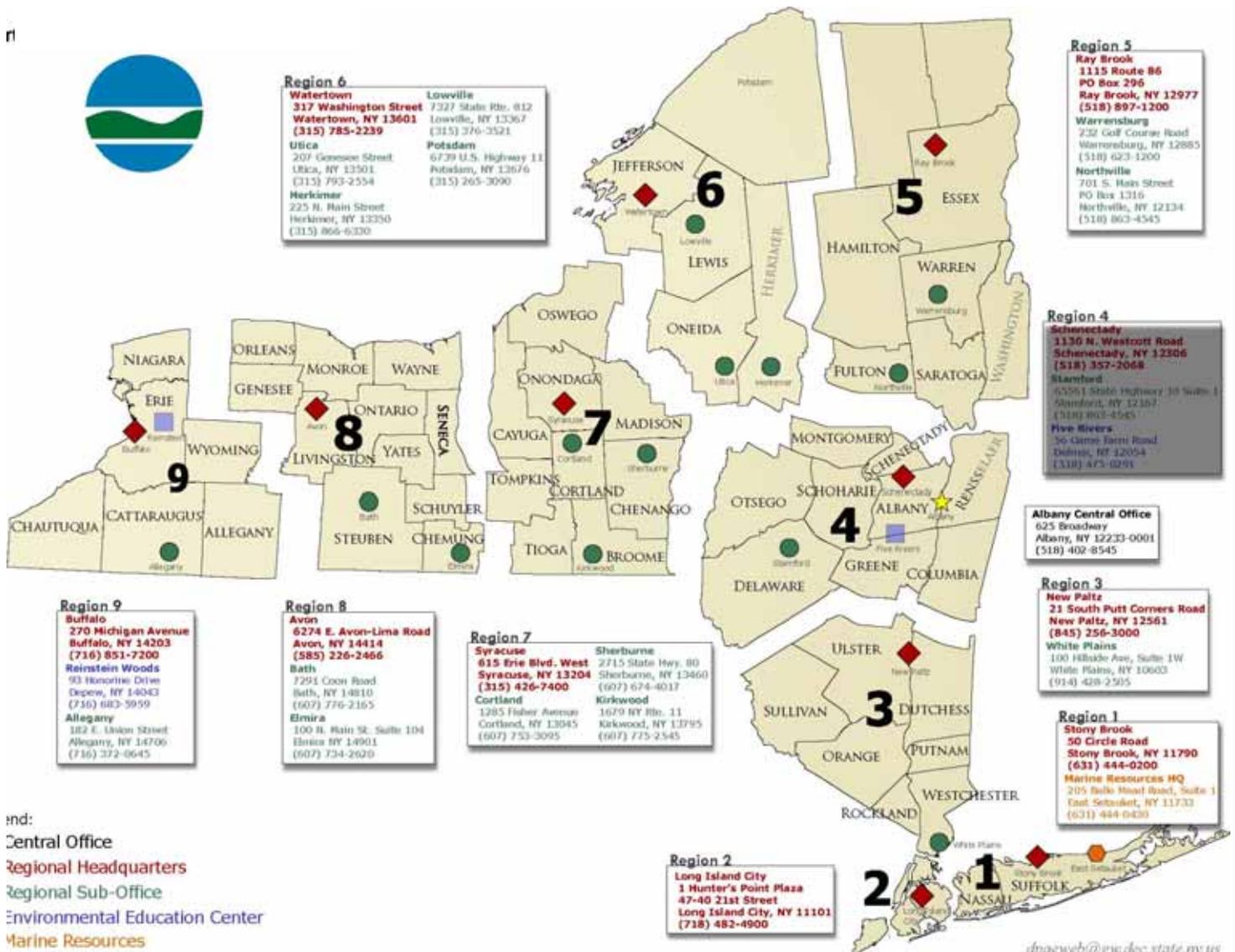
### **Who do I call if I have questions?**

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. 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
- 2,3,4,5. Enter your mailing address, the county of residence, Email and cell phone number.
- 6,7,8. Enter your operator certificate number, your certificate grade, and the expiration date. This information can be found on your certificate "wallet card".
9. Enter your day phone number.
- 10,11,12,13. Enter the name and SPDES Permit number of all the wastewater treatment plants at which you are currently working, listing your primary plant first. **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.** For each plant, answer YES or NO to the question, are the chief operator? If you are not currently employed at a wastewater treatment plant, enter "none".
14. Enter the name or title of the training course or program. **IMPORTANT: ALL TRAINING MUST BE NYSDEC APPROVED.**
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.
16. Enter the city and state where the training was held.
17. Enter the date that the training was completed.
18. Enter the course RTC number and the contact hours. Preapproved and NEIWPCC training does not require a RTC approval number.
19. Enter the total contact hours of NYSDEC approved training.

# New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Regions and Counties



**REGION 1 Counties:**  
Nassau  
Suffolk

**REGION 4 Counties:**  
Albany  
Columbia  
Delaware  
Green  
Montgomery

**REGION 6-Suboffice Counties:**  
Herkimer  
Oneida

**REGION 2 Counties:**  
Queens  
Richmond  
Bronx

**REGION 5 Counties:**  
Clinton  
Hamilton  
Essex  
Franklin

**REGION 7 Counties:**  
Broome  
Cayuga  
Chenango  
Cortland  
Madison

**REGION 8 Counties:**  
Onondaga  
Oswego  
Tioga  
Tompkins  
Monroe  
Ontario  
Orleans

**REGION 3 Counties:**  
Sullivan  
Ulster

**REGION 5-Suboffice Counties:**  
Saratoga  
Warren  
Fulton  
Washington

**REGION 8 Counties:**  
Chemung  
Genesee  
Livingston  
Monroe  
Ontario  
Orleans

**REGION 3-Suboffice Counties:**  
Rockland  
Dutchess  
Orange  
Putnam  
Westchester

**REGION 6 Counties:**  
Lewis  
Jefferson  
St. Lawrence

**REGION 9 Counties:**  
Allegany  
Erie  
Niagara  
Cattaraugus  
Chautauqa