

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Operator Certification Program

### ***How do I become a certified water or wastewater operator?***

Each operator must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Currently own or be employed by a water supply system or wastewater treatment facility.
- 2) Have a high school diploma or GED.
- 3) Have acquired the minimum number of years of experience for the class of examination desired.
- 4) Have acquired the minimum number of points for the class of examination desired. Points are awarded based on experience, education, and training. (*see the table below*).

<b>Class</b>	<b>Points*</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>
Small System	12.5	6 months
Class I	13	1 year
Class II	14	1 year
Class III	16	2 years
Class IV	18	2 years

**\*For further information on how the points are calculated see the Operator Certification Education, Training and Experience Requirements brochure on KDHE's Operator website.**

Once the minimum requirements are met, the operator must submit an examination application form, and a \$25.00 examination fee to KDHE.

### ***Is training required prior to taking a certification exam?***

While training is not a requirement prior to certification, KDHE believes that training is helpful in obtaining initial certification.

### ***Where can I find study material for certification exams?***

KDHE recommends the water and wastewater training manuals published by the University of California-Sacramento. The website for these manuals is [www.owp.csus.edu](http://www.owp.csus.edu)

KDHE also has Kansas Small Water and Wastewater Manuals. To request a copy please contact our office.

### ***How can I obtain an Application for Water or Wastewater Certification Exam?***

You can obtain an application from KDHE's website [www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html](http://www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html) or by contacting our office. KDHE will be offering fewer certification examinations so it is important to plan ahead and mail your application in as soon as possible. All facilities that KDHE uses to give exams have a maximum occupancy limitation that is set by the state Fire Marshall. Therefore, applications will be accepted on a first come first serve basis until the maximum occupancy has been reached. Remaining applications will be returned unprocessed. KDHE recommends that the application along with a copy of your high school diploma, high school transcript or GED and the \$25.00 exam fee be mailed a minimum of three – four weeks prior to the deadline. **PLEASE NOTE: KDHE can no longer accept exam applications by fax or email.**

***Why does the exam application have to be post marked and received in the KDHE office no later than two weeks before the exam date?***

We have to screen all applications to ensure the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the examination. With as many as 200 examinations given at one test site, two weeks is the minimum time necessary to evaluate the application and prepare examination packets for each applicant.

## Certificate Renewals

Water and wastewater operator certificates must be renewed every two years from the date that the certificate was issued. It is the responsibility of the certified operator to make sure that their certificate is renewed prior to the expiration date. KDHE will mail a renewal letter at least 60 days prior to the certificate expiration date to the address we have on file. The operator must have met his/her training requirements and pay the \$20.00 renewal fee prior to the expiration date in order to renew their certificate. If the certificate is not renewed by the expiration date, the operator is considered to be no longer certified and will be removed from the certified operator database. If the system has only one certified operator the system is non-compliant which could lead to enforcement action by KDHE.

***How many hours does an operator need to attend to renew their certificate?***

Small System operators are required to acquire five (5) hours every two years. Class I-IV operators are required to acquire ten (10) hours every two years.

***What type of training do I need to attend?***

Training must be directly related to the subject matter of the certificate the operator holds. If the training is pertinent to water supply and wastewater operators (pump maintenance, for example). KDHE will split the total hours between water and wastewater credit, unless the operator specifies otherwise.

***How do I know if the training has been approved by KDHE?***

All the training listed on the training calendar has been approved by KDHE. For other training not listed on the training calendar, verify with the training provider that the training has been approved by KDHE.

***What if the required training is not acquired before the renewal expiration date?***

If you fail to obtain continuing education prior to your renewal date, your certificate lapses, you are not officially certified and you will be dropped from our roll of Kansas certified operators. **If you are the sole certified operator for your facility the facility will be non-compliant for not being under the supervision of a certified operator.** You may request to be reinstated to the certified operator roll. Certificate can be only reinstated up to two years from the certificate expiration date. After obtaining your continuing education hours, you will have to pay a reinstatement fee. **Until the continuing education is obtained and the reinstatement fee paid, you are not a Kansas certified operator.**

***What training records should I keep?***

Although KDHE maintains individual operator training records from cooperating training providers, it is the operator's responsibility for maintaining their own training records. Documentation of attendance at each training event should be maintained.

***Can an operator check their own renewal and training information?***

KDHE has established real-time internet access to operator data. To access the operator database go to [www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html](http://www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html) and click on Certified Operator Database. Once you have gained access to the operator database, you will be able to review operator renewal dates and continuing education hours. Operators can also email KDHE change of address, employment, etc. directly from the site.

Instructions on how to access the Certified Operator Database can be found on the above listed KDHE website.

**Plan Ahead**

Planning ahead will make life easier. Check the expiration date on your water and/or wastewater certificate/wallet card. K.A.R. 28-16-31(b) requires that all Small System certified operators obtain at least 5 hours of approved training and Class I-IV certified operators obtain at least 10 hours of approved training for each certificate held during the two year renewal prior to the expiration date. If you need continuing education hours for renewal this year, please make it a **PRIORITY** now to attend training. Don't put it off until the month before your certificate expires. Planning ahead will ensure that you are able to attend the type of training you want to attend and at a location near you. **PLEASE** note, do not send money for renewal unless you have the required continuing education hours. Your money will be returned.

If there are other questions that have not been addressed, please do not hesitate to contact either Teresa Schuyler 785.296.5511 or Vickie Wessel 785.296.2976 or for a quicker response you can email us at [Teresa.Schuyler@ks.gov](mailto:Teresa.Schuyler@ks.gov) or [VickieJo.Wessel@ks.gov](mailto:VickieJo.Wessel@ks.gov)