

Proposed Rulemaking

*25 Pa. Code, Chapter 302
Administration of the Water and Wastewater Systems
Operators' Certification Program*

**Environmental Quality Board
April 21, 2009**

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Director
Bureau of Watershed Management

Background – Federal Requirements

- 1996 Amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act
- Compliance by October, 2002
 - Loss of 20% of the State Revolving Loan Fund
- EPA Guidelines published February, 1999

Background – Federal Requirements

- Classification framework for Community Water Systems and **Nontransient, Noncommunity Water Systems**:
 - Operators
 - Systems
- Standards for certification:
 - Education
 - Examination
 - Experience
- **Continuing education**
- **Process control decisions**

Background – State Requirements

- Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems Operator Certification Act
 - Applies federal standards to wastewater treatment system operators
 - Criminal history check
 - Security training
- Signed February 21, 2002
- Program implementation through interim regulations (Technical Guidance #383-2300-001)& guidelines

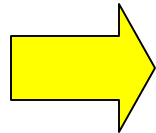
Timeline

- Purpose of regulations is to codify the federal requirements that were put in place via the interim regulations October, 2002.
- New requirements being put in place
 - Security training
- Finalize provisions for:
 - Accelerated certification program

Program Organization

*Authority is divided between the
Department/EQB and the Board*

***DEP/
EQB***



- Examination Preparation
- Training Approval
- Standards for Certification
- Enforcement
- Enter Agreements
- Establish Certification Classes and Subclasses
- Establish & Collect Fees

Program Organization

Authority is divided between the Department/EQB and the Board

Certification Board 

- Administer Examinations
- Issue, Deny, Modify, Revoke or Suspend Certificates
- Review Criminal History Records
- Review and act on DEP training actions
- Offer comments to EQB on proposed regulations

Summary of Operator Needs



- Currently have **9,998** active operators :
 - **4938** Drinking Water Certified Operators
 - **5060** Wastewater Certified Operators
- Need an additional **1,015** to meet today's needs:
 - **542** Drinking Water Certified Operators
 - **473** Wastewater Certified Operators
- By 2015, need to replace **3500** operators:
 - **1511** Drinking Water Certified Operators
 - **1663** Wastewater Certified Operators
 - **326** Achieve a 30% reduction in use of Circuit Riders

Compliance Costs



- Fee Structure based on premise that “everyone should pay” ...
- Operators
 - Average cost to get certified ... **\$235**
 - Average cost to maintain license ... **\$360**
- Owners
 - Costs depend on the number of systems owned
 - Maximum cost is **\$10,000** for any one owner
- Training Providers/Examination Providers
 - Examination Provider Average ... **\$600**
 - Costs to the Training Provider depend on number of courses
 - Maximum cost is **\$10,000** for any one provider

Advisory Committees



- State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators
- Certification Program Advisory Committee (CPAC)
- Small Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board (TAC)
- Latest Round:
 - April and June – Annex A
 - December – Proposed Fee Structure

Program Development Stakeholder Involvement



- ➔ **Association Conferences & Meetings**
 - >20 meetings with over 2000 attendees
- ➔ **Public Meetings**
 - 2 Rounds, 10 sessions, 1000 attendees
- ➔ **Regulated Community Workshops**
 - 20 Operators, 1000 attendees
 - 9 Owners, 400 attendees
 - 8 Grandparented Operators, 400 attendees
 - 24 Training Providers, 100 attendees

Comments Requested

- Reciprocity
 - General Examination vs Comprehensive

Recommended Action

- 30-day comment period
- No public meetings/hearings

Questions?
