



Training Advice for Individuals Seeking Wastewater Certification

There are many resources available to help you prepare for the wastewater system operator certification examinations. We encourage individuals to seek classroom training as opposed to relying on self-study. It is recommended that you brush up on basic math, biology, and some chemistry.

Certificate Programs

A certificate program is an entire curriculum or series of DEP- approved courses that prepare an individual for the operation of a treatment plant. A DEP- approved certificate program is comprised of at least 180 hours of approved courses. Individual courses and modules within the overall certificate programs may also be taken if offered by the college, rather than completing the entire program. Currently, there are five DEP- approved certificate programs for wastewater:

- California State University, Sacramento – 270 hours of correspondence courses
 - DEP Course ID 88 – Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants Vol. I
 - DEP Course ID 89 – Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants Vol. II
 - DEP Course ID 83 – Advanced Waste Treatment
 - Contact Karen Cardozo in the Office of Water Programs at 916-278-5619 or <http://www.owp.csus.edu/courses/wastewater.php>
- Montgomery County Community College
 - Certificate Program # 2 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 610-718-1861
- Reading Area Community College
 - Certificate Program # 4 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 610-372-4721
- Delaware County Community College
 - Certificate Program # 5010 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 610-359-7344
- Harrisburg Area Community College
 - Certificate Program # 5009 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 717-221-1339

DEP Modules

Several training entities provide exam preparation courses using the Pa. DEP Wastewater Operator Certification Training Modules. There are 22 different modules available that cover the various concepts needed to prepare for the exams, but not all of the training providers teach each module. The following approved training providers teach courses based on these modules:

- Community College of Allegheny County: 412-788-7357
- Eastern PA Water Pollution Control Operators Assoc., Inc.: 610-670-6072
- EnviroSci Corporation: 215-704-7448



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- Mike Nelson Consulting (Southeastern PA): 215-354-5532
- Montgomery County Community College (Southeastern PA): 610-718-1861
- Reading Area Community College: 610-372-4721
- Northampton Community College: 610-861-5559
- pH Environmental (Southwestern PA): 724-834-1675
- Pennsylvania Rural Water Association (entire state): 412-464-7102
- Pennsylvania State University (Conferences and Institutes): 814-863-6106
- Penn State Harrisburg (Southcentral and Northeastern PA): 717-948-6358
- RETTEW Associates, Inc.: 717-394-3721
- S2A Technologies, Inc. (Math Module): 215-752-1279
- Thomas H. Stehle / Stehle Consulting, LLC.: 724-586-9490
- Water System Solutions (Correspondence courses): 814-629-5412

The workbooks for these training modules are available through Pa. DEP here: [Training Modules](#). These modules can be used self-study guides for the certification exams. Please be aware that this is not the intended purpose for which these modules were developed and their effectiveness as self-study guides has not been evaluated. You may contact the Training Section at 717-787-0122 for further information and guidance.

Basic Wastewater Treatment Courses

You can also prepare for the examinations by taking basic courses in wastewater treatment. For example, many individuals find the “Sacramento” course material helpful in preparing. Several DEP - approved training providers offer these courses. The materials are also available as correspondence courses and some as online courses directly through California State University, Sacramento. Contact Karen Cardozo in the Office of Water Programs at 916-278-5619 or go to <http://www.owp.csus.edu/courses/wastewater.php>. The following approved training providers may offer similar courses:

- Mike Nelson Consulting (Southeastern PA): 215-354-5532
- Penn State Harrisburg ETC (Southcentral PA): 717-948-6358
- pH Environmental (Southwestern PA): 724-834-1675
- CTC Lackawanna: 570-346-8471 Ext. 135
- RETTEW Associates, Inc.: 717-394-3721

Math, Chemistry, and Biology

You may also prepare for the exams by taking courses in applied math, basic chemistry and microbiology courses, preferably as applied specifically to wastewater treatment.

Some possible training providers to consider are:

- CTC Lackawanna: 570-346-8471, Ext. 135
- pH Environmental (Southwestern PA): 724-834-1675
- Eastern Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Operators Assoc.: 610-670-6072



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- Uni-Tec Consulting Engineers (Northcentral PA): 814-238-8223

Additional Resources

The following organizations offer various manuals and study guides:

- AWWA Training Manuals (www.awwa.org/bookstore)
- Water Environment Federation Study Guides (<http://www.wef.org/StudyGuides/>)

Disclaimer and the Approved Course Catalog:

Any courses having similar title to those above, offered in the area where you live or offered by distance education, are recommended. We do not endorse any of the particular courses or training providers listed above. There are many other approved training providers that offer similar courses. Contact the individual training providers to determine the training they offering.

Pa. DEP-approved drinking water and wastewater training course information is available on the Web at **EarthWise Academy**, which you can access in this way:

- Go to <http://www.earthwise.dep.state.pa.us/edu/>
- Click on “**Catalog**” from the menu list on the left-side of the webpage.
- Follow the instructions to find information about approved training sponsors and courses. Use the drop down boxes to find courses by sponsor, training format, media type, or industry. You may also type any word in the “Course Description” field to find courses containing that word in the course title or description.

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