



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:

- 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 Mary Kay McClatchy - Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 610-359-7344 and/or visit the website at the link below
 - [Wastewater Operator Certification Program - Delaware County Community College \(dccc.edu\)](http://www.dccc.edu)
- Harrisburg Area Community College
 - Certificate Program # 5009 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Workforce Development and Continuing Education at 717-221-1339
- Community College of Beaver County
 - Certificate Program # 5014 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Maria Torchia Brown, Program Manager
School of Industrial Technology & Continuing Education at 724-480-3448
- Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania
 - Certificate Program # 5035 – 180 hours of classroom instruction
 - Contact Andrea Kessler, Director of Workforce Development at 814-230-9010

Associates Degree Programs

A DEP-approved associates degree program consists of at least 360 hours of courses organized into a curriculum for drinking water, wastewater, or both. Currently, there is one associate degree program.

- Thaddeus Stevens College, Lancaster, PA
 - Associates Degree in Water and Wastewater
 - Contact Heath Edelman or Shannon Butler at 717-650-5265



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DEP Modules

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

- Mike Nelson Consulting (Southeastern PA): 215-354-5532
- Reading Area Community College: 610-372-4721
- Pennsylvania Rural Water Association (entire state): 412-464-7102

The workbooks for these training modules are available through Pa. DEP here: [Department Training Modules](#). These modules can be used as self-study guides for the certification exams. Please be aware this is not the intended purpose for which these modules were developed. 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 may also prepare for the examinations by taking basic courses in wastewater treatment. For example, many individuals find the “Sacramento” course material helpful in preparing. The materials are available as correspondence courses and some as online courses directly through California State University, Sacramento. Contact the Office of Water Programs at 916-278-4946 or go to: [Wastewater Courses \(csus.edu\)](#)

Another provider of basic wastewater treatment courses is the Water Environment Federation. WEF (PWEA) offers multiple courses both correspondence and online. For more information go to: [Wastewater Treatment Fundamentals \(wef.org\)](#)

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:

- Pennsylvania Rural Water Association (entire state): 412-464-7102
- pH Environmental (Southwestern PA): 724-834-1675
- Eastern Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Operators Assoc.: 610-670-6072
- Any community college

Disclaimer and the Approved Course Catalog:

Any courses having a 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 courses or training



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providers listed above. There are many other approved training providers that offer similar courses. Contact the individual training providers to determine the training they provide.

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

- Go to [Earthwise Portal \(state.pa.us\)](http://state.pa.us)
- 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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