

Maryland Certification Examinations for Water and Wastewater Operators and Superintendents

*A Guide to the Maryland Certification Process and Preparing for and Taking the
Examinations*

*Produced by the
Maryland Center for Environmental Training
in partnership with the
Water and Waste Operators Association of Maryland, Delaware and
District of Columbia*

Education and Experience Requirements for Each Classification

Education Requirements

All operator certification classifications require a minimum of completion of high school or high school equivalency—no college education is required. Some, but not all, of the superintendent certification classifications require college credit in science, engineering or management. See [Education, Experience and Renewal Training Tables](#).

Experience Requirements

All operator and superintendent certification classifications require minimum amounts of on-the-job experience. Experience gained in a facility of the same classification for which you want to be certified is eligible to be credited on an hour for an hour basis. Other types of experience may be eligible for crediting, although probably not on an hour for an hour basis. “Other” types of experience that might qualify toward operator certification include experience as an operator in a different class of works or in another state, or experience that was not as an operator but involved job duties related to those of an operator. For superintendents, “other” types of experience could include management experience acceptable to the Board. For measuring experience, the regulations use both “hours of actual work experience” and “calendar years of experience,” whichever is longer. See [Education, Experience and Renewal Training Tables](#).

Education and Experience Substitution Options

The certification regulations allow limited substitution of experience for education and education for experience. Not all classifications have this option. Contact the Board for details.

Education for Experience. Operators and superintendents who lack the minimum amount of experience needed for a specific certification classification may substitute up to one year of “appropriate” college study for one year of experience. The maximum substitution is one year. College courses in science or engineering leading toward a degree are considered appropriate. Other types of job-related training or education also may be substituted for experience, as determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

Experience for Education. Superintendents who lack the minimum amount of college education needed for a specific certification classification may substitute one year of experience acceptable to the Board for one year of college.

Note: Experience cannot be substituted for the completion of high school or equivalency requirements.

Certificate Renewal Training Requirements

All operators and superintendents are required to obtain “State-approved” training during each three-year period in order to renew their certificates (except Industrial Wastewater Treatment Classes 1 & 2). Only State-approved training, *approved for the specific classification of your certificate*, may be used to meet this requirement. See [Training Approval](#). Each classification of certificate has its own specific renewal training requirements. The Board uses “units” to designate the amount of training required. A “unit” equals one hour of training. However, when you attend a course and pass its final exam, each hour of training is worth 1.5 units. See [Education, Experience and Renewal Training Tables](#) to determine how many units of training your certificate requires for renewal.

Operators

For operators who have more than one classification or category of certificate (for example, Wastewater Treatment Classes 5A or Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection Class 2), the total number of training units needed to renew is added together. However, the units earned *must* be from training courses that have been specifically approved for those particular classifications. The units earned from training courses that have been approved for more than one classification may be applied to any and all of those classifications for which you are certified.

For example, if you have a Wastewater Treatment Class 5A certificate and you attend a course that is approved for six units for all Wastewater Treatment classifications, you will earn six units towards renewing your Class 5 *and* six units towards renewing your Class A certificate. *Additionally*, if the approved course has a final examination and you pass it, you earn 1.5 times these units (in this example, a total of nine units is earned for *each* of the Class 5 and the Class A).

A particular training course may be used for renewal only once during any three-year renewal period, regardless of how many times you attend it. However, you may attend the same course again in a different three-year renewal period and apply it toward your certificate renewal.

Superintendents

Superintendents will need to renew both their Operator and Superintendent Certificates, which have similar although different renewal training requirements. The Operator Certificate renewal training requirement is detailed on the previous page. The training used to renew the Superintendent Certificate *must be specifically approved for your category of Superintendent Certificate* (for example, Wastewater Treatment or Water Distribution).

All Superintendent Certificates (except Industrial Wastewater Treatment Classes 1 & 2) require seven units of State-approved “superintendent training” to renew. If you have more than one category of Superintendent Certificate (for example, Water Treatment and Water Distribution), you must obtain seven units of approved superintendent training for *each* category of Superintendent Certificate you have. As in the case for renewing your Operator Certificate, the units earned from training courses that have been approved for more than one superintendent category may be applied to any and all of those superintendent categories for which you are certified.

Note: Certification renewal training units from a course approved for both operators and superintendents may *only* be used for *either* your Operator or your Superintendent Certificate renewal. You may not use the units toward renewing *both* certificates within the same 3-year period.

Instructors

Certified operators and superintendents who instruct State-approved training also earn units for certificate renewal at the rate of 1.5 times the number of hours of instruction.

Operator Requirements

Category & Classification	<i>Experience Requirements*</i>	Certificate Renewal Training Requirements (Units)	
		Temporary Certificate	Operator Certificate
Water Distribution	1 year	24	16
Wastewater Collection			
1	1 year	24	16
2	2 years	24	16
Water Treatment			
G	As determined by the Board	16	7
1	1 year	24	16
2	1 year	24	16
3	2 years	45	30
4	3 years	45	30
5	As determined by the Board		
Wastewater Treatment			
1	1 year	24	16
2	1 year	24	16
3	2 years	45	30
4	3 years	45	30
5	3 years	45	30
5A	3 years	24	16
S	3 years	24	16
6	As determined by the Board	24	16
Industrial Wastewater Treatment			
1	6 months	0	0
2	6 months	0	0
3	6 months	24	16
4	1 year	24	16
5	3 years	45	30
6	2 years	24	16
7	As determined by the Board	24	16

Education Requirement—All operators must have completed high school or equivalency.

*** For most classifications, 1800 hours of actual work experience are equal to one calendar year of experience. The following operator classifications have special requirements that do not use this equivalency:**

Industrial Wastewater Treatment

Class 1 & 2 & 3 250 hours or 6 months, based on 1 hour/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Class 4 500 hours or 1 year, based on 2 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Water Treatment

Class 1 & 2 500 hours or 1 year, based on 2 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Class 3 1800 hours or 2 years, based on 3.5 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Wastewater Treatment

Class 1 & 2 500 hours or 1 year, based on 2 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Class 3 1800 hours or 2 years, based on 3.5 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Superintendent Requirements

<i>Category & Classification</i>	<i>Education Requirements</i>	<i>Experience Requirements*</i>
Water Distribution	completion of high school or equivalency	1 year
Wastewater Collection 2	completion of high school or equivalency	1 year
Water Treatment		
1	completion of high school or equivalency	None
2	completion of high school or equivalency	1 year
3	1 year college or equivalency	1 year
4	2 years college or equivalency	2 years
5	As determined by the board	
Wastewater Treatment		
1	completion of high school or equivalency	None
2	completion of high school or equivalency	None
3	completion of high school or equivalency	1 year
4	2 years college or equivalency	2 years
5	2 years college or equivalency	2 years
5A	2 years college or equivalency	2 years
S	2 years college or equivalency	2 years
6	As determined by the Board	
Industrial Wastewater Treatment		
1	completion of high school or equivalency	None
2	completion of high school or equivalency	None
3	completion of high school or equivalency	None
4	completion of high school or equivalency	None
5	2 years college	2 years
6	1 year college	1 year
7	As determined by the Board	

Superintendent Certificate Renewal Training Requirement—All Superintendent Certificates (except Industrial Wastewater Treatment Classes 1 & 2) require 7 units of “superintendent-approved” training to renew.

*** For most classifications, 1800 hours of actual work experience are equal to one calendar year of experience. The following superintendent classifications have special requirements that do not use this equivalency:**

Water Treatment

Class 2 500 hours or 1 year, based on 2 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Class 3 900 hours or 1 year, based on 3.5 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.

Wastewater Treatment

Class 3 900 hours or 1 year, based on 3.5 hours/day operation, whichever takes longer.