

Waterworks Operator Certification

Chapter 246-292 WAC



December 2013

The purpose of the rule is to include changes made by the legislature to strengthen the department’s authority to take enforcement actions, and clarify our authority to certify BATs and CCSs. The changes also include updating the rule to reflect current program practices, moving requirements from guidance into rule, and clarifying rule language to improve readability.

Acronyms					
BAT	Backflow assembly tester	GWI	Groundwater under the direct influence of surface water	WTPO	Water treatment plant operator
BTO	Basic Treatment Operator	OIT	Operator in training		
CCS	Cross-connection control specialist	TNC	Transient noncommunity		

Section Number	Section Title	Adopted Changes
001	Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Editorial changes to clarify requirements Clarifies that this rule regulates BATs and CCSs
010	Definitions, Abbreviations, and Acronyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds or deletes numerous definitions, abbreviations, and acronyms Moves abbreviations and acronyms into definitions, adds numbering to definitions
020	Public Water System Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires purveyors to designate an operator in responsible charge for each operating shift and each major segment of the system, if applicable Requires purveyors to designate and report all mandatory positions to the department within 30 days of starting operations or when a position is vacated Purveyors shall not require operators to perform work that is beyond their skills, abilities or level of certification
031	Duties of a certified operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Editorial changes to clarify requirements Operators are required to tell the purveyor if an action or correction is beyond their skills, abilities or level of certification Clarifies that certified operator duties do not relieve a purveyor of their responsibility to comply with the Group A rule

Section Number	Section Title	Adopted Changes
NEW 032	Duties of a Certified Operator in Responsible Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes requirements for certified operators in responsible charge. Most are based on current program guidance or requirements in the Group A rule • Key changes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lists the duties of the operator in responsible charge - In addition to being available 24 hours per day, an operator must be able to initiate appropriate action within 2 hours - An operator must cooperate with the department during a special purpose investigation or sanitary survey - An operator must provide required records and reports to the department or its representative upon request
NEW 033	Duties of a CCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies that a CCS must oversee the development and implementation of a cross-connection control program that meets the cross-connection control requirements in the Group A rule • Includes a number of specific duties that CCSs must perform as assigned by the purveyor • Clarifies that CCS duties do not relieve a purveyor of their responsibility to comply with the Group A rule
NEW 034	Duties of a BAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies that a BAT must perform specific duties and activities such as inspecting, testing, maintaining and repairing backflow preventers that protect public water systems • BATs must record and report results to the owner of the backflow preventer and to the purveyor • Specifies that a BAT must be equipped with the necessary equipment to perform the required duties
NEW 036	Backflow Preventer Inspection and Field Test Report Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists the minimum information required for backflow preventer inspection and field test reports submitted to public water systems by BATs
040	Classification of Public Water Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements based on current program practices and guidance • Clarifies the scope of water treatment plant processes

Section Number	Section Title	Adopted Changes
050	Public Water System Minimum Operator Certification Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaces the BTO class with a WTPO class for Class 1 treatment plants to ease water system recruitment and retention issues • Clarifies language requiring a purveyor of a TNC system to have a certified operator in responsible charge, or if the TNC system has a groundwater source that requires 4-log treatment, or if the TNC system is in violation of requirements in the Group A rule • Allows a certified operator in responsible charge to be certified at one level lower than the treatment plant or distribution system rating • Allows an assigned certified operator at one level lower than the operator in responsible charge if the purveyor has written procedures
055	Minimum Requirements for Contract Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Be available 24 hours per day and able to initiate appropriate action within 2 hours • Sets minimum duties and contract information
060	Minimum Education and Experience Requirements to Become a Certified Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Changes minimum education and experience to align with federal requirements (high school diploma or GED, or experience and relevant training as a substitution for education) • Identifies allowable substitutions for part of the minimum education and experience requirements • Establishes minimum education, training or experience for BATs and CCSs
070	Application and Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes changes to reflect current program practices and the use of computer-based examinations • Specifies application packet information • Changes the effective date of certificates to align with current program practices
075	Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifies requirements to ensure that a certified operator from another state or province meets the department's minimum requirements for certification

Section Number	Section Title	Adopted Changes
080	Public Water System Temporary Operator Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The language clarifies that the temporary operator certification is issued to the operator, not to the public water system • Clarifies requirements to document experience • Specifies the department will only issue a temporary certification for up to 60 days when the system uses surface water or GWI. Operator must meet minimum education and experience at the time of application. • Specifies the department will only issue a temporary certification for up to 120 days when a system is classified as a TNC in specific cases
085	Grandparented Certification	Editorial changes to clarify requirements
<i>NEW</i> 086	Certified BTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies that the department will reclassify BTOs to a WTPO1 if the operator has 12 months experience and meets certain requirements • If the BTO does not have 12 months experience, the BTO will remain classified as a BTO or may request a reclassification to a WTPO-OIT
090	Renewal of Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • If an operator becomes newly certified after October 1, the certification will be valid until December 31 the following year • Professional growth requirements moved to a new section (095)
<i>NEW</i> 095	Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Requirements moved from section 090
100	Revocation and Suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Adds that BATs and CCSs are subject to revocation and suspension
<i>NEW</i> 105	Certification Denial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets the criteria the department will use to determine if an applicant will be denied a certification • Requires the department to notify applicants of the decision and the factual basis for denial
110	Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Clarifies that the department may impose a penalty in cases of a public health emergency
<i>REPEAL</i> 160	Water Works Certification Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved the requirements to a new section 990 to align the section number with other department fee rules

Section Number	Section Title	Adopted Changes
NEW 995	Certified Operator and Public Water System Certification Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements moved from section 160 • Editorial changes to clarify requirements • Removes the department's reapplication fee because computer-based testing eliminates the need to re-process applications to retake exams.

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