



June 2009
DOH 331-186
Updated

Fact Sheet

Relevancy of Training for Certified Waterworks Operators

Training relevancy is important

Certified waterworks operators are on the front line to protect public health by ensuring the water they serve to customers is safe and reliable. The state Department of Health Office of Drinking Water (ODW) established training relevancy criteria to ensure operators have the knowledge they need to prevent waterborne illnesses.

ODW requires all certified operators to meet a professional growth requirement to remain certified. There are several ways to meet the requirement. During each professional growth reporting period, most operators do so by earning at least 3.0 continuing education units (CEU) or college credits in coursework relevant to drinking water.

Before you sign up for training to meet the professional growth requirement, be sure to confirm the training is relevant and the sponsor is awarding CEU or college credit. Many courses offer CEU or college credit and may be relevant for other professions, but not for waterworks certification purposes. If in doubt, call Washington Certification Services at the number listed on page 2.

Defining “training directly relevant to drinking water”

Training applied toward the waterworks operator professional growth requirement must meet ODW’s definition of relevant training.

Relevant training:

1. Has an influence on water quality, water supply, or public health protection; **and**
2. Is directly relevant to the operation or maintenance of a water system; **or**
3. Is directly relevant to managing the operation or maintenance activities of a water system.

Relevant training topics include but aren’t limited to:

Water quality: Treatment techniques, bacteriological sampling, and monitoring for microbes and chemicals.

Operational subjects: Pump maintenance and repair, cross-connection control, and backflow prevention.

Utility management: Drinking water regulations, capacity development, rate setting, financial viability, water system security, and responding to drinking water emergencies.

Utility-focused safety: Handling chlorine, trenching and shoring, and working in confined spaces.

Water right issues: Source water protection and supply.

Water conservation: Leak detection, watershed planning, and improving water use efficiency.

Specialized computer software: Utility operation applications.



HELPING TO ENSURE SAFE AND RELIABLE DRINKING WATER

Types of training not directly relevant to drinking water

Training on general topics—or topics only indirectly related to water system operation—is not relevant. These topics may relate to another field of work.

Training topics NOT relevant to drinking water include but aren't limited to:

- Personnel and general management (time management, supervision, personnel issues, and communicating with difficult people)
- Personal safety (first aid, CPR, defensive driving, and flagging)
- Endangered Species Act (wildlife protection or recovery)
- Computer skills (basic computer courses, programming and troubleshooting)
- Wastewater training
- Most HAZMAT training
- Road and street maintenance
- Pesticide application
- General plumbing or electrical-code courses for plumbers or electricians

Activities that focus on information sharing, rather than an organized continuing education experience, do not qualify for CEU and will not be accepted by ODW. For example, attending meetings, viewing displays and exhibits, and association membership or leadership does not qualify.

For more information

Visit Washington Certification Services online at <http://www.wacertservices.org> or contact:

Washington Certification Services
Green River Community College
12401 SE 320th Street, M/S WCS
Auburn, WA 98092-3622
(253) 288-3357
(877) 780-2444 (toll-free in Washington)

