

WASTEWATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING DIRECTORY



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State Water Resources Control Board
California Environmental Protection Agency

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Introduction

What Is In This Directory?

This guide provides an overview of the educational requirements contained in both the Water Code and Title 23, of the California Code of Regulations and lists opportunities to satisfy those requirements.

What Is The State Water Board Authority?

[Water Code Section 13629](#) authorizes the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to approve courses of instruction at higher educational institutions. The section also gives the State Water Board authority to approve courses of instruction given by professional associations, or other nonprofit private or public agencies, if they are equivalent to courses of instruction given by higher educational institutions. Upon request, the State Water Board will assign educational points to approved courses.

Based on Section 13629, the State Water Board may not assign educational points to private, for-profit companies. However, public or private nonprofit agencies may sponsor these types of companies to provide training. The State Water Board will review the curriculum and, if appropriate, assign educational points.

Sections 3685-3687, Title 23, of the California Code of Regulations specify the education requirements and set out the method used by the State Water Board to calculate educational points.

Why Is Training So Critical?

The State Water Board, Wastewater Operator Certification Program (WWOCP) certifies all operators of wastewater treatment plants with the primary goal of protecting public health and the environment by ensuring that all operators are trained in operating wastewater treatment plants. In California, all prospective wastewater treatment plant operators must demonstrate to the WWOCP that they have successfully taken technical training. In fact, before an applicant is even allowed to take an examination, they must document their training by sending official or copies of official college transcripts, diplomas or training certificates to the WWOCP. For more information, please visit our website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/operator_certification/operator_certification.shtml.

Depending on grade level, prospective operators must have specific levels of training. In some cases, this means college classes; in others it means seminars or in-house programs. Several grades have more than one possible path to satisfy the requirements.

W hat Are The Requirements?

Please refer to the "[OPERATOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS TABLE](#)" on page eight for a list of education and experience requirements for Grades I through V. **NOTE: Applicants must take and pass the Office of Operator Certification Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Examination before applying for Certification.**

Educational Points versus Semester Units

Sometimes the WWOCP will specify educational points and sometimes semester units. The difference is important. Applicants may convert semester units to educational points, but not the reverse. Where the regulations specify semester units; they must be completed at an accredited college or university. College and university courses completed on a quarter system are prorated into semester units.

Section 3685 of the regulations authorizes the State Water Board to grant educational points as follows:

- (a) Pursuant to the provisions of this article, applicants may be required to obtain educational points to qualify for certification. Operators may receive educational points for completing wastewater treatment, biology, chemistry, engineering, math, or physics courses as follows:
 - (1) One three-unit semester course completed as part of the curriculum of an accredited college or university is equal to eight educational points. Operators who have completed courses that result in more or less than three units or in quarter units rather than semester units shall be credited with educational points on a prorated basis.
 - (2) Each hour of instruction given by a professional association or other nonprofit private or public agency is equal to point one, (.1) educational point; ten hours of instruction is equivalent to one educational point.
- (b) At Grades III, IV, and V, operators may earn up to a maximum of sixteen educational points for completing management courses. An operator may not earn more than four educational points for both each management course and for each management category. The management categories are: oral communication, technical writing, public administration, business management, and finance.

Educational points for a management course may be earned as follows:

- (1) One completed three-unit semester course that is part of the curriculum of an accredited college or university is equal to four educational points. Operators who have completed courses that result in more or less than three units or in quarter units rather than semester units shall be credited with educational points on a prorated basis.
- (2) Each hour of instruction taught at a professional association or other nonprofit private or public agency is equal to point one of an educational point; it takes ten hours of instruction to equal one educational point.
- (c) Applicants may not substitute experience for educational points.

The chart below may be useful when converting units to educational points:

Units (Semesters)	Educational Points
1	2.5
2	5.5
3	8.0
4	10.5
5	13.5
6	16.0
Units (Quarter) 12 weeks	Educational Points
1	1.5
2	3.5
3	5.5
4	7.0
5	9.0
6	10.5

Educational point substitution for experience

Applicants may substitute 16 educational points for one year of experience; however, educational points cannot be used to substitute the 1800 hours (or one year) of Operator-In-Training (OIT) experience. In other words, operators must work one year or 1800 hours prior to being able to substitute educational points for experience. An applicant must retain the minimum educational points to qualify for their Grade level and have at least sixteen additional educational points available to substitute. For example, a Grade II applicant with one year of experience and at least 28 educational points would be eligible to substitute 16 educational points for one year of experience. The applicant would have 12 points to satisfy the education requirement and 16 points to substitute for one year of experience. Once the 16 points are used to substitute for experience, they cannot be used again to substitute for experience at another grade level, or qualify for a certification examination. Operators can substitute 16 educational points for one year of experience multiple times. For example, an operator can substitute 32 educational points for two years of experience.

Acceptable High School's

Submitted high school diplomas must be issued from accredited high schools. An applicant can submit a photocopy of their high school Diploma. If the applicant has lost their high school Diploma, they can submit a copy of their final high school Transcript so long as it clearly states the applicant's graduation date, the applicant's name, and the name of the high school. If applicants do not have a copy of their diploma one suggestion is to contact the high school directly for a duplicate copy. If the high school does not exist anymore then the applicant might contact the school board for a copy.

Acceptable High School Diploma Equivalents

Here is a list of acceptable high school diploma equivalents: a General Educational Development Test (GED, administered by the GED Testing Service GEDTS), a High School Equivalency Test (HisSET administered by ETS educational Testing Service), the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC administered by McGraw-Hill), or the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) issued by the Board of Education. All equivalents must be in accordance to sections 48410-48416 <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=edc&group=48001-49000&file=48410-48416>

Community Colleges

Community colleges that offer certificate programs in wastewater are given a prominent place in this directory. Community colleges offering only a few wastewater courses are listed separately. The prospective wastewater treatment plant operator should not confuse community college certification with certification by the WWOCP. A typical community college certification program requires the student to complete a program of study totaling some 23 to 28 units in wastewater and related topics. Certification by the State of California requires the qualified individual to pass an examination, which is given twice a year.

Even though a community college in your area may not be listed, it is wise to inquire at that college. Wastewater programs are in a continual state of change. Demand for courses and budget constraints often dictate scheduled offerings.

Universities

There are a few universities which offer a series of home-study wastewater manuals and online programs. These provide an excellent alternative for those individuals who are unable to attend a community college or cannot find such courses offered in their vicinity.

The curriculum covers a variety of topics including tours to pre-treatment and wastewater treatment facilities. Contact the universities listed in the directory for more information.

Nonprofit Associations & Organizations offering Training Coursework

There are various regional and statewide training organizations which provide wastewater training seminars. Interested participants can contact the organizations at the telephone numbers listed in this directory.

Private Companies

Please be aware that the WWOCP only recognizes training taken through nonprofit colleges and universities, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations to satisfy the education requirements for certification. A public agency or nonprofit organization must notify the WWOCP prior to sponsoring any classes offered through a private company before the WWOCP will issue educational points.

W here To Go For More Information?

For additional information, please contact:

Wastewater Operator Certification Program
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 944212
Sacramento, CA 94244-2120
(916) 341-5819

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/operator_certification/operator_certification.shtml

**OPERATOR CERTIFICATION
REQUIREMENTS TABLE
(Effective April 1, 2013)**

Note: Applicants must take and pass the Office of Operator Certification Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Examination before applying for Certification.

PATH	EXAMINATION EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS		CERTIFICATION QUALIFYING EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS
GRADE I			
1	High school diploma or equivalent and 6 educational points	and	1 year of full-time qualifying experience
GRADE II			
1	High school diploma or equivalent and 9 educational points	and	18 months of full-time qualifying experience as a Grade I operator
2	High school diploma or equivalent and 12 educational points	and	2 years of full-time qualifying experience
3	Associate's degree, a higher degree, or a minimum of 60 college semester units, including a minimum of 15 semester units of science courses	and	1 year of full-time qualifying experience
GRADE III			
1	High school diploma or equivalent and 12 educational points	and	3 years of full-time qualifying experience as a Grade II operator
2	High school diploma or equivalent and 18 educational points	and	4 years of full-time qualifying experience
3	Associate's degree or a minimum of 60 college semester units, including a minimum of 15 semester units of science courses	and	2 years of full-time qualifying experience
4	Bachelor's degree or a higher degree, including a minimum of 30 semester units of science courses	and	1 year of full-time qualifying experience

GRADE IV			
1	High school diploma or equivalent and 32 educational points	and	6 years of full-time qualifying experience
2	Associate's degree or a minimum of 60 college semester units, including a minimum of 15 semester units of science courses	and	4 years of full-time qualifying experience
3	Bachelor's degree or a higher degree, including a minimum of 30 semester units of science courses	and	3 years of full-time qualifying experience
4	Valid registration as a chemical, civil, or mechanical engineer issued by the California Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors or by another state, territory, or Indian tribe	and	2 years of full-time qualifying experience
GRADE V			
1	High school diploma or equivalent and 48 educational points	and	10 years full-time qualifying experience
2	Associate's degree or a minimum of 60 college semester units, including a minimum of 15 semester units of science courses	and	6 years of full-time qualifying experience
3	Bachelor's degree or a higher degree, including a minimum of 30 semester units of science courses	and	5 years of full-time qualifying experience
4	Valid registration as a chemical, civil, or mechanical engineer issued by the California Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors or by another state, a territory, or an Indian tribe	and	4 years of full-time qualifying experience

Community Colleges Offering Wastewater Certificate or Degree Programs –continued-

(Visit website for course information)

College of the Canyons

26455 Rockwell Canyon Road
Valencia, CA 91355
www.coc.cc.ca.us

College of the Canyons Program is administered by the Water Systems Technology Program.

<http://www.canyons.edu/Departments/WATER/Pages/default.aspx>

Degree Information

Associate of Science Degree in Water Systems Technology, can emphasize in Wastewater
Certificate Of achievement in Water Systems Technology, can emphasize in Wastewater

Cuyamaca College

900 Rancho San Diego Parkway
El Cajon, CA 92019
<http://www.cuyamaca.edu/>

Cuyamaca College's Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator's Program is administered by the Water and Wastewater Technology Program.

<http://www.cuyamaca.edu/academics/departments/wwtr/default.aspx>

Degree Information

Associate of Science Degree in Wastewater Treatment Operator
Certificate in Water Treatment Plant Operator

Folsom Lake College

10 College Parkway,
Folsom, CA 95630
<http://www.flc.losrios.edu/>

Folsom Lake College's Wastewater Management Program is administered by the Environmental Technology Department.

<http://www.flc.losrios.edu/academics/waste-water-management>

Degree Information

Certificate in Wastewater Management

Community Colleges Offering Wastewater Certificate or Degree Programs –continued-

(Visit website for course information)

Imperial Valley College

380 East Aten Road
Imperial, CA 92251
www.imperial.edu

Imperial Valley College's Water Treatment Systems Technology Program is administered by the Division of Industrial Technology.

Degree Information

Associate Degree in Water Treatment Systems Technology
Certificate in Wastewater Systems Technology
Specialization Certificate in Wastewater Systems Technology- Wastewater Treatment

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

400 West Washington Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90015

www.lattc.edu

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College's wastewater program is administered by the Department of Science and Mathematics.

<http://college.lattc.edu/catalog/files/2014/09/WaterSystemsTechnology.pdf>

Degree Information

Associate Degree in Water Systems Technology
Certificate in Water Systems Technology – Wastewater Option

Mt. San Jacinto College

San Jacinto Campus
1499 N. State St.
San Jacinto, CA 92583

Menifee Valley Campus
28237 La Piedra Rd.
Menifee, CA 92584

<http://www.msjc.edu/Pages/default.aspx>

Mt. San Jacinto College's Program is administered by the Water Technology Program.

<http://www.msjc.edu/InstructionalPrograms/Documents/WATR.pdf>

Degree Information

Non-Transfer Degree Associate Degree in Water Technology
Certificate in Wastewater Treatment Operator

Community Colleges Offering Wastewater Certificate or Degree Programs –continued-

(Visit website for course information)

Palomar College

1140 West Mission Avenue
San Marcos, CA 92069

www.palomar.edu

Palomar College's wastewater program is administered by the Department of Occupational and Noncredit Programs.

<http://www2.palomar.edu/occnocr/occupational-programs/water-and-wastewater-technology/>

Degree Information

Certificate in Wastewater Technology of Achievement

Santa Barbara City College

721 Cliff Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93109-2394

<http://www.sbccc.edu>

Santa Barbara City College's Wastewater Technology Education Certification of Achievement program is administered by the Water Science Department.

<http://www.sbccc.edu/waterscience>

Degree Information

Certificate of Achievement

Santa Rosa City College

1501 Mendocino Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95401-4395

<https://www.santarosa.edu>

Santa Rosa City College's Wastewater Treatment Operators Major is administered by the Engineering and Applied Technology Department.

https://portal.santarosa.edu/SRWeb/SR_ProgramOfStudy.aspx?ProgramType=1&Program=003333

Degree Information

Associate Degree or Certificate of Achievement in Wastewater Treatment Operations.

Community Colleges Offering Wastewater Certificate or Degree Programs –continued-

(Visit website for course information)

Santiago Canyon College

8045 East Chapman Avenue
Orange, CA 92869

www.sccollege.edu

Santiago Canyon College's Wastewater/Environmental Sanitation Program is administered by the Water Utility Science Department.

<http://www.sccollege.edu/Departments/CareerEd/WaterSci/Pages/default.aspx>

Degree Information

Associate Degree or Certificate of Achievement in Wastewater/Environmental Sanitation

Shasta College

11555 Old Oregon Trail
Redding, CA 96049-6006

www.shastacollege.edu

Shasta College's Wastewater program is administered by the Center for Science, Industry and Natural Resources.

<http://www.shastacollege.edu/Academic%20Affairs/BAIT/WTT/WTT%20PDFs/WATER.Wastewater%20Treatment%20Cert%201213.pdf>

Degree Information

Certificate in Water/Wastewater Treatment

Solano Community College

4000 Suisun Valley Road
Suisun, CA 94585

www.solano.edu

Solano Community College's wastewater program is administered by the Gainful Employment Program.

<http://www.solano.edu/degrees/1516/water.pdf>

Degree Information

Associate Degree or Certificate in Water and Wastewater Technology

Community Colleges Offering Wastewater Certificate or Degree Programs –continued-

(Visit website for course information)

Ventura College

4667 Telegraph Road
Ventura, CA 93003

www.venturacollege.edu

Ventura College's wastewater program is administered by the Department of Industry and Technology.

<http://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/academic/water-science>

Degree Information

Associate Degree or Certificate in Water Science and can choose to concentrate in Wastewater

Adult Education Offering Wastewater Programs

(Visit website for course information)

Castro Valley Adult & Career Education

4430 Alma Ave.
Castro Valley, CA 94546

<http://www.cvadult.org/>

Castro Valley's Adult and Career Education's modern wastewater program is administered by the Career: Get the Job.

<http://www.cvadult.org/courses/career/miscellaneous/item/403-modern-wastewater-treatment-plant-operations-program>

Community Colleges Offering One or More Wastewater Courses

(Visit website for course information)

Bakersfield College

1801 Panorama Drive
Bakersfield, CA 93305
(661) 395-4011

www.bakersfieldcollege.edu

College of the Sequoias

915 South Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277
(559) 730-3700

www.cos.edu

Merced College

3600 M Street
Merced, CA 95348
(209) 384-6171

www.mccd.edu

Sacramento City College

3835 Freeport Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95822
(916) 558-2351

<http://www.scc.losrios.edu>

San Bernardino Valley College

701 S. Mt Vernon Ave. San
Bernardino, CA 92410
(916) 558-2351

<https://www.valleycollege.edu>

Universities and Schools Offering Wastewater Training or Technology Courses

(Visit website for course information)

Office of Water Programs
California State University, Sacramento
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819-6025

www.owp.csus.edu

The Office of Water Programs at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) offers a series of self-study manuals in wastewater treatment. Students study at their own pace, complete the test for continuing education units (CEUs) for each of the volumes, and mail it to CSUS for grading and comment.

Non-Profit Private Companies Offering Wastewater Training

(Visit website for course information)

American Water College
P.O. BOX 903185
Palmdale, CA 93590

<http://www.americanwatercollege.org/index.php>

OCT Academy
5840 Price Ave., Bldg. 1017
McClellan, CA 95652

www.octinc.com

WasteWater Technology Trainers
18030 Brookhurst St. PMB 573
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

www.wastewatertechnologytrainers.com

Wastewater Associations

(Visit website for course information)

California Water Environment Associations (CWEA)

7677 Oakport Street
Oakland, CA 94621

www.cwea.org

California Rural Water Association

1112 I Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814

www.calruralwater.org

Water Environment Federation

601 Wythe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1994

www.wef.org