

TESTING ELIGIBILITY – INITIAL EDUCATION

Candidates seeking new or upgraded certifications must meet minimum initial education requirements which are wastewater related, as determined by the Certification Board. The education requirements are cumulative, and include the education earned for the previous certification grade's education requirements. For example, a Grade II certification requires a total of 100 contact hours of training; since the Grade I certification requires 50 contact hours, an additional 50 contact hours of training are required for the Grade II certification.

Grade	Equivalent CEUs	Contact Hours	Education
I/1	5.0	50	High school diploma or GED
II/2	10.0	100	High school diploma or GED
III/3	10.0	100	High school diploma or GED plus 2 post-secondary education courses
IV/4	10.0	100	High school diploma or GED plus 4 post-secondary education courses

At the Grade III and Grade IV certification levels, post-secondary education courses are required. Relevant courses may include biology, chemistry, environmental studies, math, and wastewater treatment.

The Certification Board may approve courses for post-secondary education even if they were not taken for academic credit. Additional classes approved as post-secondary education can be counted towards Contact Hours where one (1) Credit Hour is equivalent to three (3) CEU's, and one (1) CEU is equivalent to ten (10) Contact Hours, and will be calculated as follows:

Contact Hours = (Credit Hours) (3 CEUs / Credit Hour) (10 Contact Hours / 1 CEU)

Candidates are encouraged to visit the NWEA website (www.nvwea.org) for a current listing of pre-approved continuing education and post-secondary education courses.

Candidates seeking new or upgraded certifications must meet minimum initial experience requirements which are discipline specific, as determined by the Certification Board. Acceptable experience is time spent performing the hands-on duties of a trained professional in the discipline and at a level of complexity for which certification is desired.

During the course of their work, operators, technicians, analysts, and inspectors are expected to perform a wide range of relevant duties and tasks, with increasingly complex experience for each grade level. Experience gained in the operation of wastewater treatment plants, collection systems, laboratory analysis, mechanical maintenance, and drinking water treatment facilities may be considered for related experience in other certification disciplines, and other disciplines as determined by the Certification Board. No one task or activity (i.e. collecting samples, conducting routine or simple laboratory tests, operating a combination sewer truck, performing mechanical maintenance work, etc.) will be deemed full time equivalent operating experience. Duties and tasks submitted as evidence of full-time or related experience for any discipline shall be granted at the discretion of the Certification Board. No more than 6 months shall be granted from related experience for any certification discipline.

For the Regulatory Program, operators cannot obtain full certification at grade levels higher than the highest classification of the facility where they are employed (e.g.: an operator working at a Class 2 facility cannot obtain full certification higher than Grade II). The operator may, however, obtain a Restricted Certificate at one grade higher than the plant classification where they are employed if he/she meets the education requirements for the higher grade.

Plant classification restrictions do not apply to the Non-Regulatory Programs. Restricted Certificates for the Non-Regulatory Programs are only available for Grade 1.

The following table summarizes the certification requirements and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience required for each level of certification in the Regulatory Certification Program (Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator) and Non-Regulatory Certification Programs.

Initial Certification Operating Experience Requirements		
Grade	Regulatory Program	Non-Regulatory Programs
I/1	1 year of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience at a Class 1 (or higher) facility	1 year of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience
II/2	Grade I certification and 2 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience with at least 1 year at a Class 2 (or higher) facility	Grade 1 certification and 2 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience
III/3	Grade II certification and 3 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience with at least 1 year at a Class 3 (or higher) facility	Grade 2 certification and 3 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience
IV/4	Grade III certification and 4 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience with at least 1 year at a Class 4 facility	Grade 3 certification and 4 years of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) operating experience

