



## NJDEP OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM UPDATES

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Bureau of Safe Drinking Water  
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How many times does the term “operator” appear in the 300 pages of the Federal rules at 40 CFR 141?




- A. 39
- B. 59
- C. 79
- D. 99

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## Agenda

- Structure and goals of the program
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Program assessment
- Stakeholder Involvement




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# OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Structure and Goals of the Program


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## Applicable Regulations

- 1996 Amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1420
- Licensing of Water Supply and Wastewater Operators Act (N.J.S.A. 58:11-64 to 73)
- Licensing Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:10A)

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## Governing Parties

- Board of Examiners
- Advisory Committee on Water Supply and Wastewater Licensed Operator Training
- Division of Water Supply & Geoscience - Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
  - Capacity Development, Rules and Licensing Unit
    - Water Operator Certification Program
- Division of Water Quality
  - Wastewater Operator Certification Program
- Division of Water and Land Use Enforcement
  - Bureau of Water Compliance & Enforcement (North, Central, and South)
    - County Environmental Health Act (CEHA) Agencies

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## Goals of the Program

- Ensure that all CWS and NTNCWS have the appropriate licensed operator
- Assist with the training, certification, and license renewal of operators
- Review training courses for initial certification and continuing education
  - *Updating VSWS manual to reflect new technologies used in water treatment*
- Make training more available and affordable to operators
  - *Introducing webinars produced by the Division and other TCH providers*
- Clarify licensed operator and owner roles and responsibilities

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## Systems Requiring an LO and Active Licenses by Classification

FACILITY CLASSIFICATIONS		ACTIVE LICENSES	
VSWS = 661		VSWS = 144	
T-1 = 338	W-1 = 121	T-1 = 480	W-1 = 473
T-2 = 157	W-2 = 182	T-2 = 621	W-2 = 608
T-3 = 37	W-3 = 77	T-3 = 243	W-3 = 221
T-4 = 39	W-4 = 27	T-4 = 168	W-4 = 169
<b>Total = 571</b>	<b>Total = 407</b>	<b>Total = 1,492</b>	<b>Total = 1,471</b>

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## Certification and License Renewal

- License renewal
  - \$50 annual fee
  - *Continuing education required in rules – TCH requirements*
    - Current TCH cycle: October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2021.
- Examinations Require:
  - Appropriate operating experience
  - Appropriate educational background
  - Fully completed State of Qualification



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# OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Roles and Responsibilities

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## Licensed Operator Requirements N.J.A.C. 7:10A-1.12

- Must be knowledgeable in:
  - *Licensing of Water Supply and Wastewater Operators Act (N.J.S.A. 58:11-64 to 73) and the Licensing Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:10A)*
  - *Safe Drinking Water Act (N.J.S.A. 58:12A-1 et seq.) and the Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:10)*
  - *Water Quality Accountability Act (N.J.S.A. 58:31-1 et seq.)*
  - *And other Federal and State Statutes and Rules as applicable....*



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## O&M Responsibilities N.J.A.C. 7:10A-1.12

- Have and maintain an “Operations & Maintenance” (O&M) Manual for each piece of equipment
- Properly operate and maintain the system.
- Conduct routine inspections of system in accordance with schedule in O&M Manual. Must be documented in “binder” or computer file Inspections shall include the following;

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### Emergencies

- IMPORTANT NOTE:** Immediately report all failures that have the potential to affect public health, safety, welfare or the environment or have the potential to cause a violation to the owner.

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### Additional Requirements

- The system owner must have an operator employed at the system that holds the license classification of that system
- The system owner must have a backup operator in the licensed operator's absence
- Treatment systems Class 3 and 4 must have a full-time licensed operator
- Change in employment must be notified to the Department

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# OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

## Program Assessment

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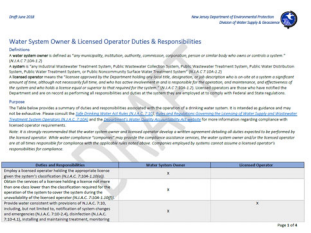
### Licensed operator program REASSESSMENT

- Evaluate all existing processes
  - Memorialize internal process to create consistency
- Identify opportunities for improvement
  - Digital submissions
  - Electronic compliance tracking
  - Missing standard operating procedures or guidelines
- Assess the need for rule updates
- Consult with stakeholders
- Implement changes in the near and long term

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### Program Assessment Improvements Roles and Responsibilities


- Developing training and guidance documents on roles and responsibilities
- Clarity on expectations of licensed operators set in the rules



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### Program Assessment Improvements LO hours and back-up operators

- Establishing minimum hours of operation or expectations for availability
- Revision of the drinking water licensed operator employment notification Form O65. The revised Form O65 will include detailed information regarding hours for varying tasks, such as the operation and maintenance of treatment processes.
- Backup operator information will be electronically data managed



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## Program Assessment Improvements

### Rules

- **Necessary rule changes will be identified** to address the above issues as well as definitions that are inconsistent with the statute and regulations.
- Potential Amendments Include:
  - Adjust 3-year TCH cycle to run July to June
    - Would allow 90-day window to submit TCHs
  - Clarify back-up operator requirement for Class 3 and 4 treatment systems
    - To provide full-time coverage while primary LO on record is unavailable
  - Minimum hour requirements
  - Licensed Operator in Training

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## Program Assessment Improvements

### Operating Multiple Systems

- **Licensed operators with multiple systems** will be asked to justify how they are able to manage all systems.
- The revised Form 065 may ask LOs if they operate more than ten systems or if they operate a T3 or T4 classified system that is considered full-time (e.g. 35 hour minimum) time requirement.
- The Department can limit the number of systems an operator can operate and the amount of time required in attendance at the system(s)

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# OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Stakeholder Involvement

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## Feedback from Stakeholders

- "Are there minimum hours a licensed operator of record should be present for?"
- "How many systems is one operator permitted operate?"
- "What are the roles and responsibilities of a licensed operator?"
- "How are drinking water systems classified?"
- Thoughts and comments on how to improve the quality of the program?
  - Email [watersupply@dep.nj.gov](mailto:watersupply@dep.nj.gov)
  - Attend future stakeholder meetings planned for Winter 2019

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## Monthly Operator Reports

*N.J.A.C. 7:10-1.12: Submit Monthly Operating Report (MOR) to NJDEP by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month for the data collected the previous month*


Electronic MORs Status Update

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## Other State Programs...

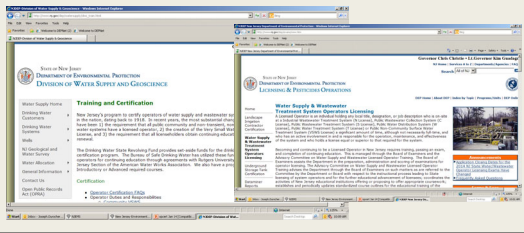


<p><b>Operator Certification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Delaware's</b> Online Course Development for Water System Operators</li> <li>• <b>South Dakota's</b> Asset Management Workshops</li> <li>• <b>Tennessee's</b> Plan to Enhance Operator Knowledge through Academic Partnerships</li> </ul>	<p><b>Capacity Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pennsylvania's</b> Master Well Owners Network</li> <li>• <b>Massachusetts's</b> Capacity Development Training for Sanitary Survey Staff</li> <li>• <b>Mississippi's</b> PEER Review Program</li> </ul>
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### Online Resources

- [www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/dws\\_train.html](http://www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply/dws_train.html)
- [www.nj.gov/dep/exams/wsw.html](http://www.nj.gov/dep/exams/wsw.html)



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### Questions? Comments & Feedback

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