



# How to Become a Class A Certified Water or Wastewater Operator

*Serve your community by helping to ensure people receive safe drinking water and wastewater is discharged in an environmentally safe manner.*

## Eligibility

To become a certified Class A Water Supply or Wastewater Treatment operator in the State of Ohio, you must apply for and pass the Class A state operator certification exam and document the appropriate level of hands-on experience. To apply for the exam, you must have a high school diploma or the equivalent. In order to receive a certificate, you will need to document 1,040 hours of operating experience **OR** 3 years of working experience in the field for which you are applying. Work experience means time spent at a job where a portion of duties involve dealing with a public water system or treatment works. If you pass the exam and don't have the required experience time, then you will be designated an Operator-in-Training for up to four years until you document the required experience. This applies to Ohio EPA's traditional and third-party exams. Education experience credits are offered as follows:

Education	Hours/Months of Experience Required	
	Operating Experience	Working Experience
High School Graduate or GED (REQUIRED)	1,040 hours	3 years
Associates Degree*	780 hours	2 years
Bachelor's Degree*	520 hours	1 year

\*Post High School education shall be obtained in a physical or natural science or chemical, civil or environmental engineering and is subject to review by Operator Certification staff and/or the Operator Certification Advisory Council. Successful completion of one or more of the [OTCO](#) (Operator Training Committee of Ohio) "Basic Water" or "Basic Wastewater" correspondence course, the [California State University at Sacramento](#) "Small Water System Operation and Maintenance" or "Small Wastewater System Operation and Maintenance, Volume I" correspondence course, shall reduce the experience requirement to one year of work experience or five hundred twenty hours of operating experience.

## Application and Fees

Ohio EPA holds Class A traditional paper exams twice a year, in May and November. Applications must be submitted through the Ohio EPA eBusiness Center by the application deadline which is ninety (90) days prior to the date of the exam. There is an examination fee of \$80 for Class A.

Operators may choose to take an approved third-party examination which are available more frequently and, in more locations, than Ohio EPA's traditional paper testing and then seek State of Ohio Class A certification. Applications for the traditional paper and pencil testing are available on [Ohio EPA's Operator Certification Web site](#). To find out more about the approved third party examination program, please visit the association of Boards of Certification (ABC) [Ohio Certification website](#).

## Preparing for the Exam

The operator certification website includes references used to create exam questions, need to know criteria and formulas that may help you prepare for the Ohio EPA exam. Ohio EPA does not require completion of any coursework prior to applying for an exam. Ohio EPA does not offer exam study courses or practice exams; however, there are a number of training providers that do offer courses.

Ohio EPA's Approved Examination Provider, ABC, has their own sample exam questions, need-to-know criteria, study guides and formulas on their website. Please visit [ABC's Ohio Certification website](#) for more information.

## To Obtain More Information

Visit our website at [epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/opcert.aspx](http://epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/opcert.aspx), email the operator certification unit at [opcert@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:opcert@epa.ohio.gov) or call our toll-free hotline at 1-866-411-OPCT (6728).