



California Department of  
Public Health

# WATER DISTRIBUTION OPERATOR CERTIFICATION



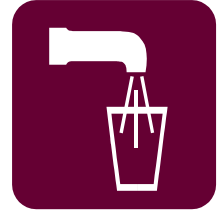
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Edition

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## About the Operator Certification Program

Since 1971 laws and regulations have been in place requiring the certification of water treatment facility operations. The regulations establish at what level these facilities should be manned, minimum qualifications for testing at each of the five grade levels, and criteria for the renewal and revocation of certificates.



In 1998, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency established guidelines for the certification and re-certification of operators of community and non-transient non-community public water systems. On January 1, 2001, new state regulations were adopted to comply with these guidelines and the existing water treatment operator certification program was modified accordingly.

The new regulations also established a water distribution operator certification program. The Operator Certification Program is now responsible for the testing and the certification of approximately 26,000 water treatment and water distribution operators throughout the state of California.

## What's Inside

This information application package is provided to help you understand the examination & certification process. Please read thoroughly. Enclosed you will find the following:

- Program Contacts
- Water Distribution exam Schedule
- Minimum qualifications for Examination & Certification
- Expected range of knowledge
- List of suggested reading
- Information on Renewals & Continuing Education Requirements
- Information on Specialized Training & Continuing Education hours

## Who to Contact

### **Our mailing address:**

California Dept. of Public Health  
Op Cert Program, MS#7417  
P.O. Box 997377  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377

### **Application Evaluation:**

If you have any questions regarding the minimum qualifications for examination or certification please contact Karen Hinrichs at (916) 449-5628.

### **Certificate Renewal:**

If you have questions regarding a certificate renewal please contact Steve Bogart at (916) 449-5615.



Visit us Online:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/occupations/Pages/DWopcet.aspx>

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## Who must be certified?

Any individual making decisions addressing the operational activities of a water distribution facility pursuant to subsection 63770(b) of the California Health and Safety Code (CH&SC) must possess a water distribution certificate.

## How do I become a certified operator?

Under the new regulations, becoming certified is a two-step process. First, an application and an examination fee are submitted to participate in the examination. The application is evaluated for the educational portion of the eligibility criterion. If the applicant meets the criterion, the applicant may take the exam. After successfully passing the examination, a second application and filing fee is submitted for certification. Experience as a distribution operator is a requirement for certification above the grade 2 level; therefore, Grade 1 and 2 applicants need only to submit the certification application and fee to become certified. Grade 3, 4, and 5 applicants, however, must meet the required experience criterion before applying for certification. You have three years from the date you passed the exam to apply and meet the experience requirements.



## If I am already certified as a water treatment operator, can I use my treatment certificate to qualify for the water distribution examination?

No. The water treatment and the water distribution certificates are independent of one another. You cannot use one certificate to qualify for the other.

## If I submit an application, but do not qualify for the examination or for certification, will I get a refund of my application fees?

No. The application fee is non-refundable as it is a processing fee. It is best to call the Operator Certification Program first (before you send your money) to get clarification on what the minimum qualifications are, and if you qualify. Your application will not be evaluated over the phone, however the analyst will explain the minimum qualifications clearly enough for you to make your own determination.

## If I am approved to take an examination and don't show up, will I get a refund of my application fees?

No. If you do not show up to an examination you will forfeit your fees and be required to resubmit a new application with the correct fees in order to take the following exam.

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## When the examination application requires verification of specialized training, what information must be submitted?

When specialized training is required you must submit a photo copy of either an official transcript or certificate of completion issued by the college or the IACET provider. The documentation must indicate the name of the course and the number of units (or hours) you were awarded for successful completion of the course. **Remember, only submit a copy of the official transcript or certificate of completion; retain the original for your records.**

## What happens if I appear late for an examination or forget my ID or have improper ID?

If you appear after the exam has started or you are denied admittance because of improper ID, you must sign the proctor's report acknowledging your denial. If you do not sign the proctor's report there will be no record of the denial and verbal claims of denial will not be accepted, you will be marked as a No-Show. The proctor will give you a notice about rescheduling and you must contact this office the Monday following the exam to record your denial.

Once we receive the signed report from the proctor, you will be rescheduled for the following exam. Your application fees will carry over **only** to the next examination. If you do not show up for the rescheduled exam, you will have to reapply and resubmit your full exam fees again.



## What happens to those found cheating during an examination?

Cheating is not tolerated and has consequences. Examinees found cheating will automatically fail the exam and will not be allowed to take either the Water Distribution or Water Treatment examinations for the next two (2) years.

## What kind of specialized training is required to qualify for the educational portion of the examination?

College level courses providing at least 36 hours of continuous formal instruction in drinking water or waste water quality, drinking water or waste water treatment, drinking water distribution, or drinking water or waste water facility operation. Courses must be completed through an accredited academic institution or an organization accredited by the International Association of Continuing Education Training (IACET) or an authorized provider of IACET. Course hours cannot be added to together to meet the education requirement.

Grade D1 does not require specialized training, however, grades D2 and above require a minimum amount of specialized training, a portion of which must cover the fundamentals of water supply principles. For more information about specialized training, visit our website to see which courses meet the definition of a water supply principles course and other acceptable specialized training courses.

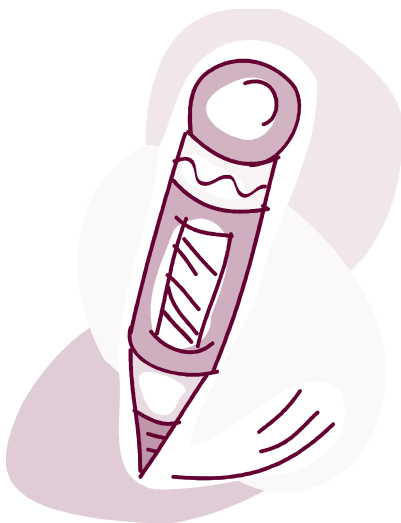
Please keep in mind that once your specialized training course has been accepted for the purpose of meeting the examination requirements, you can continue to submit that course for subsequent examinations.

# Qualifying for Examination

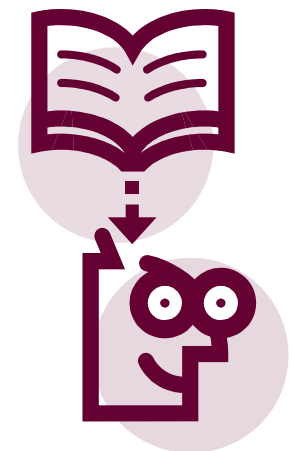
Below is the minimum educational requirements for examination. Specialized training courses must be completed before the application deadline.



Grade	Minimum Educational Qualifications for Examination
D1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School or GED*</li> </ul>
D2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High School or GED*</li> <li><b>AND</b></li> <li><u>One 36 contact hour (or 3-unit) course</u> of specialized training covering the fundamentals of water supply principles.</li> </ul>
D3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A valid Grade D2 operator certificate.</li> <li><b>AND</b></li> <li><u>Two 36 contact hour (or 3-unit) courses</u> of specialized training that includes at least <b>one course covering the fundamentals of water supply principles.</b></li> </ul>
D4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A valid Grade D3 operator certificate.</li> <li><b>AND</b></li> <li><u>Three 36 contact hour (or 3-unit) courses</u> of specialized training that includes at least <b>two courses in water supply principles.</b></li> </ul>
D5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A valid Grade D4 operator certificate.</li> <li><b>AND</b></li> <li><u>Four 36 contact hour (or 3-unit) courses</u> of specialized training that includes at least <b>two courses in water supply principles.</b></li> </ul>



\***High School/GED** equivalency for **grades 1 & 2 ONLY** can be fulfilled with **1 year** as an operator of a facility that required an understanding of a piping system that included pumps, valves, and storage tanks.



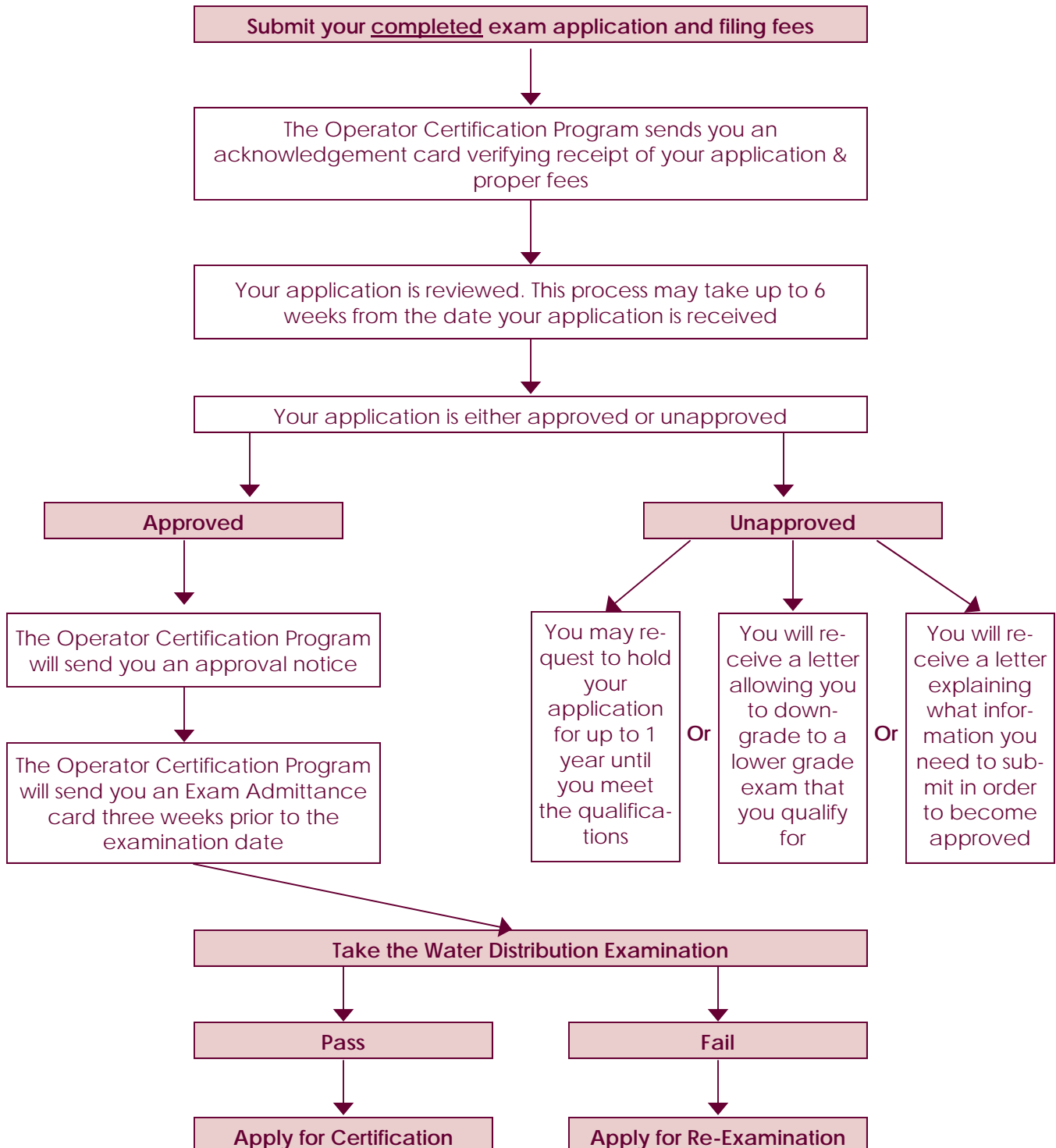
For more information about specialized training, please visit our website at:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/occupations/Pages/DWopcet.aspx>

# Distribution Operator Exam Procedure

Applications for the Exam must be postmarked by the exam deadline. No late applications will be accepted.

When applying for examination, you must provide all your personal information such as your full legal name, address, date of birth, social security number, work & home telephone numbers, and current certification status (operator number, grade, issue date) if applicable.



# Specialized Training

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## Where can I get “specialized training”?

The following is a partial listing of accredited academic institutions and IACET providers of courses in specialized training. You must contact the school directly to see when the next course will be given. Remember, each course must be a minimum of 36 contact hours. This translates to 3 semester units or 3.6 CEU's.

- **Antelope Valley (Lancaster)**  
(661) 722-6300  
Website: [www.avc.edu](http://www.avc.edu)
- **Bakersfield Community College (Bakersfield)**  
(661) 395-4011  
Website: [www.bc.cc.ca.us](http://www.bc.cc.ca.us)
- **California State University, Sacramento**  
(916) 278-6142 (Correspondence courses)  
Website: [www.owp.csus.edu](http://www.owp.csus.edu)
- **CA-NV AWWA Water College**  
(909) 481-4688  
Website: [www.ca-nv-awwa.org](http://www.ca-nv-awwa.org)
- **Citrus College (Glendora)**  
(626) 914-8511  
Website: [www.citrus.cc.ca.us](http://www.citrus.cc.ca.us)
- **College of the Canyons (Santa Clarita)**  
(805) 476-4100  
Website: [www.coc.cc.ca.us](http://www.coc.cc.ca.us)
- **College of the Redwoods (Eureka)**  
(707) 445-6700  
Website: [www.redwoods.edu](http://www.redwoods.edu)
- **College of the Sequoias (Visalia)**  
(559) 730-3700  
Website: [www.sequoias.cc.ca.us](http://www.sequoias.cc.ca.us)
- **Columbia College (Sonora)**  
(209) 588-5100  
Website: <http://columbia.yosemite.cc.ca.us>
- **Cuyamaca College (El Cajon)**  
(619) 660-4000  
Website: [www.cuyamaca.net](http://www.cuyamaca.net)
- **Hartnell Community College (Salinas)**  
(831) 755-6700  
Website: [www.hartnell.cc.ca.us](http://www.hartnell.cc.ca.us)
- **Imperial Valley College (Imperial)**  
(760) 352-8320  
Website: [www.imperial.cc.ca.us](http://www.imperial.cc.ca.us)
- **L.A. Trade Technical College (Los Angeles)**  
(213) 744-9500  
Website: [www.lattc.cc.ca.us](http://www.lattc.cc.ca.us)
- **Mendocino College (Mendocino)**  
(707) 468-3101  
Website: [www.mendocino.cc.ca.us](http://www.mendocino.cc.ca.us)
- **Merced College (Merced)**  
(209) 384-6000  
Website: [www.merced.cc.ca.us](http://www.merced.cc.ca.us)
- **Mt. San Antonio (Walnut)**  
(909) 594-5611  
Website: [www.mtsac.edu](http://www.mtsac.edu)
- **Mt. San Jacinto College (San Jacinto)**  
(909) 487-6752  
Website: [www.msjc.edu](http://www.msjc.edu)
- **OCT, Inc.**  
(888) 863-8916  
Website: [www.octinc.com](http://www.octinc.com)
- **Ohlone College (Fremont)**  
(510) 659-6000  
Website: [www.ohlone.cc.ca.us](http://www.ohlone.cc.ca.us)
- **Palomar Junior College (San Marcos)**  
(760) 744-1150  
Website: [www.palomar.edu](http://www.palomar.edu)
- **Santiago Canyon College (Orange)**  
(714) 628-4901 Admissions  
(714) 628-4883 Career Education Office  
Website: [www.sccollege.edu/watersci](http://www.sccollege.edu/watersci)
- **San Bernardino Valley College (San Bernardino)**  
(909) 888-6511  
Website: <http://sbvc.sbccd.cc.ca.us>
- **Santa Barbara City College (Santa Barbara)**  
(805) 965-0581  
Website: [www.sbcc.cc.ca.us](http://www.sbcc.cc.ca.us)
- **Santa Rosa Junior College (Santa Rosa)**  
(707) 527-4011  
Website: [www.santarosa.edu](http://www.santarosa.edu)
- **Shasta College (Redding)**  
(530) 352-8320  
Website: [www.shasta.cc.ca.us](http://www.shasta.cc.ca.us)
- **Solano Community College (Suisun)**  
(707) 864-7000  
Website: [www.solano.cc.ca.us](http://www.solano.cc.ca.us)
- **Ventura College (Ventura)**  
(805) 654-6339  
Website: [www.ventura.cc.ca.us](http://www.ventura.cc.ca.us)
- **Yuba College, Lake Campus (Clearlake)**  
(707) 995-7900  
Website: <http://lakecampus.org>

# Exam Schedule & Fees

## How often are exams given?

Exams are given twice a year, in February and August. See below for upcoming exam dates and application deadlines for all grades.



### Application Deadline

### Exam Date

June 1, 2009	August 15, 2009
January 1, 2010	March 20, 2010
July 1, 2010	September 18, 2010
January 3, 2010	March 19, 2011
July 1, 2011	September 17, 2011
January 2, 2012	March 17, 2012
July 2, 2012	September 15, 2012



Applications must be postmarked **by** the application deadline date to be considered for the current examination period. **If the deadline falls on a Sunday or federal holiday, applications must be postmarked prior to that date.**

When you are ready to take the exam, be sure to **completely** fill out the application and submit it along with the filing fee by the application deadline. All minimum qualifications (Page 4) must be met by the application deadline date of the examination you wish to participate in. Completed specialized training courses (Grades 2-5) must be verified with **photocopies of official transcripts or certificates of completion**. Incomplete applications could cause a delay in your approval and scheduling for the exam. If you find you don't meet the minimum qualifications, you will have up to one year from the date of submittal to amend your application.

## Exam Locations

Exam sites are within the general vicinity of the cities listed below and are subject to change

Bakersfield	Northridge	Redding	San Jose
Eureka	Oceanside	Sacramento	Santa Barbara
Fresno	Orange County	Salinas	Santa Rosa
Martinez	Palm Springs	San Bernardino	Stockton
Modesto	Pasadena	San Diego	Sun City
			Torrance

Applicants who qualify for the exam will be notified approximately three weeks prior to the exam date. The notification will contain the location of the exam site and the time of the exam. **Please arrive to the exam site at least 1 (one) hour before the exam is scheduled.**

## Examination Fees

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Exam Fee</u>	<u>Re-Exam Fee</u>
D1	\$50	\$30
D2	\$65	\$45
D3	\$100	\$70
D4	\$130	\$95
D5	\$155	\$120

An examination fee is submitted with the initial application and covers the evaluation of your application and subsequent scheduling for examination; **the re-exam fee applies only if you had previously participated in an examination for the same grade but were not successful in passing.** If you are scheduled for an exam and do not show up to that examination and wish to re-apply, you forfeit your fees and must re-submit the full exam fee.

# Submitting Your Application



Before submitting your application for examination, please ensure that you have completely filled out the application properly, providing all the correct information that is required on the application as shown below.

## APPLICATION FOR WATER DISTRIBUTION OPERATOR EXAMINATION, RE-EXAMINATION, OR EXAMINATION FOR RESTRICTED CERTIFICATE

Operator number	Exam results	Date received
Application approved for D1 D2 D3 D4 D5		
Acknowledgement sent Approval sent		
Application <b>NOT</b> approved		
<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient specialized training/verification <input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED information incomplete	Certificate dated	Certificate sent
Comments		

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE

Please print in blue ink.

1. Personal Information

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social security number \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (number, street, city, state, ZIP code) \_\_\_\_\_

Work telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently certified by the State of Michigan as a **water distribution operator**?  Yes  No

Operator number \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Issue Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. EXAMINATION INFORMATION

This application is for grade \_\_\_\_\_ Fee \_\_\_\_\_ This application is for  Exam  Re-exam Preferred exam site \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an ADA Title I disability/impairment for which you need specific accommodations to take the exam?  Yes  No

If yes, please enclose a letter (from a professional authorized to make such assessments) that describes the specific accommodations that will be required.

Please indicate if your religious beliefs prevent you from taking an exam on Saturday.  Yes  No

If yes, please enclose a letter from your church stating that you are a member in good standing, and why you cannot participate in a Saturday examination.

If you checked "yes" above, please enclose required letter. Is letter enclosed?  Yes  No

3. HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION/WORK EXPERIENCE SUBSTITUTION

Did you graduate from high school?  Yes  No If not, do you possess a GED certificate?  Yes  No

Date (month/year) \_\_\_\_\_ Name of school \_\_\_\_\_ Location (city/state) \_\_\_\_\_

If you are applying for a **grade D1 or grade D2 ONLY**, and you do not have a high school diploma or GED certificate, you must have one year of experience as an operator of a facility that requires an understanding of a piping system that includes pumps, valves, and storage tanks. **This experience must be verified with a copy of your utility's official job description.**

From (mm/yyyy) To (mm/yyyy) Name and address of employer \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's name \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Is your official job description enclosed?  Yes  No

### 4. SPECIALIZED TRAINING (For grades 2–5 applicants only. Grade 1 applicants proceed to item 5.)

You must fill in the course information below **AND** attach legible photocopies of **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS** or **CERTIFICATES OF COMPLETION** as proof of attainment of the required course work (certificates of completion must include the number of hours of instruction completed). *Please include only that information which verifies completion of the required course work.* **PLEASE NOTE: COPIES OF REPORT CARDS OR UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE VERIFICATION OF COURSE WORK.**

**Each course must be a minimum of 3 units or 36 hours of continuous formal instruction and must be provided by an accredited academic institution or an organization accredited by the International Association of Continuing Education Training (IACET).**

**Grade D2 applicants:** One course covering the fundamentals of water supply principles.

**Grade D3 applicants:** Two courses, one of which must be in water supply principles, while the supplemental course can be in drinking water treatment, drinking water or wastewater quality, or drinking water or wastewater facility operation.

**Grade D4 applicants:** Three courses, two of which must be in water supply principles, while the supplemental course can be in drinking water treatment, drinking water or wastewater quality, or drinking water or wastewater facility operation.

**Grade D5 applicants:** Four courses, two of which must be in water supply principles, while the two supplemental courses can be in drinking water treatment, drinking water or wastewater quality, or drinking water or wastewater facility operation.

#### Water Supply Principles

Course title \_\_\_\_\_ Units/hours \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's name \_\_\_\_\_ Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Course title \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Supplemental Course (as stated above)

Course title \_\_\_\_\_ Date completed \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's name \_\_\_\_\_ College or organization \_\_\_\_\_

Course title \_\_\_\_\_ Units/hours \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor's name \_\_\_\_\_ College or organization \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

I, the undersigned, certify that I am the above-named applicant; that all statements made on this application are true and correct; that I understand that any misrepresentations may result in ineligibility for the examination applied for or revocation of any certificate granted, pursuant to Section 106876 of the Health and Safety Code.

Original signature (Please sign in blue ink) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### • Personal Information:

Full name  
Date of birth  
Social security number  
Mailing address  
Work, home and/or cell number  
Certification status (if applicable)

### • Examination Information:

Grade you are applying for  
Exam filing fee (Page 7)  
Exam type (Exam or Re-Exam)  
Preferred exam site (Page 7)

### • High School Education / Work Experience (please note that a high school transcript is not needed):

Graduation / GED status  
Date graduated  
Name of school  
Location of school

If you do not have a high school diploma or GED certificate, you must have one year of experience as an operator of a facility that requires an understanding of a piping system that includes: pumps, valves and storage tanks. **This experience must be verified by submitting a copy of your utility's official job description on company letterhead.**

### • Specialized Training:

For grades 2-5, legible photocopies of an official transcript or certificates of completion must be included with the application. Certificates of completion must include the number of hours of instruction completed. **Copies of report cards and unofficial (printed off the internet) transcripts are not acceptable.**

### • Signature of Applicant:

Applicant's signature and date are required to process your application. Please sign in blue ink. Photocopies or faxed copies of the application are not acceptable.

# Submitting Your Application (continued)

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30% to 40% of the exam applications received are initially sent back because of the following:

- Application is not completely filled out.
- Verification of course work is not attached.
- Application is not signed.
- Payment is not enclosed or the wrong amount is sent.

Please make sure all minimum qualifications (Page 4) are completed by the application deadline as **filing fees are non-refundable**. If you find you do not meet the minimum qualifications, you will have up to one (1) year from the date of submittal to amend your application.

Mail your completed application along with the proper filing fees (accepted in the form of check or money order only) payable to **CDPH-OCP** (cash or credit cards are not accepted) to:

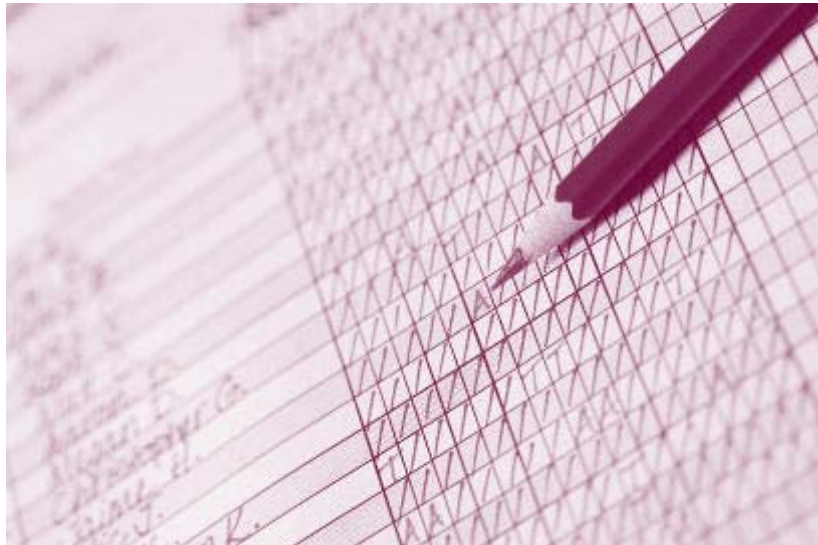
**California Dept. of Public Health  
Op Cert Program, MS #7417  
P.O. Box 997377  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377**

**Please Note:**

\*If for any reason your check does not clear, you will not be scheduled for the application until all applicable fees have been paid.

**If I have a Title 1, ADA disability that allows me special testing accommodations, what documentation must I submit with my application to be allowed such accommodations?**

Before being considered for special testing accommodations, you must submit a doctor's or authorized professional's written evaluation on official letterhead (original only, no copies) stating the type of accommodation and the reason for the accommodation. Documentation must accompany your application. You will be contacted regarding special testing arrangements.

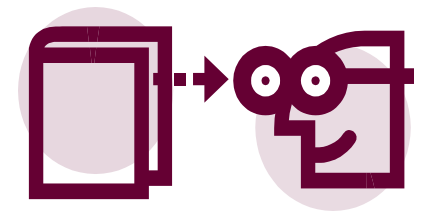


# Expected Range of Knowledge

## Taking the Written Exam

### How do I know what to study for the exam?

The expected range of knowledge lists what topics will be covered on each grade exam.



## Water Distribution Operators Expected Range of Knowledge

The chart below shows the expected skill range. To the right of each subject area will be an expected skill range for grade levels 1 through 5.

**N/A = Not Applicable**

**S = Small System Operator**

A person who generally works alone on a system that meets the regulatory definition of a small water system. A small water system serves a population of 1,000 or less. This individual has a general understanding of all concepts listed below as they pertain to small systems.

**A = Apprentice**

A person who generally works under the supervision of a more skilled person. Has a general understanding of all concepts listed below and functions at the novice level.

**J = Journeyman**

An experienced, competent worker. Has a high level of understanding of all concepts listed below and performs with minimal supervision.

**M = Master**

A highly skilled person who has a complete understanding of all concepts listed below and performs with no supervision.

Water Distribution Mathematics	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Water terms & definitions	S	A	J	M	M
Water Measurements	S	A	J	M	M
Formulas (area and volume)	S	A	J	M	M
Units and conversion factors	N/A	A	J	M	M
Water Pressure	S	A	J	M	M
Calculation of dosage, feed rates, and flow rates	N/A	N/A	A	M	M
Calculation of horsepower requirements	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	M
Calculation of electrical costs for pumping	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	M
SCADA signal calculations, i.e., 4-20mA	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	M

Piping	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Effect of pipe size, type and C factor	N/A	A	J	J	M
Standard installation, operating capacities and pressures	N/A	A	J	M	M
Head loss in pipes — causes, significance	N/A	A	J	M	M
Tuberculation — causes and effects	N/A	A	J	M	M
Joints and fittings	N/A	A	J	M	M

## Expected Range of Knowledge (continued)

<b>Distribution System Operations</b>	<b>D1</b>	<b>D2</b>	<b>D3</b>	<b>D4</b>	<b>D5</b>
Purpose, configuration, operation	S	A	J	M	M
Pipe materials	N/A	A	A	J	M
Static head — meaning and significance	S*	A	J	M	M
Water storage facilities — types and purpose	S	A	J	J	M
Valve types and uses	N/A	A	J	M	M
Meters	S	A	J	J	M
Hydrants	S	A	J	J	M
Leak detection and repair	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Corrosion — causes, effects, control	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Flushing and cleaning	N/A	A	J	J	M
Cross-connection and backflow devices use and maintenance	N/A	A	A	J	M
Water meter testing, maintenance and repair	N/A	A	A	J	M
Maintenance of pumps and electric motors	S	A	J	J	M

<b>Safety</b>	<b>D1</b>	<b>D2</b>	<b>D3</b>	<b>D4</b>	<b>D5</b>
General	S	J	J	M	M
Basic first aid	N/A	A	J	M	M
Traffic control	N/A	A	J	J	M
Trenching and shoring	S	A	J	J	M
Confined spaces	S	A	J	J	M
Respiratory protection	N/A	A	J	J	M
OSHA compliance	S	N/A	A	J	M

<b>Pumps and Motor</b>	<b>D1</b>	<b>D2</b>	<b>D3</b>	<b>D4</b>	<b>D5</b>
Types of pumps	S	A	A	J	M
Operational principles	N/A	A	J	J	M
Mechanical components of centrifugal and positive displacement pumps	N/A	A	J	J	M
Static, dynamic, suction and discharge head	N/A	A	J	M	M
Motors/drives	N/A	A	J	M	M
Chemical feeders	N/A	A	J	M	M
Causes of water hammer and cavitation	S	A	J	M	M
Routine preventative maintenance (packing, bearings, alignment, priming)	S	A	J	M	M

## Expected Range of Knowledge (continued)

Sources of Supply	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Chemical, physical & bacteriological characteristics; variability	S	A	J	M	M
Groundwater and surface water supplies	S	A	J	M	M
Hydrologic cycle	S	A	J	M	M
Well location, construction and yield	S	A	J	M	M
Sanitary surveys	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Watershed management	N/A	N/A	A	J	M

Disinfection	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Purpose of disinfection	S	J	M	M	M
Disinfectant types	N/A	A	J	J	M
Characteristics of chlorine & chlorine compounds (gas/liquid)	S	A	J	M	M
Chlorine demand — significance & relationship to dose	S	A	J	J	M
Residual measurement methods & reagents used	S	A	J	J	M
Chlorine storage, feeding and measurements	S	A	J	J	M
Chlorine containers	N/A	A	J	J	M
Detection of leaks	N/A	A	J	J	M
Hazards and safety requirements	S	A	J	M	M
Disinfection by-products; THMs	N/A	A	J	J	M
Breakpoint chlorination — meaning, significance, determination	N/A	A	J	M	M
Effects of pH, turbidity, and temperature on chlorination	S	A	J	M	M
Free vs. combined chlorine	N/A	A	J	M	M
Standard disinfection methods for new/repared mains and storage facilities	S	A	J	M	M

Water Quality	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Elements, compounds, hardness, pH	N/A	A	J	J	M
Significance of organics & inorganics	N/A	A	J	J	M
Sampling requirements, techniques	S	A	J	M	M
Coliform group — occurrence, significance	S	A	J	M	M
Heterotrophic bacteria	N/A	A	J	J	M
Potential waterborne diseases	S	A	J	M	M
Cross-connection significance & prevention	S	A	J	J	M
Disinfection by-products, THMs	N/A	A	J	J	M

## Expected Range of Knowledge (continued)

Electricity (water related)	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Units (amps, ohms, watts, volts)	S	A	A	J	J
Current flow; AC/DC	N/A	A	A	J	M
Circuits	N/A	A	A	J	J
Lock-out/tag-out	S	A	J	M	M
Horsepower	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Electrical controls	N/A	A	A	J	M
Generators	N/A	A	J	J	M
Transformers	N/A	A	J	J	M
SCADA systems	N/A	A	J	J	M

Utility Management	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
Planning	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Personnel	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Maintenance management	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Information management	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Public relations	S	N/A	A	J	M
Emergency response	S	N/A	A	J	M
Finance	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Water rates	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Safety administration	N/A	N/A	A	J	M
Security	S	N/A	A	J	M



# Recommended Study Materials

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## D1

Water Distribution Operator Training Handbook; 1999, American Water Works Association (AWWA). The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

Small Water System Operation and Maintenance; California State University, Sacramento (Office of Water Programs, Ken Kerri, Director), CSUS, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819-6025; Phone: (916) 278-6142.

Water Distribution System Operation and Maintenance; California State University, Sacramento (Office of Water Programs, Ken Kerri, Director), CSUS, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819-6025; Phone: (916) 278-6142.

Basic Science Concepts and Applications; (Principles and Practices of Water Supply Operations), 1996, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

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## D2

Water Distribution Operator Training Handbook; 1999, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

Water Distribution System Operation and Maintenance; California State University, Sacramento (Office of Water Programs, Ken Kerri, Director), CSUS, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819-6025; Phone: (916) 278-6142.

Basic Science Concepts and Applications; (Principles and Practices of Water Supply Operations), 1996, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

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## D3

Water Transmission and Distribution; (Principles and Practices of Water Supply Operations), 1996, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200.

Water Distribution Operator Training Handbook; 1999, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200.

Water Sources; (Principles and Practices of Water Supply Operations), 1996, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200.

Water Quality; (Principles and Practices of Water Supply Operations), 1996, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200.

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## D4

Water Utility Management Practices (M5); 1980, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200.

Safety Practices for Water Utilities (M3); 1990, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

Emergency Planning for Water Utilities (M19); 2001, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

State and Federal laws and regulations related to the water industry, i.e. Labor (FLSA), Environment and Fiscal Controls.

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## D5

Principles of Water Rates, Fees and Charges (M1); 1991, AWWA. The Water College Bookstore, 10574 Acacia Street, Suite D6, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. Phone: (909) 481-7200

State and Federal laws and regulations related to the water industry, i.e. Labor (FLSA), Environment and Fiscal Controls.

# Taking the Examination

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## What do I need to bring with me to the examination?

- Exam Admittance Card
- Valid government issued photo ID:  
(Picture ID is mandatory for admittance into the exam. Acceptable forms of ID are driver's license, DMV non-driver ID, current U.S. passport, or military ID)
- Your social security number:  
(It is not necessary to bring the card, but have the number memorized)
- Simple electronic calculator:  
(No programmable calculators or calculators with large displays and/or tape print-out are allowed)
- No. 2 pencils with erasers:  
(Bring a small supply, 2-5)

## Exam Helpful Hints

The certification exams are composed of multiple choice questions, some requiring math calculations. Try to arrive at a reasonable conclusion without first looking at the answers.

- **Be Prepared:**

The first step in passing a certification exam is to prepare in advance by studying the information that will be covered in the test. (The Expected Range of Knowledge will tell you what will be covered on each exam.)

When preparing for the test, remember that exams are changed frequently. Do not try to learn the answers to specific problems that you may have heard about. Concentrate on learning how to work various types of problems. By doing this you will be prepared to handle any questions on the test, not just certain questions you have memorized.

Preparing for the exam is an ongoing effort; do not try to "cram" all the information you'll need to know into a few days of study time. Cramming usually doesn't help much, and it can lead to confusion and frustration.

- **Exam Day:**

Leave in plenty of time and have the driving directions or a map handy. Make sure you have the necessary materials (listed above) needed for the exam. You will need to be at the testing site at least one hour before the start time to ensure that you check-in to the exam on time. The test starts promptly at the time indicated on your admittance card. **Once the proctor begins the instructions, no one will be admitted.** Also, remember to put fresh batteries in your calculator. No calculators will be available to rent or borrow.

Before starting the test, and after given permission by the proctor, skim through the questions to get a general idea of the kinds of questions that are on the test. By seeing the types of questions and math problems you must answer at the start, you will have a better idea of how to use your time. It is a good idea to answer all easy questions first and then tackle the difficult problems that will take more time to complete.

- **Math Problems:**

Since math problems are an important and often difficult part of the exam, the following are guidelines which might prove helpful:

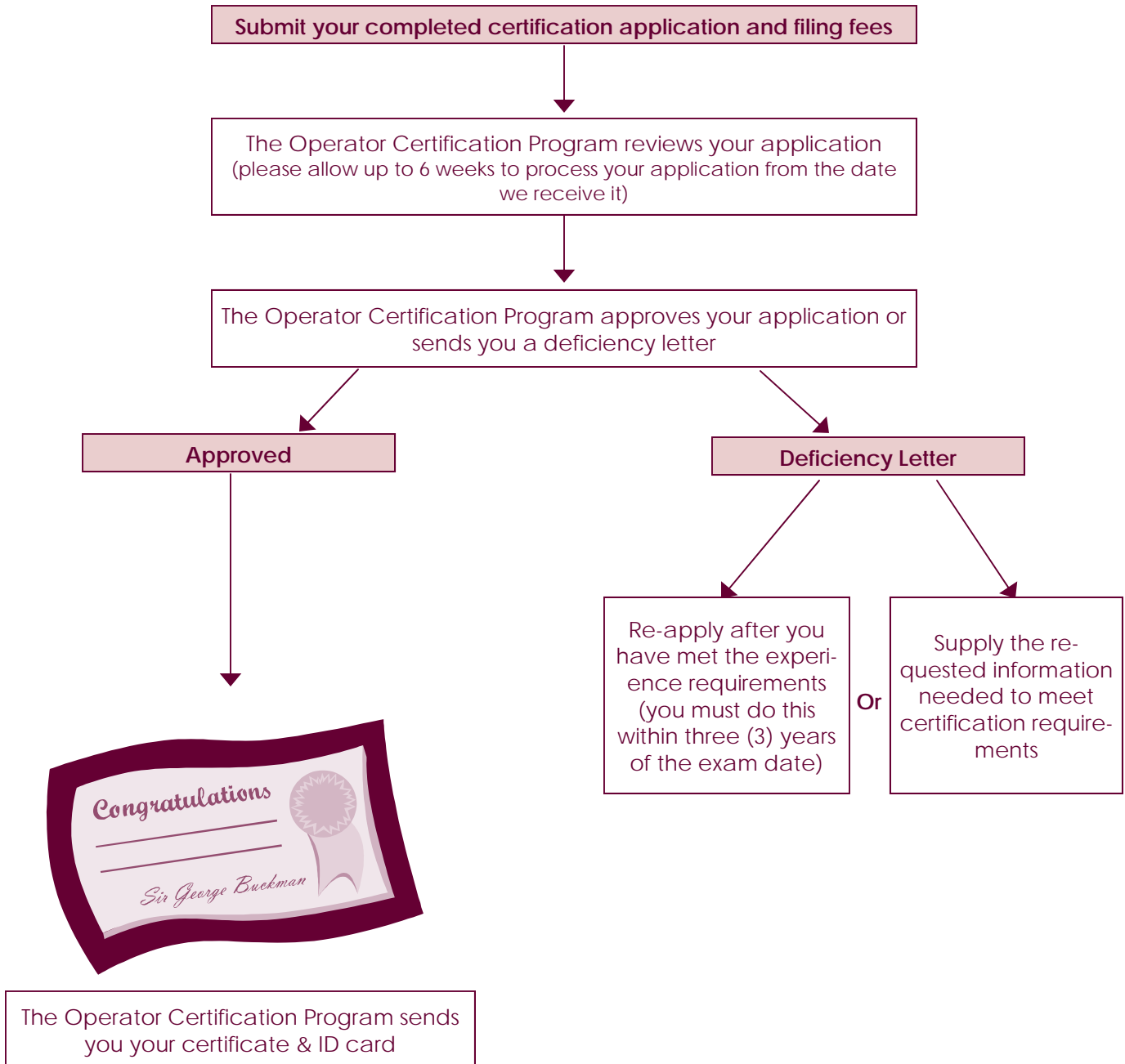
- Read each question carefully to be sure that you know what answer is required.
- If necessary, make a drawing or sketch to help you solve the problem.
- Make all necessary conversions.
- Show all your work.
- Use the appropriate units throughout the problem.
- Be sure the decimal point is in the right place.

You are given three (3) hours to take the exam. Don't try to rush thru the exam. If you finish the exam early, skim through your answer or go back to any questions that you may have had a hard time working on. You may find that looking back on your previous answers may improve your score. Remember, you need a total score of 70% or higher to pass the exam.

# Distribution Operator Certification Procedure

After successfully passing an exam, you will receive a notice to apply for your certification. Grade 1 & 2, just complete the notice and mail it back with the proper fees. Grades 3—5 will be sent an application and further instruction on the requirements to obtain certification.

Applications can be submitted up to three (3) years after the date of the exam you passed. This allows you



# Distribution Operator Certification

Once you receive notice that you have successfully pass the water distribution exam, you may apply for certification. **Please note, the certification application is not available online, we will send it to you upon passing your examination.** For grades 1 & 2, simply fill out the bottom portion of the notice and return it with the appropriate fee in order to obtain your certificate. **Remember, you are not considered a certified operator until you receive your certificate, after applying and submitting the proper information.** For grades 3—5, a second application must be submitted, along with the certification fee and pre-requisite documentation verifying experience requirements have been fulfilled.

Operators that currently hold a valid California water treatment certificate only need to pay the discounted dual certification fee. Below is a chart listing the fees for each certification grade level.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Certification Fee</u>	<u>Dual Certification Fee</u>
D1	\$70	\$55
D2	\$80	\$60
D3	\$120	\$90
D4	\$140	\$105
D5	\$140	\$105



## Certification Application Content

Before submitting your application for certification, please make sure you have completely filled it out. **50% of the applications are initially sent back because of missing information.** Please refer to the checklist below to review your application for completeness.

## Certification Application Checklist

- All personal information must be filled out.
- Certification fee (see chart above; in form of money order or check only)
- For each timeframe of employment claimed, you must state the number of hours per week spent performing water distribution duties and provide a copy of the job description issued by the water utility.
- For each timeframe of employment claimed, you must provide an organizational chart originating from the water utility which includes your name and position title along with your supervisor's name and position title.
- The original signature of your current (or past) supervisor verifying any experience claimed.
- Your signature (original signature)

You are allowed to substitute some experience with education. You must include a photocopy of an official transcript showing attainment of certificate of degree. Please refer to the chart on the next page for allowable experience substitution.

If your degree is from another country (and the transcript is not in English) you must submit a translated copy of your transcript for your application to be evaluated. This translation must be done by an organization authorized to make such an assessment.

# Qualifying for Certification

## Minimum Experience Qualifications for Certification

Before submitting an application for certification, please make sure all experience requirements are completed as the **filing fees are non-refundable**. Applications for certification that do not meet the requirements may re-apply within 12 months of the original submittal date without payment of an additional certification fee. **You have three (3) years from the date of exam you passed to apply and qualify for certification.**

Minimum Qualifications for Certification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful completion of the <b>Grade D1</b> operator examination within the three years prior to submitting the application for certification.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful completion of the <b>Grade D2</b> operator examination within the three years prior to submitting the application for certification.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful completion of the <b>Grade D3</b> operator examination within the three years prior to submitting the application for certification, <b>AND</b>:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. At least <b>one year</b> of operator experience working as a certified D2 operator for a D2 system or higher (no substitutions) <b>AND</b>;</li><li>2. At least <b>one additional year</b> of operator experience working as a distribution operator (may be substituted with (1) or (2) below)</li></ol></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful completion of the <b>Grade D4</b> operator examination within the three years prior to submitting the application for certification, <b>AND</b>:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. At least <b>one year</b> of operator experience working as a certified D3 operator for a D3 system or higher (no substitutions) <b>AND</b>;</li><li>2. At least <b>three additional years</b> of operator experience working as a distribution operator, (may be partially substituted with (1) below)</li></ol></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful completion of the <b>Grade D5</b> operator examination within the three years prior to submitting the application for certification, <b>AND</b>:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. At least <b>two years</b> of operator experience working as a certified D4 operator for a D4 or D5 system (no substitutions) <b>AND</b>;</li><li>2. At least <b>three additional years</b> of operator experience working as a distribution operator, (may be partially substituted with (1) below)</li></ol></li></ul>

## Experience Substitutions for Certification, as referenced above:

1. A degree earned at an accredited academic institution may be substituted as follows:
  - **Associate Degree or Certificate** in water or wastewater technology or distribution that includes at least 15 units of physical, chemical, or biological science may be used to fulfill **1 year** of operator experience.
  - **Bachelor Degree** in engineering or in physical, chemical, or biological science may be used to fulfill **1.5 years** of operator experience.
  - **Masters Degree** in engineering or in physical, chemical, or biological science may be used to fulfill **2 years** of operator experience.
2. A certified operator may substitute on a day-for-day basis, one additional year of operator experience working as a distribution operator with experience gained while working with lead responsibility for water quality or quantity related projects or research.

# Renewals & CEU's (Continuing Education Units)

## Certificate Renewal and Continuing Education Requirements

Once you become a certified operator you will be required to pay a renewal fee and complete continuing education contact hours every three years. All certified operators must complete the continuing education contact hours within their renewal period in order to renew their certification. Certificate renewal is due 120 days (four months) prior to the certificate expiration date, therefore, it is necessary to complete the continuing education contact hours at least four months prior to the expiration of the certificate in order to avoid late fees.

Continuing education that was obtained **prior** to the issue of the certificate being renewed does not count toward renewal of the current certificate. The number of required contact hours is based upon the grade of certificate held. Continuing education contact hours for certificate renewals are as follows:

**D1 = 12 Contact Hours**

**D2 = 16 Contact Hours**

**D3 = 24 Contact Hours**

**D4 = 36 Contact Hours**

**D5 = 36 Contact Hours**

Operators possessing both water distribution and water treatment certificates may apply continuing education credits to both certificates providing credits are earned within both renewal periods.

### How will I know whether or not the training I take will be acceptable as continuing education?

The regulation requires that the course, class or seminar present "information related to the operation of a treatment facility and/or distribution system." Continuing education hours can also be earned by attending industry meetings and conferences, in-house training, and by taking college courses, correspondence courses, internet classes, etc.

**The course, class, seminar or presentation must be at least one hour long and cannot be added together to equal one hour of contact time.**

A list of continuing education providers is available if you are unsure of where to get your contact hours. The list is not comprehensive, but representative of providers that have been reviewed. **Please contact the education provider directly for information about class time, cost, location and contact hours awarded.** See the list of continuing education providers below or visit our website for updated information on providers.

## Continuing Education Providers

Online Courses		
Training Provider	Contact Information	Contact Hours Offered
360Water.com	(866) 259-7480 <a href="http://www.360water.com">www.360water.com</a>	1—10
AWWA	American Water Works Association Online Institute (800) 926-7337 <a href="http://www.awwa.org/learnonline">www.awwa.org/learnonline</a>	Varies
CEUPlan	<a href="http://www.ceuplan.com">www.ceuplan.com</a>	1—4
RedVector.com	(866) 546-1212 <a href="http://www.redvector.com">www.redvector.com</a>	1—6
TargetSafety	(877) 944-6372 <a href="http://www.targetsafety.com">www.targetsafety.com</a>	1

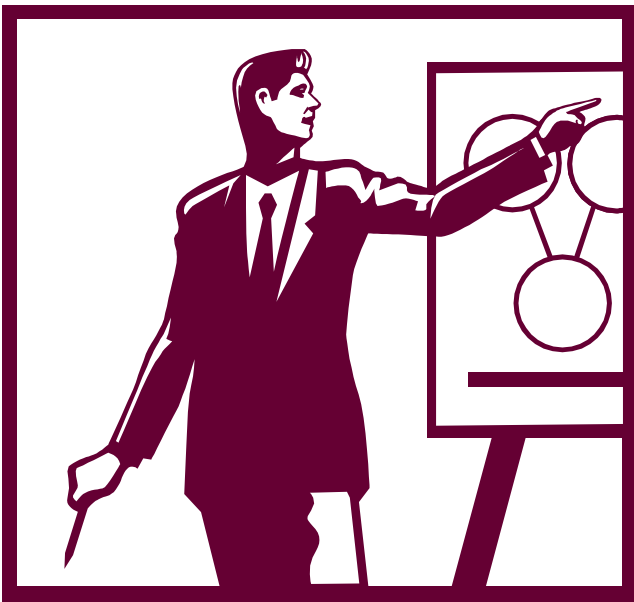
# Renewals & CEU's (Continuing Education Units) (Continued)

Computer-based Training		
Training Provider	Contact Information	Contact Hours Offered
David H. Paul Training	David H. Paul Training P.O. Box 2590 Farmington, NM 87499 (877) 711-4347 <a href="http://www.dhptraining.com">www.dhptraining.com</a>	Varies
Micar, Inc.	Micar, Inc. P.O. Box 5897 Aloha, OR 97006-5897 (800) 318-4739 <a href="http://www.h2o-ed.com">www.h2o-ed.com</a>	6
Montana Water Center and the National Drinking Water Clearinghouse	<a href="http://water.montana.edu/training/gwb/orderCD.htm">http://water.montana.edu/training/gwb/orderCD.htm</a>  Order from: <a href="http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/ndwc/ndwc_resources.htm">www.nesc.wvu.edu/ndwc/ndwc_resources.htm</a> "Operator Basics Training" Series, Click on ndwc_orders@mail.nesc.wvu.edu to order product #DWCDTR18 thru e-mail or call (800) 624-8301 and ask for item #DWCDTR18	Varies Print out and return the computer log of hours for CE Credit
Technical Learning College	Technical Learning College P.O. Box 420 Payson, AZ 85547-0420 (928) 468-0665 info@tlch2o.com <a href="http://www.tlch2o.com">www.tlch2o.com</a>	10—30

Seminars/Presentations		
Training Provider	Contact Information	Contact Hours Offered
CA-NV-AWWA	The California-Nevada Section of the American Water Works Association (909) 481-4688 <a href="http://www.ca-nv-awwa.org">www.ca-nv-awwa.org</a>	Varies
CRWA	California Rural Water Association (916) 553-4900 <a href="http://www.calruralwater.org">www.calruralwater.org</a>	Varies
RCAC	California Community Assistance Corporation (916) 447-9832 x 121 <a href="http://www.rcac.org">www.rcac.org</a>	Varies
Harry Brown Training (CSUS Approved Instructor)	Harry Brown Training P.O. Box 4959 San Luis Obispo, CA 93403 hbrown5477@aol.com (805) 545-7971	21—40

# Renewals & CEU's (Continuing Education Units) (Continued)

Seminars/Presentations		
Training Provider	Contact Information	Contact Hours Offered
OCT, Inc.	Provides various training courses throughout the state of California (888) 248-2552 <a href="http://www.octinc.com">www.octinc.com</a>	Varies
Golden State Water Company	Golden State Water Company 630 E. Foothill Boulevard San Dimas, CA 91773 (888) 933-8648 <a href="http://www.eduniv.com">www.eduniv.com</a>	Varies



**Important:**  
Continuing Education Hours are due by the expiration date of your certificate

Correspondence Course /Video / Online Courses		
Training Provider	Contact Information	Contact Hours Offered
CSUS	CSUS—California State University, Sacramento Office of Water Programs (916) 278-6142 <a href="http://www.owp.csus.edu">www.owp.csus.edu</a>	15—90

# Renewal Fees & CEU Information

## Does safety training count towards the continuing education requirement?

Operators may fulfill up to 25% of the required contact hours with safety training. Examples of acceptable safety topics are: confined spaces, slip and fall prevention, chemical safety, electrical safety, etc.

## How do I prove that I've completed the required number of continuing education contact hours?

You should keep a copy of the certificate of completion, course syllabus or outline, and maintain a record of the instructor's name, the location of the course, the number of contact hours, and the date it was completed. If the instructor does not provide a certificate of completion or course syllabus or outline, you should keep notes on what the instructor covered during the course. With your renewal application, you will be required to submit the name of the instructor, the location of the course, the number of contact hours, the date class was obtained, and the telephone number of the instructor.

## What happens if I don't complete the continuing education hours?

A certificate will not be renewed if the continuing education requirements are not met. The certificate may be reinstated within six months of the expiration date if all continuing education requirements are met, if applicable penalties are paid and the renewal application is complete.

If the CE hours are not completed within six months after the expiration date, the certificate will be revoked. Once a certificate is revoked, the only way to become re-certified is to take and pass the exam again.

In accordance with the California Health & Safety Code Section 106885, water treatment and distribution operators cannot work if certification has been suspended or revoked.

Please Note:  
Water treatment and water distribution certificates are considered separate certificate. Fees must be paid for each separate certificate.

## Renewal Fees

In addition to fulfilling the continuing education requirements, you must pay a renewal fee to remain certified. Renewal fees are due every three years, four to six months prior to the expiration date of the certificate.

The current renewal fees are as follows:

D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
\$70	\$80	\$120	\$140	\$140

If you are also a state-certified water treatment operator, you qualify for a discount. The dual certificate renewal fees are as follows:

D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
\$55	\$60	\$90	\$105	\$105

A penalty fee of \$50.00 will be due for renewals that are submitted after the renewal due date, but at least 45 days prior to the expiration date. A penalty fee of \$100.00 will be due for renewals submitted less than 45 days prior to the expiration date but within one year after the expiration date.

## Why do I have to pay my fees 4 months in advance?

Renewals must be submitted no less than 120 days prior to expiration because of the time necessary to complete the due process associated with revocation as a result of failure to pay renewal fees.

## How will I know when it's time to renew my certificate?

One (1) renewal notice will be sent to the certificate holder two (2) and 1/2 months prior to the due date when its time to renew the certificate. It is the certificate holder's responsibility to keep track of the certificate's renewal date and submit the renewal card, required continuing education hours and the renewal fee during the appropriate time frame. It is also the responsibility of the certificate holder to notify the Operator Certification Program in writing (mailed or faxed) within 60 days of any change in address or name. Please include your operator number(s), signature and date.

# Other Information

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## What happens if I don't pay my certificate renewal fee?

If the certificate renewal is not paid before the date of expiration your certificate will be suspended for **six months**. You have **six months** from the date of suspension to pay your renewal fees. In order to lift the suspension, the renewal fee and the \$100.00 penalty must be submitted.

Once the **six month** grace period for your renewal payment to be received by this office has passed, your certificate is revoked. Once a certificate is revoked, the only way to become re-certified is to take and pass the exam again.

Remember, water treatment and water distribution operators cannot work if their certification has been suspended or revoked.

## If I lose my original certificate can I get a new one?

Yes. You must send a written request that includes your operator number, grade, name, address, reason for request, and a \$25 check or money order made out to the CDPH-OCP. Send the request and fee to:

**California Department of Public Health  
Operator Certification Program, MS#7417  
P.O. Box 997377  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377**

## I lost my operator wallet ID card. Can I get another one?

Yes, just give us a call at (916) 449-5611 and we will mail you another wallet ID card with your operator number and expiration date at no cost.

## What if I have a new mailing address or have recently moved?

We need to receive your new or corrected address information from you in writing. You can either fax or mail the request to us. You must include your name, operator number, old address, new address, and your signature. You will receive confirmation through the mail that we have received and updated your information. You do not need a special form.

## I work for a small water utility and can't afford the expense of becoming a certified operator. Is there financial aid available?

Yes, financial aid is available. The Expense Reimbursement Grant (ERG) Program is being established from a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency. The ERG Program's purpose is to enable all small water system (SWS) operators to become certified at the proper level for duties they perform. It will:

Provide education, training, certification and certification renewal opportunities for SWS operators.

Provide those opportunities at little or no cost to SWS operators.

Operate on a reimbursement basis.

The ERG Program will be administered through a contract with Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS). CPS will conduct necessary administrative functions to assure that SWS operators are reimbursed for eligible specialized training courses, SWS operator high school equivalency course, operator certification examinations, operator certification, continuing education and certification renewal costs. For more information, call **CPS at 1-800-822-4277**.

## E-mail Contacts

<b>Questions about the examination &amp; certification?</b>	.....	Karen Hinrichs at Karen.Hinrichs@cdph.ca.gov
<b>Questions about continuing education renewals?</b>	.....	Steve Bogart at Steve.Bogart@cdph.ca.gov
<b>Questions about certificate renewal fees?</b>	.....	Amy Chiang at Amy.Chiang@cdph.ca.gov