

California Drinking Water Operator Certification Program

Transition Task Force

November 13, 2013

California Drinking Water Operator Certification

Program started in 1971 with 13,000 certified water treatment operators at five grade levels.

In 1998, the US EPA released Guidelines for the Certification and Recertification of Operators of Community and Nontransient Noncommunity Public Water Systems. Based on these guidelines, state regulations governing the certification of potable water treatment operators were revised to include distribution operators at five grade levels, effective January 2001.

H&S Code Sections: 106875 – 106910

CCR Sections: 63750 - 63850

Purpose of Operator Certification

- ▶ To ensure that water treatment and distribution operators are properly qualified
- ▶ Ensure that operators understand:
 - Complex regulatory requirements
 - The operators' role in protecting public health
 - When notification of customers problems is required
 - The importance of water quality monitoring

Roles within CDPH

- ▶ CDPH Headquarters
 - Administer the program
 - Conducts enforcement as needed
- ▶ CDPH District Offices and Local Primacy Agencies
 - Ensure facilities are properly operated
 - Cooperative approach, enforcement as needed
 - Evaluate water treatment systems and distribution facilities

Operator Certification Program

- ▶ There are 33,500 certified water treatment and distribution operators in California
- ▶ Approximately 1 / 3 of operators hold both water treatment and distribution certificates
- ▶ Each year
 - 7,000 operators apply for exams
 - 4,700 operators apply for certification
 - 10,000 certificates are renewed

Certification Program Staff

- ▶ Eight staff members to implement the certification program
 - 1 Staff Services Manager I
 - 2 Analysts
 - 2 Management Services Technicians
 - 1 Office Technician (T)
 - 1 Program Technician II
 - 1 Sr. Environmental Scientist

Duties of the Certification Program Staff

- Compile and administer exams
- Evaluate exam and certification applications
- Evaluate educational courses
- Evaluate renewal applications
- Provide guidance to operators
- Validate exam questions

Certification Requirements

- All treatment plant operators who physically treat drinking water must be certified
- Distribution operators who make decisions affecting the quality or quantity of drinking water must be certified

- ▶ Five levels of drinking water treatment certification, T1 – T5 and five levels of water distribution certification, D1 – D5
- ▶ Certificates are valid for three years
- ▶ Renewal requires continuing education hours
- ▶ Deposit between 18,000 – 20,000 checks each year

Fees

	Exam	Re-Exam	Certification or Renewal	Certification or Renewal for Operators holding both T & D certificates
D1 or T1	\$50	\$30	\$70	\$55
D2 or T2	\$65	\$45	\$80	\$60
D3 or T3	\$100	\$70	\$120	\$90
D4 or T4	\$130	\$95	\$140	\$105
D4 or T5	\$155	\$120	\$140	\$105