



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3745-7-01 Professional operator certification definitions.

Effective: July 3, 2025

Except as otherwise noted, the definitions in rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code apply to this chapter.

(A)

(1) "Active instruction" means the time when a professional operator is receiving instruction. This does not include break time, introductions or question and answer sessions in excess of fifteen minutes. A professional operator shall not claim hours on a renewal application other than those received in active instruction.

(2) "Agency" means the Ohio EPA.

(3) "Automated" means the ability to monitor and control water and wastewater treatment processes and the status of treatment components by computer or electronic means.

(4) "Available" means able to be contacted as needed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to make operational decisions in a timely manner.

(5) "Average daily flow" for the purpose of this chapter means the average of the sixty highest daily flows during any three hundred sixty-five day period.

(B) [Reserved.]

(C)

(1) "Certified professional operator" or "professional operator" means an individual with valid certification issued pursuant to this chapter.



(2) "Certified professional operator of record" or "professional operator of record" means the on-site certified professional operator or one of the on-site certified professional operators responsible for the technical operation of one or more of the following:

(a) A public water system.

(b) A water treatment plant, if a public water system has more than one water treatment plant.

(c) A distribution system.

(d) A sewerage system.

(e) A treatment works.

(f) A wastewater treatment facility, if a treatment works has more than one wastewater treatment facility.

(3) "Complete application" means an application submitted with all required information on the form completed and all appropriate fees, transcripts and documentation attached. Applications missing any of the listed items are not considered complete.

(4) "Contact hours" means time spent by a certified professional operator in approved formal or informal training.

(5) "Continuous monitoring" means the monitoring and recording of parameters accomplished by either meters or manual samples at least every fifteen minutes.

(6) "Contract operations company" means a person which has been approved by the director to employ or subcontract with certified professional operators and contracts with public water systems or wastewater treatment facilities to provide the professional operator services required by this chapter.

(7) "Contracted professional operator" means an individual who either works for a contract



operations company or who individually contracts with public water systems or wastewater treatment facilities to provide the professional operator services required by this chapter.

(8) "Core person ID" means the unique identifying number assigned to a person by the agency. For certified professional operators, this number is the middle digits of their certification number.

(9) "Council" means the professional operator certification advisory council as established in rule 3745-7-10 of the Administrative Code.

(D) "Director" means the director of the Ohio EPA or the director's duly authorized representative.

(E) "Expired certificate" means a certificate which has not been renewed by December thirty-first of the renewal year. An expired certificate may be renewed within six months of the expiration date in accordance with rule 3745-7-15 of the Administrative Code.

(F)

(1) "Facility specific certificate" means a certificate associated with a treatment facility within a public water system or wastewater treatment facility.

(2) "Field" means the field of practice for which a professional operator is certified. Water supply, water distribution, water reclamation, and wastewater collection are each fields of certification.

(G) "Green leaf training provider" means a training provider that is approved by the director to issue trainer-specific contact hour course approval numbers.

(H) [Reserved.]

(I) "Invalid certificate" means a certificate which expired and was not renewed within six months of the expiration date.

(J) [Reserved.]



(K) [Reserved.]

(L) [Reserved.]

(M) "Management experience" means experience obtained while supervising, directing, or controlling the affairs associated with a public water system or treatment works. Such experience includes, but is not limited to, being directly responsible for plant operations, supervising operating staff, and being responsible for personnel issues. Experience gained in the position of shift supervisor at a class III or IV facility shall qualify as management experience.

(N) "NPDES" means national pollutant discharge elimination system.

(O)

(1) "One year" means two thousand eighty hours when referring to operating experience. This is equal to forty hours per week for fifty-two weeks. When referring to educational experience one year constitutes at least thirty semester hours of applicable course work.

(a) "Nine months" means fifteen hundred sixty hours when referring to operating experience.

(b) "Six months" means one thousand forty hours when referring to operating experience.

(2) "Operating experience" means time performing the day-to-day activities necessary to ensure the proper performance and operation of the equipment or processes of a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage system. Experience for the water supply or water distribution examination may only be obtained at a public water system as defined in this rule.

(a) Types of experience related to a public water system, a treatment works, a water distribution system, or a sewerage system that qualify as operating experience include the following:

(i) Experience while in the military with providing potable water or wastewater treatment.

(ii) On-site investigations and inspections of operations that require coordination of work with



active treatment processes, collection, or distribution systems.

(iii) Hands-on operation and maintenance of a public water system, a treatment works, a water distribution system or a sewerage system.

(iv) Experience in ensuring compliance with primary and secondary maximum contaminant levels, action levels and permit limits through the evaluation of facility process control parameters.

(v) Industrial wastewater treatment.

(b) For applicants whose actual job responsibilities solely consist of one or more of the following types of experience, in conjunction with the applicant's job description, the experience qualifies as operating experience but may count for no more than twenty-five per cent of the operating experience requirement of each field. A combination of duties of the following would count for no more than twenty-five per cent of the operating experience requirement of each field.

(i) Sludge handling or hauling, if part of a treatment works.

(ii) On-site supervisory control and data acquisition ("SCADA") systems monitoring.

(iii) Laboratory analyses if the analyses are conducted in the laboratory of the owner of a public water system, treatment works or sewerage system.

(iv) Pretreatment, if part of a treatment works or sewerage system.

(v) Collection system experience when applying for a wastewater treatment examination or certificate.

(vi) Distribution experience when applying for a water supply examination or certificate.

(vii) Construction inspection and engineering design that require coordination of the inspection or design with the operation of the active treatment process, sewerage or distribution systems.



(viii) Source water protection and watershed management.

(c) The following types of experience related to a public water system, a treatment works, a water distribution system, or a sewerage system do not qualify as operating experience:

(i) Clerical duties.

(ii) Commercial laboratory work.

(iii) Sludge handling and hauling if not part of a treatment works.

(iv) Academic research.

(v) Meter reading only.

(vi) Experience as a laborer, if only responsible for mowing grass, painting tanks, etc.

(vii) Investigations and inspections of operations that do not require coordination of work with active treatment processes, collection, or distribution systems.

(viii) Construction inspections and engineering design that do not require coordination of work with active treatment processes, collection, or distribution systems.

(ix) Off-site monitoring of SCADA.

(x) Septage hauling.

(xi) Septic tank maintenance or operation.

(P)

(1) "Person" means any individual; corporation; company; association; partnership; the state; or any political subdivision, agency, institution, or instrumentality thereof; any interstate body created by



compact; or the federal government or any department, agency, or instrumentality thereof.

(2) "Population," for the purpose of this chapter only, means the following:

(a) For community public water systems, population is determined in accordance with paragraph (P)(11)(a) of rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code and the addition of the average of the highest sixty days for any non-community population determined using the methods identified in paragraph (P)(11)(b) of rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code. In the event a certificate of occupancy or seating capacity is used in accordance with paragraph (P)(11)(b) of rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code, an average does not need to be calculated.

(b) For noncommunity public water systems, population is the average of the highest sixty days for any non-community population determined using the methods identified in paragraph (P)(11)(b) of rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code. In the event a certificate of occupancy or seating capacity is used in accordance with paragraph (P)(11)(b) of rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code, an average does not need to be calculated.

(3) "Precipitative softening" means a series of processes to remove hardness using lime or any other chemicals to cause chemical precipitation prior to filtration.

(4) "Private sewer" means a sewer or sewerage system that is not public.

(5) "Public sewer" means a sewer or sewerage system that is owned by a municipality, county, or state entity or any public body created under state law that has authority over sewerage.

(6) "Public water system" is defined in rule 3745-81-01 of the Administrative Code.

(Q) [Reserved.]

(R) [Reserved.]

(S)



(1) "Satellite collection system" means any public sewerage system that conveys wastewater to any sewerage system or treatment works owned by a separate entity.

(2) "Sewage sludge facility" is as defined in rule 3745-40-01 of the Administrative Code.

(3) "Sewerage system" is as defined in section 6111.01 of the Revised Code.

(T)

(1) "Technical operation" means the act of making process control or system integrity decisions which directly impact the quality or quantity of water or effluent.

(2) "Treatment works" is as defined in section 6111.01 of the Revised Code.

(U) [Reserved.]

(V)

(1) "Valid certificate" means a certificate that is not expired, suspended, revoked or invalid.

(2) "Visit" means a period of time when a person is on-site at a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage system that is sufficient to perform routine sampling (e.g. flow, chlorine residual, and pH measurements), maintenance, or observation of a public water system, sewerage systems, or treatment works in order to ensure compliance and proper operation.

(W)

(1) "Wastewater" means water containing sewage, industrial waste, or other wastes.

(2) "Wastewater collection system" shall mean "sewerage system" as defined in section 6111.01 of the Revised Code.

(3) "Wastewater treatment facility" is as defined in rule 3745-33-01 of the Administrative Code. A



treatment works may be comprised of more than one wastewater treatment facility.

(4) "Water treatment plant" means any type of equipment, device, treatment unit, or structure that in some way alters the physical, chemical, or microbiological quality of the water, excluding booster chlorination facilities within the distribution system of a public water system that has a classified water treatment plant. A public water system may be comprised of more than one water treatment plant.

(5) "Week" for the purposes of the rules in this chapter means a seven-day period beginning on Sunday and ending on the following Saturday.