



How to Become a Class III Certified Professional 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 professional Class III Water Supply or Wastewater Treatment operator in the State of Ohio, you must apply for and pass the Class III examination and document the appropriate level of hands-on operational experience.

To apply for the exam, you must have a high school diploma or the equivalent, and 60 months of operating experience in the field for which you are applying. 12 months, or 2,080 hours of the 60 months, needs to be documented while holding a valid Class II certificate in the same field. If you do not have the operating experience required to become certified at the Class III level, you may not sit for the exam. **Operator-in-Training status is not available for Class III certification.** This applies to Ohio EPA traditional exams and Third Party exams through an Ohio EPA Approved Examination Provider. In both cases, you must have the required experience time prior to sitting for the exam. Education experience credits are offered as follows:

High School Graduate or GED (REQUIRED)	60
13*	48
14 or Associates Degree*	36
15 or more with no degree*	24
Two-year technical degree in Water or Wastewater Treatment or a BS or BA from an accredited four-year college*	24

*Post High School education shall be obtained from an accredited institution while pursuing a degree in a physical or natural science or chemical, civil or environmental engineering and are subject to review by the Operator Certification staff and/or the Operator Certification Advisory Council. Even with an education experience credit, you must obtain 12 months of operating experience, in the field for which you are applying, while holding a valid Class II Certificate.

Application and Fees

Ohio EPA holds Class III 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 90 days prior to the date of the exam. The Class III examination fee is \$130 and should be submitted with the application.

The State of Ohio has approved the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) as an Approved Examination Provider which are available more frequently, and in more locations, than Ohio EPA’s traditional paper testing. Operators may now choose to take an ABC examination and then seek State of Ohio certification for Class III certification. Applications for the traditional paper and pencil testing are available on the eBusiness Center, available through the OHID portal. Instructions on how to take the paper and pencil testing are available **here**. To find out more about the ABC certification program, please visit **ABC’s 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.

More Information

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