

**3745-7-15 Expiration and renewal of operator certification.**

- (A) All operator certificates shall expire on December thirty-first of the second year after the year in which the certification is issued or renewed. The certificate will expire unless renewed in accordance with this rule before the expiration date.

Valid operator certificates in effect prior to May 23, 1986 expired on December 31, 1987. Operator certificates in effect after May 23, 1986 shall expire each December thirty-first of the second year after the year in which the certificate was issued or renewed, unless renewed in accordance with this rule.

- (B) The director shall send a renewal notice and application form to the certified operator's latest address of record prior to the expiration date of the certificate. Failure to receive such notice shall not relieve the certified operator of the responsibility to renew the certificate.

- (C) Requirements for renewal.

- (1) In order to renew a certificate before it expires, a certified operator shall submit a complete application to the director before the expiration date of the certification. The application shall include:

- (a) A complete application for renewal, on a form provided by the director;
- (b) A nonrefundable fee as set forth in section 3745.11 of the Revised Code;
- (c) When requested by the director, any documentation necessary to prove attendance at appropriate contact hour courses; and
- (d) Any other form required by state law.

- (2) For a holder of multiple certificates within a category, the director shall only renew the certificate representing the highest classification within the system category.

- (3) To renew a certificate issued under this chapter, the certified operator shall complete the number of director-approved contact hours during each renewal cycle required by paragraph (D) this rule.

- (D) Contact hours.

- (1) The minimum number of contact hours that shall be completed by operators holding a single certificate as a:

- (a) Class A or a limited class A operator is eight hours of director-approved contact hours;
- (b) Public water system operator I, water distribution operator I, water distribution operator II, wastewater works operator I, wastewater collection system operator I, or wastewater collection system operator II is twelve hours of

director-approved contact hours;

- (c) Public water system operator II, public water system operator III, public water system operator IV, wastewater works operator II, wastewater works operator III, or wastewater works operator IV is twenty four hours of director-approved contact hours.
- (2) Operators holding multiple certificates shall have the number of contact hours required for the renewal of each certificate reduced by twenty-five per cent . The reductions shall be granted as follows:
  - (a) For persons holding a certificate as a class A or limited class A operator, not less than six hours of director-approved contact hours shall be completed for each of these certificates;
  - (b) For persons holding a certificate as public water system operator I, water distribution operator I, water distribution operator II, wastewater works operator I, wastewater collection system operator I, or wastewater collection system operator II, not less than nine hours of director-approved contact hours shall be completed for each of these certificates;
  - (c) For persons holding a certificate as public water system operator II, public water system operator III, public water system operator IV, wastewater works operator II, wastewater works operator III, or wastewater works operator IV, not less than eighteen hours of director-approved contact hours shall be completed for each of these certificates.
- (3) At least half of an operator's contact hours shall be those determined by the director to be directly related to operations and maintenance.
- (4) The minimum required number of director-approved contact hours shall be completed during the two-year period preceding the expiration date of the certificate, except as provided in paragraph (I) of this rule.
- (5) A maximum of one contact hour per renewal cycle may be earned if a certified operator provides proof of individual membership in a trade organization related to the field in which they hold a certificate.
- (6) A contact hour course may only be used once per renewal cycle for credit toward the contact hour requirements established paragraph (D) of this rule.
- (7) An operator holding multiple certificates may not use a contact hour course for credit on more than one certificate, unless that operator has attended multiple sessions of that course. However, a course's contact hours may be split among multiple certificate renewals.
- (8) Upon request, an applicant for renewal of a certificate shall submit documentation of attendance at approved contact hour training to the director with the renewal application.

(9) The holder of a certificate expiring as the result of a failure to obtain the contact hours required by this rule may apply for renewal, provided that the certificate will not be renewed until the applicant has met the contact hour requirements and submitted a late fee in accordance with division (O) of section 3745.11 of the Revised Code. These contact hour requirements shall be met within one year after the expiration date of the certificate or the certificate shall not be renewed. The operator shall not be the operator of record of a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage system until such time as a renewal certificate is issued. Contact hours accrued to meet the certificate renewal requirements pursuant to this paragraph shall not count as contact hours for the next certificate renewal.

(E) Contact hour course approval.

- (1) All training for the purpose of obtaining contact hours shall be approved by the director.
  - (a) Training providers shall submit requests for approval of training prior to the training event or within thirty days after completion of the training event. Training providers or operators may request approval of college courses, out-of-state training, or correspondence courses within thirty days of the completion of the training on a form provided by the director.
  - (b) Approval of training shall be based on:
    - (i) Identification and qualifications of the instructor, who shall have at least three years experience in the subject for which they are providing training, or equivalent experience as determined by the director.
    - (ii) Content of the training, which for courses over one hour in length, shall include an agenda which distinguishes training time from breaks.
    - (iii) Applicability and relevance of the training to the operation or management of a public water system or treatment facility, water distribution system, treatment works, or sewerage system, and
    - (iv) Verification of attendance at the training event.
  - (c) Each approval shall include an expiration date no later than three years following the date of approval.

(F) Approval of training providers.

- (1) As an alternative to the process listed in paragraph (E) of this rule, training providers may request approval as an approved contact hour training provider on a form acceptable to the director, provided they:
  - (a) Provide training that is applicable to the operation or management of a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage system;

- (b) Use instructors who have at least three years experience in the subject for which they are providing training, or equivalent expertise as determined by the director;
  - (c) Have provided courses approved by the agency in accordance with paragraph (E) of this rule for a minimum of three years;
  - (d) Have been previously approved to provide a minimum of twelve contact hours;
  - (e) Assign each class provided with a unique number that identifies the provider, class number, and subject;
  - (f) Maintain attendance records, a course syllabus (including an agenda which distinguishes training time from breaks and lunches) and instructor qualifications for each course given for a period of three years from the date of training;
  - (g) Assign contact hours only for the amount of time spent on training. Providers shall not give partial credit for courses;
  - (h) Assign a subject to each class (i.e., operation and maintenance or other.);
  - (i) Provide the director with a list of scheduled training, in a format acceptable to the director, by the first day of the month for each month that training is offered. This list shall include the name of the course, the training provider's approval number, the time, date, and location of the training, along with the number of contact hours assigned;
  - (j) In the event a list of scheduled training is not provided by the first day of the month, course approval applications shall be submitted in accordance with paragraph (E) of this rule. If course approval applications are not submitted, the training shall not be considered for the renewal of a certificate.
  - (k) Upon request, be capable of providing a record of student training to the agency or the student.
- (2) All training providers shall allow agency representatives to attend courses at any time for the purpose of reviewing the length of training, training content and other relevant aspects of the training. Agency employees shall not use this provision to obtain contact hours.
- (3) Failure to meet any of the criteria in paragraph (F) of this rule may result in the withdrawal of the director's approval for all training given by the provider for the next two years. For training providers who have not received approval in accordance with paragraph (F) of this rule, the director shall not approve new training for a period of two years. The director may refuse to recognize contact hour credit if a training provider fails to meet the criteria listed in paragraphs (F)(1) and (F)(2) of this rule.

- (G) The director shall not renew the certificate of an applicant failing to meet the requirements of this rule.
- (H) A renewal card indicating the valid dates of the renewed certificate shall be issued to all certified operators who have met the renewal requirements of this rule.
- (I) Upon submission of a complete application, an expired certificate can be renewed within one year of the expiration date, subject to all the requirements and conditions of paragraph (C) of this rule and division (O) of section 3745.11 of the Revised Code. In all cases the expiration date of the renewed operator certificate shall be the same as if the renewal requirements had been met on or before the date of expiration. After the expiration date and prior to renewal according to this paragraph, the operator shall not perform those activities requiring a certificate.
- (J) An operator's certificate that has not been renewed within one year of the expiration date shall not be renewed. In such cases, the former certificate holder shall apply for examination, pay all required fees, and pass the examination in order to obtain certification.
- (K) In the event that an operator is not able to meet the contact hour requirements of this rule due to a personal life threatening illness or military service the director may, upon request, grant an extension for achieving the required contact hours. However, the operator shall not be the operator of record of a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage system until such time as the contact hour requirements are fulfilled and a renewal certificate is issued.
- (L) The director shall audit a representative number of renewal applications in order to document compliance with the contact hour requirements.

Effective: 02/23/2012

R.C. 119.032 Review Dates: 11/30/2011 and 11/30/2016

Promulgated Under: 119.03

Statutory Authority: 6111.46, 6109.04

Rule Amplifies: 6111.46, 6109.04

Prior Effective Dates: 5/23/86, 1/1/99, 2/12/01, 2/18/02, 12/21/06