

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Operator Rules & Requirements

Required Training

This training is required prior to signing any operator certification application.



Section 1

RULES GOVERNING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFIED OPERATORS



CERTIFIED OPERATOR RULES

- The following will highlight important rules applicable to certified operators and outline important updates. This is not a comprehensive list of all changes nor is it a full explanation of all rules. Please refer to [Ohio Administrative Code 3745-7: Operator Certification for Public Water Systems and Wastewater Treatment Works](#) for a complete list of all applicable rules. All certified professional operators are expected to have read and understood the rules within these chapters.
- **New provisions in Chapter 3745-7 became effective on August 15, 2018 unless otherwise noted.**

3745-7-01 OPERATOR CERTIFICATION DEFINITIONS

This chapter defines important terms relative to professional operators, training providers, and facilities.

- Important updates:
 - Contract operations company is now defined.
 - The definition of operating experience changed on August 15, 2019.
 - A week is defined as a seven-day period beginning on Sunday and ending the following Saturday.

3745-7-02 CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS OF RECORD

This chapter outlines the requirement of a public water system or treatment system to have a certified operator of record (ORC).

- Important updates:
 - Classified private sewerage systems must have a professional operator of record.
 - If a public water system, sewerage system, or treatment works enter into a contract with a professional operator of record, the contract must clearly define the responsibilities of both the operator and owner.

3745-7-03 PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM CLASSIFICATION AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Important updates:

- The ORC (or appropriate certified professional operator) of a Class I distribution system will visit the system at least 3 days a week. ORC (or appropriate certified professional operator) of a Class II Distribution system will visit the system at least 5 days a week.
- At Class II, III and IV facilities a backup operator 1 class lower than the facility may replace the ORC for up to 30 consecutive days. Notification of Ohio EPA is not required. In order to use this provision, a facility must have an active ORC. If an ORC leaves suddenly, retires, etc. Ohio EPA must be consulted and other provisions in the rules can be used.

3745-7-03 PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM CLASSIFICATION AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

- Important updates:
 - Operational records must show anytime a backup operator is being used to meet the minimum staffing requirement.
 - Any professional operator fulfilling the role of a backup operator will be held responsible for any violations which occur during the time they are acting as ORC.

3745-7-04 TREATMENT WORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM CLASSIFICATION AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Important updates:

- The ORC (or appropriate certified professional operator) of a Class I sewerage system will visit the system at least 3 days a week. ORC (or appropriate certified professional operator) of a Class II sewerage system will visit the system at least 5 days a week.
- Operational records must show anytime a backup operator is being used to meet the minimum staffing requirement.
- Any professional operator fulfilling the role of a backup operator will be held responsible for any violations which occur during the time they are acting as ORC.



3745-7-05 CLASSIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

Update

- A hierarchy table has been added for clarity regarding water and wastewater certification supersession.

<u>Wastewater Certificate Hierarchy Table</u>		<u>Drinking Water Certificate Hierarchy Table</u>	
<u>Class IV wastewater treatment</u>		<u>Class IV water supply</u>	
<u>Class III wastewater treatment</u>		<u>Class III water supply</u>	
<u>Class II wastewater treatment</u>		<u>Class II water supply</u>	
<u>Class I wastewater treatment</u>		<u>Class I water supply</u>	
<u>Class II wastewater collection</u>		<u>Class II water distribution</u>	
<u>Class A wastewater treatment</u>	<u>Class I wastewater collection</u>	<u>Class I water supply</u>	<u>Class I water distribution</u>
<u>Limited class A wastewater treatment</u>		<u>Class I water distribution</u>	
		<u>Limited class A water supply</u>	

3745-7-06 CERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS

- All applicants to be a certified professional operator must acknowledge review of this training course.
- All applications for certification must describe operating duties in detail.
- Class IV examinations must be submitted within 2 years of approval unless the Director grants an extension.

3745-7-07 PROFESSIONAL OPERATOR IN TRAINING

This chapter explains the professional operator in training (OIT) status.

- A professional operator in training has four years to document their operating experience, from the date they pass their examination.
- A professional operator in training is not certified and shall not act as a professional operator of record.
- Successfully passing an approved examination for a class A, I, or II certification results in an applicant being acknowledged as a professional operator in training. Passing an ABC examination by scheduling through this [link](#) will grant OIT status. Ohio EPA does not send correspondence when you pass an ABC examination. In order to become certified, the operator must submit an application through the eBusiness center.
- If an operator passed an Ohio EPA paper and pencil examination, the OIT documentation form must be submitted. A copy can be found [here](#).

3745-7-09 RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OWNERS, CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS AND CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS OF RECORD

- Important updates
 - Records shall be maintained in hard bound books or computerized logs, which automatically documents the date, time and person making the entry.
 - Date and times of arrival shall be documented in military time for the professional operator of record and anyone acting as a backup.
 - It is the duty of a professional operator of record to ensure the recordkeeping requirements of this chapter are met.
 - A copy of the professional operator of record's certificate must be displayed for public examination.
 - Minimum staffing times must be reported to the agency on an approved form. Effective July 1, 2021, minimum staffing times are to be reported on the 'Certified Operator Minimum Staffing Reporting' tool found on the eBusiness Home page.

OPERATOR LOG BOOKS

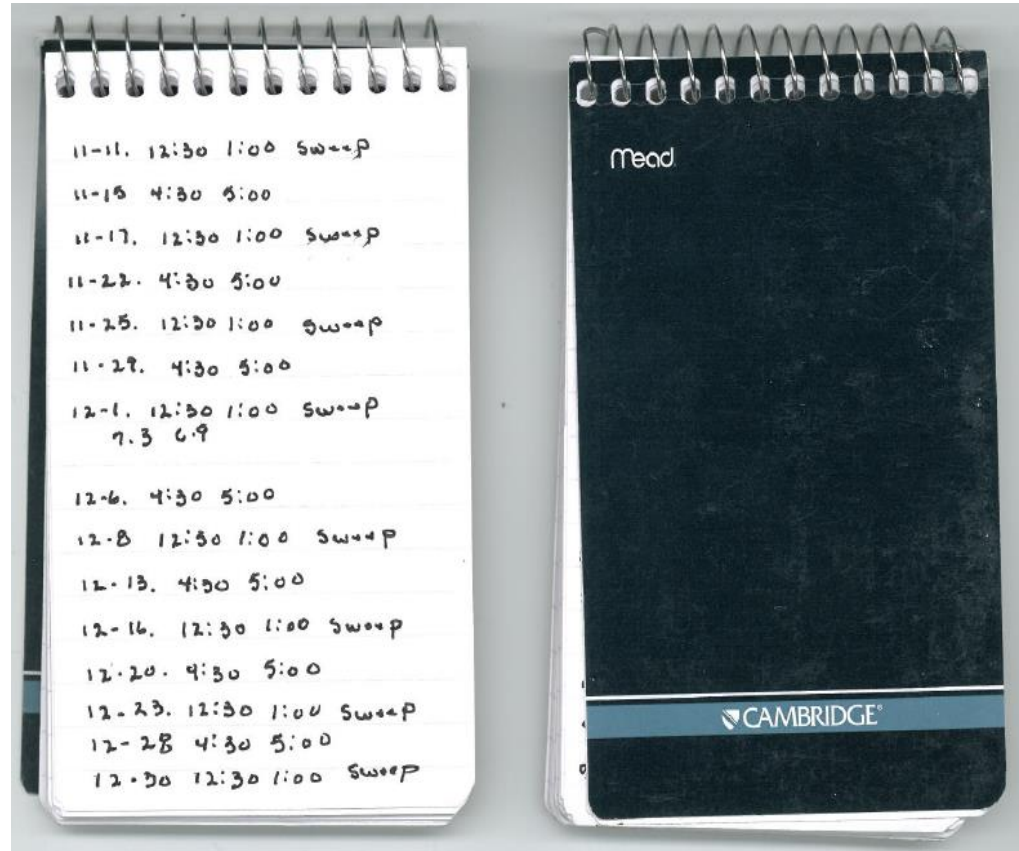
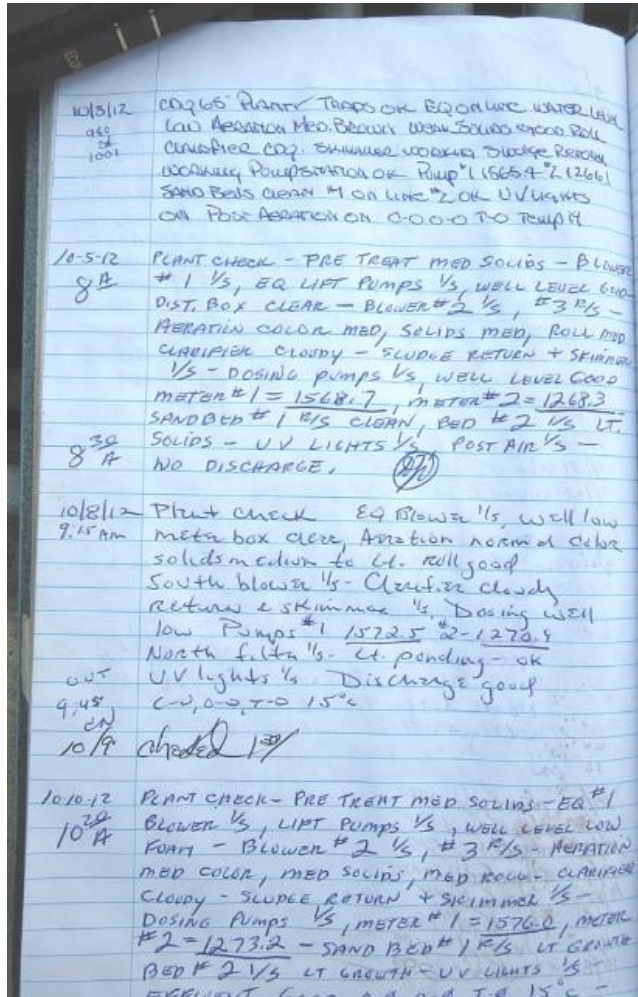
A log book should contain detailed information on the duties performed by the operator of record.

- Detailed operating information.
- Treatment adjustments.
- Chemical changes.
- Maintenance activities.
- Requests for repair, replacement and maintenance.
- Only one operator of record, or backup operator, can be used to meet the minimum staffing requirement during the same time period. For example, 'Operator Jim' is on site from 8a-10a and 'Operator Bob' is also onsite from 8a-10a on the same day. This does not equal four hours. Only 2 hours can be used to meet the minimum staffing requirement.
- All other information required by OAC Rules.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD AND BAD LOG BOOKS

On the left is an example of an **acceptable** log book.

On the right is an example of an **inadequate** log book.



3745-7-15 EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL OF PROFESSIONAL OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

- This rule outlines the renewal procedure, explains the responsibility of a professional operator to renew their license, outlines the responsibility of the training provider and indicates the required number of hours for each license type and level.
- Important changes:
 - Requires operators to renew via the eBusiness Center website.
 - Holds training providers more responsible if the rules are not followed.
 - Provides clarification of internet, webinar, and correspondence course requirements.
 - Requires the completion of this training during renewal.
 - Requires training providers to upload attendance records within 60 days of completion.
 - Provides expiration dates for courses approved by the renamed Green Leaf training provider (formerly Approved Contact Hour Training Provider).



3745-7-17 & 3745-7-18

- **3745-7-17 Professional operator certification fees**
 - Outlines the fees associated with exams, reciprocity, and renewal.
 - Denied reciprocity applications can now have the fees transferred to an application for certification.
 - Fees are nonrefundable.
- **3745-7-18 Conduct during the application and examination process**
 - Discusses inappropriate behavior and consequence, if violations occur.
 - Falsification of records or employment history and/or cheating will result in revocation of licensure and restriction from future examinations or licensure.

3745-7-20 CERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS WHO PASS AN EXAMINATION FROM AN APPROVED EXAMINATION PROVIDER

This chapter outlines the necessary actions to obtain certification after passing an approved exam.

- An application must be submitted, within four years of passing the exam, via the eBusiness Center after passing an approved exam from an approved exam provider.
- You must submit proof of passing the examination with your application.
- You must be eligible to obtain the class III certificate prior to taking the exam, even through the eBusiness Center.
- You are an operator in training after you pass approved exam.

3745-7-21 CONTRACT OPERATIONS COMPANIES AND CONTRACTED PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS.

This rule provides requirements for contract operating companies and contracted professional operators.

- Contracted professional operators and contract operation companies must apply for approval and provide a sample contract which outlines the minimum expectations and explains who is responsible for and the minimum expectations for the following:
 - Operator of record of the facility.
 - Minimum staffing hours.
 - Emergency operations.
 - Maintenance (routine and preventative).
 - Ensure operators comply with 3745 of the Administrative Code.
 - Sharing of compliance letters between owner and operator.
- Operators wishing to be contract operators must submit an application for approval at least thirty days prior to initiating contract operations.

3745-7-21 CONTINUED

All contract operation companies or contracted professional operators shall comply with the following:

- Ensure that certified professional operators under their employment comply with provisions of Chapters 3745., 6111., and 6109. of the Revised Code.
- If required by the facility owner or agency, respond to emergencies within one hour.
- Provide an appropriately certified operator if the listed operator of record is unavailable.
- Provide a report of the facilities that are contracted to operator by June 30th by each year.
- Maintain a copy of the contract onsite for inspection by Ohio EPA.
- Maintain a copy of the contract for a minimum of 3 years after the expiration of the contract.
- Ensure that all relevant personnel, including the professional operators and owner, are notified of written correspondence from or to the Ohio EPA.

A contract operator or contract professional operator may be held liable for violations.

Failure to comply with the rules of this chapter and Chapter 6111. and 6109. of the Revised Code may result in withdrawal of approval to be a contract operator or operating company.



3745-83-01

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Provides guidance on treatment and distribution requirements.

- Drinking Water System Components must meet ANSI/NSF Standard 61.
- Must maintain 20 PSI at all points in the distribution system.
- All equipment must be maintained to ensure intended function.
 - If the equipment cannot function as originally intended, then it must be repaired or replaced.
- Ohio EPA must be notified of any disruption of service, e.g. line breaks, treatment failure, anything that affects normal day to day operations.
 - The weblink to the disruption of service tool is [here](#).

3745-85-01

CONTINGENCY PLANS

- All Drinking Water Systems are all required to have an annually updated Contingency Plan. It is also recommended that all Wastewater Systems also have a Contingency Plan that is kept up-to-date.
- Contingency Plans require PWS's to have a strategy for specific circumstances which could affect the quantity or quality of water they serve. These circumstances are the same for all systems, though it is not an inclusive list. If your system faces additional hazards others may not, you may add those to your Contingency Plan.
- At least one or more circumstances covered in the Contingency Plan Rule must be exercised **annually** and all circumstances must be exercised at least once every 5 years.
- An example Contingency Plan Template can be found [here](#).

CYBERSECURITY

- Ohio utilities (water, wastewater, electric, oil and gas, e.g.) continue to face unprecedented threats in the cybersecurity landscape. A threat can be as simple as the hacking of a utility's employee email account, or more seriously, a breach of plant controls. Other times, a simple email can be opened that contains harmful ransomware or malware that threaten the digital infrastructure of that system.
- Criminal actors will likely continue to try to obtain a system's customer data, financial information, or hacking into a facility's SCADA software, which ultimately allows criminals to threaten public health and safety and the financial and operational needs of those systems.
- There are simple solutions any Wastewater or Drinking Water Plant can take that can help minimize or prevent these unwanted attacks.
- The next slide provides resources to assist you in protecting your system's digital infrastructure from Cyberthreats.

CYBERSECURITY RESOURCES

- Below is a list of resources for more information on cybersecurity.
 - U.S. EPA websites
 - <https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response-research/water-infrastructure-resilience>
 - https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-06/documents/cybersecurity_guide_for_states_final_0.pdf
 - <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience>
 - <https://www.epa.gov/waterriskassessment/epa-cybersecurity-best-practices-water-sector>
 - AWWA
 - [Cybersecurity & Guidance | American Water Works Association \(awwa.org\)](https://www.awwa.org/Cybersecurity-Guidance)
 - <https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Risk-Resilience>
 - Water Operator.org
 - <http://wateroperator.org/blog/cid/57?Category=security>
 - Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center
 - [WaterISAC](https://www.waterisac.org/)

Section 2

REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATORS OF RECORD



Revised date: January 5, 2022

ELECTRONIC DISCHARGE MONITORING REPORT (EDMR)

- eDMR reports must be submitted according to their NPDES permits.
- eDMR can be submitted by a delegated official.
- To delegate an official, you must add the facility to your account and a delegation of authority document will appear.
 - Print the delegation of authority document off, sign it in the presence of a notary, and physically mail the paperwork in.

OPERATOR OF RECORD (ORC) NOTIFICATION FORM

- You can print off a blank ORC form [here](#).
- Notifying Ohio EPA of changes in ORC is the responsibility of the owner AND operator.
- You must submit a new ORC form within 3 days becoming the ORC or leaving the position of ORC.
- This form is the same for water and wastewater.

OHID PORTAL

- On November 6, 2020, access to the eBusiness center was made available only through the OHID portal.
- All owners and operators who use the eBusiness center must have a valid OHID account.
- Instructions to create an account is located [here](#)
- If you are an existing eBusiness account holder, you must use the same email address that eBusiness has on file.

Section 3

EBUSINESS REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFIED OPERATORS




Revised date: January 5, 2022

OHID ACCOUNT



- You are required to keep your contact information up to date. You can do so in the OHID portal. You must have the Water/Wastewater Operator service activated to do so. If you do not, please follow the instructions [here](#).
- In the operator service, use the green **EDIT** button on the right hand side.

Certified Operator Service

Certified Operator Service Management

 This screen can be used to edit your contact information, apply for new exams or certifications, renewal certificates and apply contact hours to your certificate.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

- **IMPORTANT:** Please ensure you have an updated email address through the OHID portal. Ohio EPA will use emails to communicate with you.

RENEWAL GUIDELINES

- Renewals are required to be submitted through the eBusiness Center.
- Many of your contact hours will already be loaded to your eBusiness Center account. You are still required to go through the renewal, select the number of contact hours to apply to the certificate and submit the renewal application.
- If **contact hours that you earned** do not appear in your transcript, check with your training provider first to see if they are going to upload your attendance. In the rare occasion they are not going to, you will have an opportunity to add the approved courses after August 1st of your renewal year.
- If you are having issues uploading the hours yourself, please contact the operator certification unit at 1(866)411-6728 or at opcert@epa.ohio.gov.

RENEWAL GUIDELINES

- The eBusiness Center does not replace your record keeping. You are expected to maintain your own records and training providers are still expected to provide you with documentation of completing a course.
- **Instructions** for utilizing the eBusiness Center can be found [here](#). Navigate to the operator tab and find the eBusiness Center sub-tab.

Section 4

EXAM AND CERTIFICATION APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS



Revised date: January 5, 2022

OHIO EPA APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- Exam and Certification Applications must go through the eBusiness Center at <https://ohid.ohio.gov/>
- Do NOT submit an application after passing a **third party exam** until you have met the operating experience requirements.
- [Operator In Training \(OIT\)](#) form for certification after passing an **Ohio EPA paper and pencil exams** is still on paper.
- **There is no OIT status for the Class III certification.** You must wait until you meet the experience requirements to sit for the examination.

OHIO EPA APPLICATION GUIDELINES







- If you have submitted an application through eBusiness before and are submitting a new application, be sure to update the application prior to submitting.
- After you submit an application for examination, certification, or reciprocity, a copy of the application will appear. You should print the application and both you and your supervisor should sign and date the form. You can scan and submit the form to opcert@epa.ohio.gov.

APPLICABLE DUTIES

- Please note, the following experience is not accepted as operating experience and should be removed from the percentage of time that you designate to water and/or wastewater:
 - Meter reading only.
 - Customer shut off / turn on that is NOT related to the maintenance of a distribution system.
 - Work conducted on storm sewers that are not part of a combined sewer.
 - Service laterals from a residential house or other private property.
 - Residential septic systems with passive treatment .
 - If you work at multiple facilities, collection systems, or public water systems, the time spent driving to a different area should be excluded. You will be asked for an estimation of your drive time or documentation of your time spent at public water systems.

EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Be sure to enter the total number of months in each position. Do not calculate the months based upon the percentage designated into water and wastewater. The Operator Certification Unit will calculate your experience upon review.
- For **all part time, seasonal, or temporary positions** you must document the number of hours worked. If this work is not your current employer and you have not submitted signed documentation for this time in the past, please submit signed documentation confirming the hours worked when you apply.
- When you eliminate a percentage of time for inapplicable duties, please indicate you have done so in the duties section of the application.
- Be sure to create a **new employment entry for every change in employment**, as shown below:

Employer	Mailing Address	Start Date	End Date	Job Title	Percent DW	Percent WW	Action
Ohio EPA	50 West Town Street Columbus OH 43215	01/01/2001	01/01/2009	Environmental Specialist 2	75.0	0.0	 
Ohio EPA	50 West Town Street Columbus OH 43215	01/05/2009	05/10/2014	Environmental Supervisor	50.0	0.0	 
Ohio EPA	50 West Town Street Columbus OH 43215	05/14/2014		Environmental Manager	80.0	0.0	 

- Each entry must be filled out completely. Duties must be described in **DETAIL**.



OVERTIME DOCUMENTATION

- If you have overtime hours, you can claim them on your application. Please be sure to indicate the time as part time and use the number of hours for experience time.
- If you are **currently employed** by the same organization where you earned overtime hours, then no additional documentation is required.
- If this is a **past position**, you will need to acquire a signed letter from your previous employer verifying the overtime hours earned.

* Employer Name:	<input type="text" value="Ohio EPA"/>
* Mailing Address:	<input type="text" value="50 West Town Street"/>
* Mailing City:	<input type="text" value="Columbus"/>
* Mailing State:	<input type="text" value="OH"/>
* Mailing Zip:	<input type="text" value="43215"/>
* Address Country:	<input type="text" value="USA"/>
* Start Date:	<input type="text" value="1/5/2009"/>
End Date (if still employed leave blank):	<input type="text" value="5/10/2014"/>
* Job Title:	<input type="text" value="Environmental Supervisor"/>
* Experience Time Type:	<input type="text" value="Part Time"/>

* Experience time (Full-time enter number of months or part-time enter number of hours):

* Document the percentage of your months/hours you spend on Water related duties:

* Document the percentage of your months/hours you spend on Wastewater related duties:

* PWSID:

* Describe your operating duties in **DETAIL** (2000 characters max):

Congratulations, you
have completed this
training!