

How to Become a Certified Professional in the Voluntary Action Program

Introduction

Ohio's Voluntary Action Program (VAP) was created to give businesses and property owners a way to investigate possible environmental contamination due to hazardous substances or petroleum releases, clean up the property if necessary and receive a covenant not to sue (CNS); that is, a release from the State of Ohio that no more cleanup is needed.

The VAP maximizes resources and expertise in the private sector by using qualified, experienced professionals such as engineers and scientists certified by Ohio EPA as certified professionals (CP). To ensure high quality laboratory data, Ohio EPA also designates qualified laboratories as certified laboratories (CL) to test environmental samples which generate data used to support environmental cleanups.

The objectives of this fact sheet are to describe who may qualify as a CP and to explain what documentation must be submitted by a professional seeking to participate in the VAP.

Who Qualifies?

A person must meet the following criteria to be eligible to become a CP. The individual must:

- hold a bachelor's degree from a recognized school in biology, chemistry, an appropriate area of engineering, geology, hydrogeology, toxicology, environmental sciences, the scientific sub-disciplines of public health, hazardous waste management or other equivalent curriculum acceptable to Ohio EPA;
- have eight years of professional experience related to cleanup work. Of the eight years, three years must have been spent as a supervisor or project manager. A relevant master's degree can substitute for up to one year of experience, and a doctorate can substitute for up to two years;
- possess good moral character, as testified to by references under affidavit;
- possess the professional competence and knowledge to perform the tasks required of a certified professional; and
- take the initial training offered by Ohio EPA within one year prior to submitting a certification application.

Application Requirements

A person wishing to be considered for participation in the VAP must submit the following information and documentation by affidavit:

- completed application with signed affidavit;
- original transcripts of degree from a recognized educational institution (please redact Social Security numbers or other personal identifiable information);
- six completed reference forms;
- documentation of attendance at the initial training; and
- record of payment of the initial professional certification fee, as established in OAC 3745-300-03.

The application and documentation must be mailed to:

Voluntary Action Program
Ohio EPA / DERR
50 West Town Street, Suite 700
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

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Payment Required

In addition to the application requirements, a person wishing to participate in the VAP as a CP must submit a payment of \$2,500 payable to (Please do not attach a copy of the check to the application):

Treasurer, State of Ohio

The payment should be sent to :

Voluntary Action Program

Ohio EPA / DERR
50 West Town Street, Suite 700
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

Location of Application/ Rules

Visit the VAP Certified Professional webpage to view or download the application package:

<http://epa.ohio.gov/derr/volunt/certification/cpapp.aspx>

The rules are available here:

<http://epa.ohio.gov/derr/derrrules.aspx>

The VAP program technical guidance compendium can be found here:

http://epa.ohio.gov/portals/30/vap/tgc/TGC_Index.pdf

Contact

For more information, contact:

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