

Attachment B - Wastewater Relevancy Guidelines for Continuing Education and the Professional Growth of Wastewater Operators

In order to qualify for the renewal of an Oregon wastewater operator certificate, the operator must provide evidence of training and continued professional growth. The accumulation of two *Continuing Education Units* (CEUs) once every two years in relevant subject matter is considered satisfactory evidence of professional growth. The Oregon Environmental Services Advisory Council will evaluate all CEU course training and, if appropriate, assign wastewater CEUs to valid training and specify if the CEUs are relevant to the certification of wastewater system operators. One CEU equals 10 hours of training or education. OESAC may award general CEUs, but only those CEUs approved for wastewater will be accepted by the DEQ wastewater certification program for the purpose of certificate renewal.

ABC Exam Need-to-Know Criteria:

The Oregon Wastewater Operator Certification program exclusively uses the national ABC standardized exam for all certification grades and types. Therefore, the evaluation for wastewater CEU relevancy will predominantly follow ABC Need-To-Know criteria with a few exceptions and as explained below.

Using the ABC Need-to-Know Criteria:

OESAC will use the Need-to-Know criteria based upon the following hierarchy: 1) Blueprint areas/core competencies, 2) Blueprint sub-categories, and lastly, 3) Required Capabilities. Content that corresponds to “required capabilities” will not be as conclusive as blueprint areas and blueprint sub-categories. The blueprint sub-category cannot be N/A for two or more certificate classes (I-IV), or else the criteria will be viewed as inconclusive for evaluation purposes.

When content is not identified by ABC Need-to-Know Criteria:

When a course’s proposed content cannot be found in the ABC Need-to-Know criteria, the content will be discussed with wastewater operator Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) present at the OESAC meeting. If the content’s relevancy remains inconclusive, the content will not be awarded CEUs. Instead, the approval of such content will rest upon the course sponsor to submit an appeal with justification of the content’s relevancy for the Council to reconsider at a subsequent meeting.

The governing regulation for determining relevancy for wastewater operators is Oregon Administrative Rule, OAR 340-049. While the OAR does not exhaustively list what content is “relevant,” it does provide the following definition:

"Operator" or "Wastewater System Operator" means any person engaged in the routine on site performance of duties, tasks and responsibilities in the operation of a wastewater treatment system or a wastewater collection system. This term does not include officials, managers, and engineers, directors of public works or equivalent whose duties do not include the actual "hands-on" operation or supervision on site of wastewater system facilities or operators.

If the course content under evaluation does not make evident how it benefits “operators” as defined above, it will not be awarded OESAC wastewater CEUs.

Exceptions to the ABC Need-to-Know Criteria:

When existing Oregon statute, rule, regulations, the scope of the DEQ wastewater operator certification program does not allow for approval, or the scope of another state agency program precludes approval of course content under evaluation, this content will not be

awarded OESAC wastewater CEUs even if the content is supported by ABC Need-to-Know criteria.

Academic Credit Hours (non-CEU courses):

The operator in some instances may submit academic transcripts as non-CEU courses along with the course descriptions directly to the DEQ Operator Certification program for pre-approval. When these documents are received, DEQ will determine if the course(s) have relevancy for wastewater operators. The approval for academic credit hours (non-CEU) should be obtained directly from DEQ *in advance* of attending the academic transcribed course, *and* in advance of submitting a renewal application form to DEQ. These academic credits hours described here are the non-CEU “hours of credit” referenced in OAR 340-049-0040(1)(b).