



# CERTIFICATION NEWS



Volume 1, Issue 2

September 2000

## Five Levels of Certification

Currently there are five levels of certification for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators in the State of Nevada. As far as we know, only four other states have more than four grade levels. The Nevada Water Environment Association (NWEA) Laboratory Analyst and Industrial Waste Inspector programs are based on four grade levels. The State of Nevada Water Treatment and Water Distribution programs (administered by the **Nevada State Health Division**) both utilize four grade levels.

The Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) bases all of their certification programs on four grade levels.

The Nevada wastewater certification program was originally modeled after the California program which had (and still does) five levels.

When we standardized with ABC exams it became necessary to create a Grade V exam that could be constructed and administered by ABC. The Board created Grade V questions and submitted them to ABC who uses them to build the Grade V exam. Over the years the Board has been concerned with the content of the Grade V exam and several Board members have been actively revising the Grade V.

As we have proceeded with the revision of the Grade V exam we have discussed the need for five grade levels. In essence, we are testing at a higher level than 90% of the rest of the country. And, since we do not issue the Grade V by reciprocity, anyone coming into Nevada from anywhere else in the country that needs a Grade V must take our exam. We are implying that even if you were

the Plant Manager for the largest plant in New York, Chicago, or Detroit you are not qualified to operate a large plant in Nevada without taking the Grade V exam.

In order to make the Grade V exam meaningful we must devise questions that test to a higher level than the Grade IV.

What do you think about this? The Board is soliciting opinions from operators and any others involved in the operation of wastewater facilities in regard to this matter. Let us know by writing us at P.O. Box 50229, Henderson, Nevada 89016-0229, faxing us at (702) 433-1498, or emailing us at [nvwcert-board@aol.com](mailto:nvwcert-board@aol.com). We must receive your comments by October 15, 2000 for them to be reviewed at the fall Board Meeting.

## Operator Pins

Thanks to a generous donation from the Nevada Water Environment Association and the hard work of Board member David Mendenhall the operator pins are now a reality.

They are great! Every Certified Operator, Lab Analyst, and Industrial Waste Inspector in

good standing will receive one with their current grade level on it. People with expired certificates, Provisional Operators, and Operators-in-Training (OIT) are not eligible to receive a pin.

When an OIT submits evidence of required experience they will automatically receive a pin with

their certificate.

Many pins have already been distributed at the larger facilities. If you have not already received a pin you will get one when you renew. Persons wanting their pins sooner than their renewal date can renew early.

## Wastewater Operator Test Questions

by Starlin Jones

### Grade I

1. A primary clarifier has clumps of sludge floating up in different places on the surface, what can cause this to happen?
  - a. Collector arm moving too fast stirring up the solids
  - b. Influent flow too low
  - c. Too much digester supernatant being returned
  - d. Plugged raw sludge pump

### Grade II

1. Which method is used to treat the odors from a treatment plant?
  - a. Spray Chanel No. 9 perfume into the air
  - b. A biological soil media filter
  - c. Nothing, raw sewage has no bad odor
  - d. A mechanical fan
  - e. Aluminum Sulfate to precipitate out the mercaptans

### Grade III

1. Your secondary clarifier has been putting out crystal clear effluent for a couple of weeks. You are proud of your effluent quality. You notice that the dissolved oxygen is dropping off drastically in the afternoon for about 9 hours to 0.5 mg/l. The SVI has slowly increased since this started happening. You come in on a dark cloudy Monday morning to find your secondary clarifier bulking sludge. What is the most likely cause of this nightmare?
  - a. Not enough nutrients for the activated sludge organisms

- b. Mean Cell residence time is too low
- c. Low Dissolved Oxygen Filaments
- d. Not enough nitrification

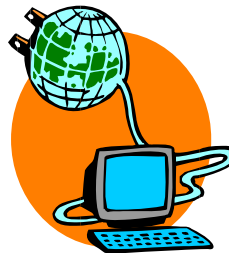
### Grade IV

1. A chlorinator has a manual feed of 250 lbs/day. When you make your next round you find that the Chlorine feed has dropped off to 80 lbs/day. The inlet pressure is normal. The vacuum gauge is reading 2 inches. You just changed a cylinder and have put it on-line that day. What is the most likely cause of the problem?
  - a. Cylinder valve closed
  - b. A vacuum leak has developed between the chlorine injector and the chlorinator
  - c. The chlorine injector pump has tripped off
  - d. The chlorine cylinder that you just put on line could be empty

### Grade V

1. Which is the most important resource that a supervisor has to properly utilize?
  - a. Time
  - b. Equipment
  - c. Finances
  - d. Personnel

Answers are on page 4



**NEW!**  
E-Mail address  
Nvwwcertboard@  
ol.com

## Addresses

We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for the Board to have your current address. One of the main reasons people become decertified is non-receipt of the renewal notice the Board sends out. After the last newsletter mailing we received dozens

of address changes from the Post Office (at a cost to the certification program of \$0.33 each plus the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, which the Post Office will not forward).

As a result, Dianne changed those addresses in the database

and now many of you will be receiving the newsletter for the first time. We are still missing good addresses on several people. If you know any of the people listed below please ask them to fax their current address to the Board at (702) 433-1498.

Scott Chappell  
Gary C. Flatley  
Rom "Scott" L. Folger  
Mark B. Gray

Larry A. Kohler  
Reg D. Lang  
Leonard P. Martinez  
Carolyn R. Schnitkey

John Kirby Shaw  
Stella Stout  
William J. Whitmore  
Michael Jay Wilson

**Certification Board**

**Chairman**

Steve Cottrell (702) 293-4134

**Vice Chairman**

Pete Rozis (775) 289-2150

**Program Administrator**

Leo Drozdoff (775) 687-4670  
ext 3142

**Vice Program Administrator**

Dianne West (702) 433-1498

**Board Members**

Starlin Jones (775) 861-4104  
Dave Mendenhall (702) 229-6200  
Don Richey Sr. (775) 832-1242  
Bill Shepherd (702) 450-4417

**CERTIFICATION CALENDAR**

**July 13, 2000**

August 24, 2000  
September 12, 2000  
September 26, 2000  
October 11, 2000

**EXAMINATION**

Notification of pass or fail  
Application deadline for October exam  
Test approval/denial notification  
July certificates mailed

**October 12, 2000**

November 23, 2000  
December 11, 2000  
December 25, 2000  
January 10, 2001

**EXAMINATION**

Notification of pass or fail  
Application deadline for January exam  
Test approval/denial notification  
October certificates mailed

**January 11, 2001**

February 22, 2001  
March 12, 2001  
March 26, 2001  
April 11, 2001

**EXAMINATION**

Notification of pass or fail  
Application deadline for April exam  
Test approval/denial notification  
January certificates mailed

**April 12, 2001**

**EXAMINATION**

**Certification Fees**

Make checks payable to NWEA. Mail checks, correspondence, applications and renewals to the **Certification Board, P.O. Box 50229, Henderson NV 89016-0229**

*Renewals* . . . . . \$30

Renewal notices are mailed 30 days before expiration; please call the Hotline if you don't receive one; fee extends certification for two-year period

*Examinations* . . . . . \$60

Proctored in Las Vegas, Reno, and Ely on the second Thursday of January, April July, and October; application deadline is 30 days prior to exam date

*Reciprocity* . . . . . \$75

Be sure to include a copy of your certificate that clearly shows the expiration date

*Operator-in-Training* . . . . . \$60

Valid for two years and renewable after that. Includes cost of Grade I exam. Converts to Grade I with proof of one year's experience.

*Replacement Certificate* . . . . . \$20

	Grade	No. of Exams	% Passed
Waste-water Treatment Operator	I	29	66
	II	18	61
	III	18	39
	IV	20	20
	V	1	100
Average			49
Lab Analyst	1	8	75
	2	3	100
	3	3	67
	4	1	100
Average			80
Industrial Waste Inspector	1	2	100
	2	2	0
	3		
	4		
Average			50

**HOTLINE**

**(702) 433-1498**

The Hotline is an answering machine. Messages are retrieved in the evenings and weekends only. We're sorry but it's not possible to immediately return calls.

The Hotline is also able to receive faxes at the same number.

**ADDRESS**

**All correspondence for the Certification Board should be sent to P.O. Box 50229, Henderson NV 89016-0229**

**Certified Mail**

The Certification Board uses a Post Office box to receive mail.

Since mail is usually picked up from the box after normal working hours Certified Mail cannot be claimed until the next working day. This often results in a delay of several days in processing items that are sent "Certified".

Normally, standard mail with a good return address on it will suffice in sending something to the Board. If you want confirmation that your mail arrived send it Priority Mail - With Delivery Confirmation. Delivery Confirmation is not Proof of Delivery. If you have to have that, then you must send it Certified.

Nevada Water Environment Assoc., Inc.  
 Certification Board  
 5740 S Eastern Ste 120  
 Las Vegas NV 89119-3049

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 LAS VEGAS NV  
 PERMIT NO. 2658

## Testing Rates Raised

We have recently been informed by the Association of Boards of Certification that the cost for providing and scoring exams is raising by \$2.00 per exam at the beginning of next year.

That amounts to about \$300 more per year to run the Certification Program. The good news is that we will not be increasing the cost to take our exams.

The operators in Nevada are fortunate that we have a dedicated Board of volunteers who are fortunate to work for employers that often pay for Board members travel expenses.

We are fortunate to have Dianne West as our Assistant Program Administrator who must be forced to take payment for all the good she does. And we are fortunate to

have the support of the Nevada Water Environment Association.

All of these elements come together to run a program that is self-sufficient and economical.

We will do our best to keep the certification rates as low as possible into the future.

Answers to Wastewater Operator Test Questions	2. b
	3. c
	4. b
1. d	5. d

**Congratulations** to the following people who have passed exams of certification for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Wastewater Quality Analyst, or Industrial Waste Inspector

<b><u>WWTP Operator</u></b>		<b><u>Grade III</u></b>	<b><u>WW Quality Analyst</u></b>
<b><u>OIT/Grade I</u></b>	Philip K. Walsack	Johnny Cleveland	<b><u>AIT/Grade 1</u></b>
Donald H. Heacock II	Andrew W. Weyman Jr.	Lori Eversole	Mary L. Murrell
James B. Lynch	David C. Wilson, Jr.	Ross L. Hahn	<b><u>Grade 1</u></b>
Anthony Sean Mayor	Eric L. Ziegler	Ken Mallory	Norbert Bemelman
Paula M. Stetka	<b><u>Grade II</u></b>	Dennis McCormick	Ross L. Hahn
Mary Kathleen Webb	Thomas G. Belcher	Charles J. Trushel	Brian Mullin
<b><u>Grade I</u></b>	Mark R. Dunbar	<b><u>Grade IV</u></b>	<b><u>Grade 2</u></b>
Keith F. Brinkoetter	Joe D. Fontaine	Martin Perry Johnson	LeAnna M. Risso
Parick J. Carey	Mark D. Gerald	LeAnna M. Risso	<b><u>Grade 3</u></b>
Deborah J. Chilcote	Kurt Krause	Darin Swartzlander	Randy J. Hadland
Don Geary	James A. Lovato Jr.	Roger N. Zueger	<b><u>Grade 4</u></b>
Michael Lee Haddenham	Robert Roberge	<b><u>Reciprocity WW Grade IV</u></b>	Daniel C. Fischer
Noel Huber	Fritz-Peter Sawyer	Jimmy R. Sargent—(Kansas)	<b><u>Industrial Waste Inspector Grade 1</u></b>
Shane Schumacher	Skeet Sellers	<b><u>Grade V</u></b>	Daniel C. Fischer
Chris Torres	Lee Smith	William F. Hutcheson	Ronald Wilson