



# CERTIFICATION NEWS



Volume 1, Issue 4 July 2006

## RECIPROcity IN NEVADA *by: John Solvie*

Reciprocity in the purest sense is a mutual or cooperative agreement between certification authorities to allow certified individuals (ie: operators, analysts, etc.) to move between jurisdictions/states without further testing or review. The subject of reciprocity is a complex issue for certification programs to address.

Constraints to reciprocity include the diversity of individual certification programs that are tailored to each state's water quality needs and state statutory issues that limit interstate flexibility. Minimum federal standards for wastewater certification programs do not currently exist. Nationwide, there are vast and conflicting views on reciprocity. While the subject is frequently discussed amongst the certified community, the reality is that certification programs receive very few requests for it.

Many certification programs will consider granting only limited reciprocity, some none at all. The Nevada Board of Certification has adopted a broad policy by which a certified individual from another state may be able to obtain reciprocity certification in Nevada without having to test. Nevada's approach is based on determining exam equivalence while also confirming that Nevada's educational and experience requirements have been met.

Determining exam equivalence involves reviewing another state's certification exams, need-to-know criteria, subject matter experts and the process by which the exams became validated. This review is critical, both from a practical perspective and a legal perspective. The Nevada Board of Certification, like many certification programs, does not have the resources or expertise to accomplish this review on its own. Fortunately, the Board is able to determine exam equivalence through the assistance of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC), which is a national organization of environmental certifying authorities.

The Nevada Board of Certification uses ABC standardized exams for all but one of its certification disciplines. ABC has created a list of state certification exams that it has determined to be equivalent with ABC's standardized exams. ABC's exam equivalency chart can be found online at [www.abccert.org/pdf/abcwxtexamequiv0106.pdf](http://www.abccert.org/pdf/abcwxtexamequiv0106.pdf). If another state's certification exams are included on ABC's chart, the Nevada Board of Certification will consider granting reciprocity.

After exam equivalency has been determined, documentation is reviewed to confirm that he/she successfully passed the exam at the grade level for which they are applying and also successfully passed all previous grade levels. Nevada's certification exams are what are referred to in the testing industry as "sequential" exams, meaning that an applicant must sequentially pass each grade level before being allowed to test at the next grade level.

If all exam requirements are successfully met and the applicant meets Nevada's educational and experience requirements, a reciprocity certification will be approved by the Board.

The Nevada Board of Certification desires to foster reciprocity whenever possible. More information can be found at Nevada's certification website at [www.nvwea.org](http://www.nvwea.org) or at Nevada's certification hotline at 775-465-2045.

## Special Thanks to Leo Drozdoff and Pete Rozis!

The Certification Board would like to give special thanks to Leo Drozdoff and Pete Rozis for their many years of dedication and voluntary service to the State of Nevada Wastewater Operator Board of Certification. Leo served on the board for several years and was Chairman for three years. He did an excellent job. He was recently promoted to NDEP Administrator. The Certification Board thanks Pete for his many years of dedicated service. It was long drive from Ely to Las Vegas and Reno for Board Meetings, but Pete always did it with a smile. We wish them both success!

## Wastewater Operator Test Questions

### Grade I

1. When routinely inspecting a centrifugal pump, the operator finds that the pump bearing are excessively hot.

This could be caused by:

- A. Over lubrication
- B. Speed too slow
- C. Worn impeller
- D. Worn Packing

### Grade II

2. The activated sludge condition characterized by weak, small floc, low SVI, turbid supernatant, and the absence of filamentous organisms, called \_\_\_\_\_?

- A. Nocardia
- B. Filamentous
- C. Pinfloc
- D. Nitrifying bacteria

### Grade III

3. What are the disadvantages of using a constant return activated sludge flow?

- A. The F/M ratio will vary with a constant speed
- B. MLSS concentrations will vary
- C. As the loadings change the secondary clarifier sludge blanket may not be removed as effectively.
- D. The dissolved oxygen level will not change

### Grade IV

4. Given the following data, what is the most likely cause of a low D.O. level in the aeration tank. The aeration tank has diffusers and there seems to be a problem? Select the answer that is most likely to cause the problem.

Data: Blower output is high  
Hydraulic load is normal  
Organic load is normal  
High turbulence in a specific area of the aeration tank.

- A. Aeration tank header for the diffusers has leaking or broken pipes
- B. Excessive air bubbles shearing by diffusers
- C. Return activated sludge rate too high
- D. Under aeration because of lower blower speed.

## How the Cure in Place (CIP) Pipe Lining Process Can Effect Your Treatment Process

Treatment plants beware! If you have pipe line rehabilitation taking place in your community be careful. When a process using the Cure in Place (CIP) method using hot water, a byproduct called styrene is produced. Styrene is an organic and is in the same family as benzene. When styrene enters a facility and ends up in your activated sludge process, one will notice very poor settling. The floc will disperse creating a turbid effluent. Additionally, there is reasonable suspicion that styrene kills nitrifying bacteria nitrifiers (convert ammonia to nitrite) and nitrobacter (convert nitrite into nitrate). These are the important bacteria to facilities that nitrify. The floc dispersion could create a high suspended solids or increased BOD in the effluent. If your community is rehabilitating smaller lines (24" or less) a steam process can be used that reduces the amount of styrene byproduct significantly. Some communities have inserted in their specifications that all styrene or residual water from the pipe lining process must be pumped through a carbon filter process. Additionally, Contra Costa County Sanitation District had problems meeting turbidity. This effected their ability to disinfect using Ultraviolet light. If your plant has had problems because of this type of situation, please feel free to contact the Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility.

22nd Annual Tri-State Seminar on the River  
September 28-30, 2006  
Primm, Nevada

AWQCA  
California Water Environment Association  
ONWEA

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## The Board Formalizes the Policy on Related Experience

Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required for any given level of certification. The remainder of the experience requirement must be from direct experience in the type of certification being sought. The Board has sole discretion in determining what constitutes acceptable related experience and what constitutes acceptable direct experience for each type of certification. The breakdown for each grade of certification shall be as follows: **In-Training** No experience required. **Grade I/1** One year of total experience required, at least six months of which must be from direct experience. Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required. **Grade II/2** Two years of total experience required, at least one and one-half years of which must be from direct experience. Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required. **Grade III/3** Three years of total experience required, at least two and one-half years of which must be from direct experience. Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required. **Grade IV/4** Four years of total experience required, at least three and one-half years of which must be from direct experience. Related experience cannot account for more than six months of the total experience required.

### Certification Fees

Make checks *payable to NWEA*.  
mail checks, correspondence, appli-  
cations and renewals to the:

**Certification Board**  
**P.O. BOX 190**  
**Smith, NV 89430**

*Renewals. . . . . \$30*

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

*Examinations . . . . . \$60*

Proctored in Las Vegas, Reno,  
and Ely on the second Thursday  
of March, June, September and  
December, Elko is by appoint-  
ment only; application deadline is  
30 days prior to exam dates.

*Reciprocity. . . . . \$75*

Be sure to include a copy of your  
certificates that clearly show 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  
and 6 CEU's.

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

**NOTE** \*All of the applications can be downloaded and printed out  
from your computer. Just go to [www.nvwea.org](http://www.nvwea.org) and open up the cer-  
tification link and click on APPLICATIONS. Also the certification  
rules and regulations are available on the website. Under useful links,  
one will find the ABC math formulas to help you with an exam.

#### **September 14, 2006**

*October 26, 2006*  
*November 14, 2006*  
*November 28, 2006*  
*December 6, 2006*

#### **December 14, 2006**

*January 25, 2007*  
*February 8, 2007*  
*February 22, 2007*  
*March 7, 2007*

#### **March 8, 2007**

#### **March 16, 2007 (NVRWA Conference)**

#### **March 23, 2007 (NWEA Conference)**

*April 19, 2007*  
*May 14, 2007*  
*May 28, 2007*  
*June 6, 2007*

#### **June 14, 2007**

*July 26, 2007*  
*August 13, 2007*  
*August 27, 2007*  
*September 5, 2007*

#### **September 13, 2007**

*October 25, 2007*  
*November 13, 2007*  
*November 27, 2007*  
*December 5, 2007*

#### **EXAMINATION**

*Notification of pass or fail*  
*Application deadline for December exam*  
*Test approval/denial notification*  
*September certificates mailed*

#### **EXAMINATION**

*Notification of pass or fail*  
*Application deadline for March exam*  
*Test approval/denial notification*  
*December certificates mailed*

#### **EXAMINATION**

*Notification of pass or fail*  
*Application deadline for June exam*  
*Test approval/denial notification*  
*March certificates mailed*

#### **EXAMINATION**

*Notification of pass or fail*  
*Application deadline for September exam*  
*Test approval/denial notification*  
*June certificates mailed*

#### **EXAMINATION**

*Notification of pass or fail*  
*Application deadline for December exam*  
*Test approval/denial notification*  
*September certificates mailed*

### Certification Board

#### **Chairman**

Bill Shepherd (702) 450-4417

#### **Vice Chairman**

Harvey Johnson (775) 832-1289

#### **Program Administrator**

John Solvie (702) 229-6547

#### **Vice Program Administrator**

Jennifer McMartin (775) 465-2045

#### **Board Members**

Steve Cottrell (702) 293-4134

Starlin Jones (775) 861-4104

Joe Crim (775) 273-2556

Alan Tinney (775) 687-9414

Diana Silsby (775) 687-9438

### **Educational Opportunities**

Keep an eye out for upcoming Circuit Rider courses. Visit the NWEA  
website under conferences. We are planning a seminar in the fall of  
2006. We have not decided what we the subject is so stay tuned. The  
22nd annual Tri-state conference in Primm NV, September 28-30,  
2006. Also September 17- 19th the CWEA will be hosting a confer-  
ence at the Nugget in Sparks. WEFTEC is going to be held in Dallas,  
TX October 21-25, 2006. The NWEA annual conference will be held in  
Las Vegas, March 21 thru 23, 2007 at the Tuscany Hotel and Casino.



### Certification Hotline

The Hotline is available weekdays M-F. If Jennifer is not available to  
take your call, please leave a message and she will get back to you usu-  
ally within 24 hours. The Hotline is also able to receive faxes at the  
same number. Check out contact us on our website [www.nvwea.org](http://www.nvwea.org)

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

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**IMPORTANT REMINDER! What is the most common way to get decertified? Answer: Do not forward your new address to the Assistant Program Administrator.** If you have changed addresses it is your responsibility to notify the Assistant Program Administrator of your new mailing address. If your address changes and we are not notified, the renewal notice comes back. The Board has no way of notifying you. After one year, your certificate will be decertified. Once your certificate is decertified you must reapply plus take and pass the grade level you were previously certified.

Please don't let this happen to you!

**Nevada Statistics**

2005	Exam	Totals
# Exams	# Passed	% Passed
<b>WWTP Operators</b>		
31	23	74%
18	13	72%
26	11	42%
24	5	21%
99	52	53%
<b>WW Lab Analyst</b>		
2	2	100%
0	0	0%
3	2	67%
2	2	100%
7	6	86%
<b>Industrial Waste Inspectors</b>		
3	1	33%
1	1	100%
1	1	100%
0	0	0%
5	3	60%
<b>IW Operator-Physical/Chemical</b>		
1	1	100%
0	0	0%
0	0	0%
0	0	0%
1	1	100%
<b>Collection System Operator</b>		
35	24	69%
13	12	92%
8	7	88%
3	3	100%
59	46	78%
<b>171</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>63%</b>

**National ABC Statistics**

2005	Exam	Totals
# Exams	# Passed	% Passed
<b>WWTP Operators</b>		
829	521	63%
1040	488	47%
805	262	33%
527	200	38%
3201	1471	46%
<b>WW Lab Analyst</b>		
37	26	70%
154	77	50%
8	4	50%
41	31	76%
240	138	58%
<b>Industrial Waste Inspectors</b>		
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
0	0	0%
<b>IW Operator-Physical/Chemical</b>		
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
N/A	0	0%
0	0	0%
<b>Collection System Operator</b>		
1032	506	49%
439	279	64%
183	96	52%
133	64	48%
1787	945	53%
<b>5228</b>	<b>2554</b>	<b>49%</b>

**Nevada 2006 Statistics**

2006	March	Totals
# Exams	# Passed	% Passed
<b>WWTP Operators</b>		
10	9	90%
3	3	100%
6	2	33%
7	5	71%
26	19	73%
<b>WW Lab Analyst</b>		
0	0	0%
3	2	67%
0	0	0%
1	1	100%
3	3	75%
<b>Industrial Waste Inspectors</b>		
1	0	0%
0	0	0%
0	0	0%
0	0	0%
5	3	60%
<b>IW Operator-Physical/Chemical</b>		
0	0	0%
1	1	100%
0	0	0%
0	0	0%
1	1	100%
<b>Collection System Operator</b>		
13	8	62%
1	1	100%
4	2	50%
2	2	100%
20	13	65%
<b>52</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>69%</b>

(Answers to quiz: 1= A, 2 = C, 3= C, 4 = A)