



Drinking Water Operator Certification Rule Office of Water Quality

(317) 233-8488 • (800) 451-6027

www.idem.IN.gov

100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

Public water supplies that must have a certified operator:

All community public water systems, all nontransient noncommunity public water systems, and any transient noncommunity public water systems that are using surface water or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water, and any transient noncommunity public water systems that employ complex treatment.

The different types of water distribution systems and what they mean:

- Distribution system small (Class DSS) – Distribution systems that serve a population less than 3,301 people and have no components other than pressure tanks or storage tanks, or are nontransient noncommunity public water systems serving a population less than 501 people utilizing no treatment other than ion exchange or inline filtration.
- Distribution system medium (Class DSM) – Distribution systems that serve a population greater than 3,300 but less than 10,001 people and have no mechanical means of movement of water other than pressure tanks or storage tanks, or booster pumps to storage tanks, or distribution systems that serve a population less than 3,301 people and consist of pumps, not including well pumps, before the entry point to the distribution system or booster pumps to storage tanks.
- Distribution system large (Class DSL) – Distribution systems that serve a population greater than 10,000 people or serve a population less than 10,001 people and consist of booster pumps in the distribution system other than booster pumps to storage tanks or mechanical devices for movement of water beyond storage.

The different types of water treatment systems and what they mean:

- Water treatment 1 (Class WT1) – Water treatment plants that serve a population of less than 501 people, are a community water system, acquire water from ground water or purchase, and have ion exchange softening process for cation removal and/or an inline filtration device with no chemical treatment.
- Water treatment 2 (Class WT2) – Water treatment plants, with no population limitations, that acquire water from ground water or purchase and utilize a chemical feed to achieve disinfection or fluoride standardization or water stabilization; or water treatment plants that serve a population greater than 500 people and less than 3,301 people that use an ion exchange softening process for cation removal and/or an inline filtration device.
- Water treatment 3 (Class WT3) – Water treatment plants that acquire water from ground water or purchase, utilize a chemical feed, and have one of the following:
 - Pressure or gravity filtration.
 - Ion exchange processes (if the population served is greater than 3,300 people).
 - Lime soda softening.
 - Reverse osmosis.
 - Inline filtration, if the population is greater than 3,300 people.
- Water treatment 4 (Class WT4) – Water treatment plants that serve a population less than 10,001 people and acquire water from surface water and/or ground water under the direct influence of surface water.
- Water treatment 5 (Class WT5) – Water treatment plants that serve a population greater than 10,000 people and acquire water from surface water and/or ground water under the direct influence of surface water.
- Water treatment 6 (Class WT6) – Water treatment plants that utilize newly emerging treatment technology not commonly in use for drinking water treatment in Indiana, as determined by the IDEM Commissioner.

Who administers the certification of water operators:

Indiana Department of Environmental Management
Office of Water Quality, Drinking Water Branch
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2251
Contact: Ruby Keslar
Telephone: (317) 234-7431

Requirements to become a certified operator:

- All individuals for each class must pass an examination, unless exempted by statute or rule, have a high school education or its equivalent and possess educational skills necessary to:
 - make simple computations with fractions and decimals;
 - read a linear scale;
 - calculate volumes of simple shapes;
 - make simple computations of multiplication and division;
 - keep records;
 - read and write the English language to the extent of interpreting service manuals and work orders, and submitting written reports; and,
 - understand basic principles of sanitation and science.
- Each grade of water works operator certification requires a specific amount of acceptable work experience that has been obtained under the supervision of an appropriately certified operator.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs):

- All certified operators are required to obtain a designated number of continuing education contact hours during their three-year renewal period. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are broken down into contact hours, which are 50 to 60 minute instructional sessions involving a qualified instructor or lecturer. Ten contact hours equals one CEU. Each grade of operator must complete a specific amount of contact hours in order to renew their certification. The following shows the contact hours needed for each Certified Operator Class for every three-year renewal:
 - DSS 10 contact hours
 - DSM 15 contact hours
 - DSL 15 contact hours
 - WT1 10 contact hours
 - WT2 15 contact hours
 - WT3 25 contact hours
 - WT4 30 contact hours
 - WT5 30 contact hours
 - WT6 30 contact hours

More Information:

- For more information on Operator Certification, please contact IDEM's Drinking Water Branch at (317) 234-7430 or, toll free, at (800) 451-6027, ext. 4-7430.
- For information on federal drinking water standards, please contact the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA's) Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800)426-4791.

This technical guidance is intended solely as guidance and does not have the effect of law or represent formal Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) decisions or final actions. This guidance document shall be used in conjunction with applicable rules and statutes. It does not replace applicable rules and statutes, and if it conflicts with these rules and statutes, the rules and statutes shall control.