



# **Water and Wastewater Works Advisory Board**

**State of Alaska  
Department of Environmental Conservation**

## **Policy Statement 2010-01 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Training**

### **Background**

Continuing education is required in two instances with regard to operator certification.

1. Higher level exams require continuing education as a prerequisite for taking exams.
2. Continuing education is required for certificate renewal.

For purposes of evaluating education, the department utilizes the Continuing Education Unit (CEU), an internationally recognized unit of educational accomplishment similar to college credits. The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) defines one CEU as "ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction."

### **Introduction**

Regulations do not specify the criteria for determining which courses or programs are acceptable as CEUs. This policy statement supplements the regulations by stating criteria that programs or coursework must meet to be eligible for CEUs. Additionally, this policy statement draws a distinction between directly related and indirectly related education as it relates to water/wastewater certification.

### **Discussion**

When formulating this policy, the Board wishes to:

1. Emphasize that programs counting toward CEUs must meet national standards for awarding CEUs;
2. Make it easier for both department staff and individual operators to objectively determine the eligibility of specific courses and programs for CEUs; and
3. Lay the groundwork for distinguishing between courses directly related and courses peripherally related to the water/wastewater industry.

## **Policy**

The department will apply the following criteria to determine eligibility of CEUs toward the operator certification requirements:

### **A. Program or Coursework Criteria**

1. The course or training must be an organized continuing education experience that meets an identifiable need.
2. The sponsoring organization must be an educational institution, professional association, business, non-profit corporation, government organization, or a department approved instructor.
3. Instructors must be competent in the subject matter as indicated by experience in which command of the subject matter is recognized by the instructor's peers, formal education or training, or demonstrated by publication in professional journals or other appropriate media.
4. Instructors must submit a resume, course outline with number of contact hours, and personal references.
5. Specific performance requirements for completion of the program must be established prior to the program (i.e., attendance, reading/homework assignments, final tests, etc.) As a minimum, participants must attend eighty-five percent (85%) of a classroom offering that meets the program criteria.
6. Participant registration must include sufficient detail to provide necessary information for a permanent record of the individual's participation in the program (i.e., certificate of completion or equivalent document showing attendee's name, course title, name of instructor, name of sponsoring organization, dates, and hours of attendance, if appropriate.).

### **B. Activities that Do Not Qualify for CEUs**

1. High school equivalency programs or courses earned at a secondary level do not qualify.
2. Programs that deal with the internal affairs of an organization do not qualify, e.g., topics such as employee rights, responsibilities, or benefits.
3. On-the-job training, safety meetings, and other routine work-related duties do not qualify unless part of a planned and documented program that meets the program criteria described above.
4. Work experience does not qualify.
5. Meetings of societies and associations do not qualify. However, activities associated with these meetings may qualify if other program criteria are met.
6. Participation in television, radio, newspaper, or video programs does not qualify unless these presentations are an integral part of an educational program that qualifies under the program criteria.
7. Attendance at lectures, cultural events, performances, or recreational meetings does not qualify unless as an integral part of a larger educational program that meets the program criteria.
8. Writing articles and reports, or the presentation of papers does not qualify unless as part of a structured program that meets program criteria.

9. Self directed studies, individual study, or other forms of independent learning do not qualify unless part of a structured program that fulfills program criteria.
10. Activities less than one hour in length do not qualify.

### **C. Calculating CEUs and CEU Equivalents**

1. CEU equivalency for college credits approved by the department is as follows: 1 semester hour is equivalent to 1.5 CEUs; 1 quarter hour is equivalent to 1 CEU.
2. Instructors can receive continuing education for their first presentation of a program. Instructors receive the same number of CEUs as the attendees. Instructors will not receive CEUs for subsequent presentations of the same course.

### **D. Core versus Non-core CEUs**

1. Core CEUs are those specifically related to the water or wastewater industry or those integral to the operation and maintenance of the system. Examples of core CEUs would include courses in water treatment, water distribution, fire hydrant maintenance, wastewater treatment, activated sludge, wastewater collection, or utility management.
2. Non-core CEUs, while still relevant to the water or wastewater industry, are those indirectly related or peripheral to the industry. Examples of non-core CEUs would include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED), or Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER).

### **E. Repeating Courses for CEU Credit**

1. Core courses can be repeated once for CEU credit; however, not within a three year period. Half credit will be recognized the second time that a core course is taken.
2. Non-core courses cannot be repeated for CEU credit.
3. Core or non-core courses even though similar in name to a previously completed course may have updated content; in those cases full credit will be assigned to a repeated core or non-core course if it can be shown that the course content has been significantly updated and approved. An updated core or non-core course will not be recognized for CEUs if completed within three years of the initial course.
4. Wastewater stabilization pond courses may be repeated for full CEU credit for the renewal of wastewater stabilization pond operator certificates; however, not within a three year period.

Adopted this twenty-seventh day of October, 2010

Mark Buggins/ Mark Buggins  
Chair, Water and Wastewater Works Advisory Board

*Amended to allow for repeating of core or non-core courses for full credit if course content has been significantly changed and to allow repeating wastewater stabilization pond courses for full credit toward the renewal of wastewater stabilization pond operator certificates.*

*(Effective 12/2/88 88-T-03; amended 9/17/02 02-T-03; amended 5/8/09 2009-06; amended 10/27/10 2010-01)*