

Do you own or operate a Class A Public Water System serving 25-500 people per day or a Class B Public Water System that uses a surface water source?

If so -- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation wants to hear from you.

To meet federal drinking water requirements, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will be adopting a new Operator Certification Program for public water systems that serve 25 to 500 people per day, with fewer than 100 service connections. Operators of these small public water systems will be required to be “certified” by DEC. This new program must be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and be in place by February 6, 2001.

Designing A Program That Makes Sense for Alaska

The Operator Certification Program for Alaska’s small public water systems must ensure that operators are sufficiently trained and experienced to provide safe water to consumers. But to be successful, the new program must make sense for Alaska’s small public water systems. System owners, operators and consumers are invited to help design the Operator Certification Program for Alaska’s small public water systems.

It's Time to Get Involved!

- Review the *proposed* program described in this flyer. Think about how it would work for your water system. Please give us any suggestions you have on how to improve it!

Proposed Classification for Small Public Water Systems

Under the *proposed* Operator Certification Program, public water systems that serve 25 to 500 people per day and have fewer than 100 service connections would be “classified” by DEC according to their size, complexity and type of source water. Operator certification and renewal requirements would be determined by the system classification.

The following classifications are proposed for small public water systems. Your comments on these proposed classifications are needed!

- Type I **Systems that do no water treatment or use only physical filtration or other passive treatment (no chemicals added).** This would be the simplest small water system classification with the most basic operator certification requirements.
- Type II **Systems that use chemicals for disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control or pH adjustment, and Class B systems that use a surface water source.**
- Level I - IV **Systems that use more complex water treatment methods (such as chemically-aided or membrane filtration).** DEC would use a “point rating system” to classify these systems, from Level I-IV. These “levels” are used by DEC in their existing certification program for large water system operators (18 AAC 74).

Proposed Requirements for Operator Certification

To become certified, operators of small public water systems would need to meet education and experience requirements and pass an examination. To renew their certificate every three years, operators would be required to take additional training.

Proposed certification and renewal requirements are shown below. Your comments on these proposed requirements are welcome!

System Type	Education	Experience	Examination	Renewal
Type I	H.S. diploma or GED; substitution of operating experience or relevant training allowed	3 months operating experience, completion of DEC-approved “basic” training course , or “on-site” training at your water system site	On-site, practical exam	½ - day DEC-approved training
Type II	H.S. diploma or GED; substitution of operating experience or relevant training allowed	3 months operating experience, or completion of DEC-approved “intermediate” training course	Written exam; (on-site oral, practical exam may be given at discretion of DEC)	One-day DEC-approved training
Level I – Level IV	Required education varies depending upon the Level, per existing DEC regulations (18 AAC 74)	Required experience varies depending upon the Level, per existing DEC regulations (18 AAC 74)	Written exam	30 hours of DEC-approved courses

Would a Certified Operator Be On-Site at All Times?

Federal guidelines require that small public water systems be directly supervised by a certified operator. However, many small systems could be supervised by a certified operator who is a “circuit rider.” A circuit rider would supervise the operation of a number of small public water systems at different locations. DEC would review each system’s plan to use a circuit rider, to ensure that the system would be adequately supervised.

Existing Operators Would Have Time to Become Certified

People who are now successfully operating small public water systems would be able to continue to operate their systems while they complete the operator certification requirements and become certified operators.

With your help, DEC will have a draft formal Operator Certification Program for public comment by May 2000. Look for updated information on DEC’s web site at www.state.ak.us/dec

For more information or to give comments, call:

- Keven Kleweno, DEC, Drinking Water Program, (907) 269-7696 in Anchorage.
- Kerry Lindley, DEC, Facilities Construction and Operation, (907) 465-5143 in Juneau.

The definitions, training, and educational requirements described in this flyer would apply only to systems serving fewer than 500 people, or 100 service connections. Currently, DEC is not planning to modify the current Operator Certification Program for systems serving more than 500 people, or 100 service connections. However, if you would like to provide comments on the proposed and existing programs, DEC will accept all comments.