

On June 28, 2012, the findings of the external review were submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in DEP's Annual Report for the Drinking Water Operator Certification Program for 2011. Although the Certification Program Advisory Committee completed its external review of the program in January 2011, CPAC recognized the importance of obtaining input from certified operators. To obtain input, operators who participated in the July 2011 round of Operator Certification workshops across the state were surveyed through a questionnaire in their training packet. The survey results from 171 certified operators were tabulated and reviewed. The results of the certified operators' survey aligned with the external program review findings and recommendations. Thus, the January 2011 external review findings did not change.

For the survey results, *Attachment A—Operator Certification Certified Operator Survey Results*, was included in DEP's Annual Report for 2011.

Attachment A

## OPERATOR CERTIFICATION CERTIFIED OPERATOR SURVEY RESULTS

To date, surveys developed by the Certification Program Advisory Committee, which focused on soliciting opinions regarding the Examination and Testing; Certification Section Services and Procedures; Continuing Education and Training Providers; and Status and Trends components of the program have been sent to system owners, training & examination providers and examinees. Unfortunately, due to mailing costs for distributing about 8,000 surveys, we did not solicit input from *certified operators* at that time. However, all those involved in the external review process understood the importance and necessity to include *certified operators* input so it was determined that the external review should include results from a survey of *certified operators*.

DEP recently conducted several training sessions between July 12, 2011 and July 21, 2011 for the regulated community; to facilitate completion of the external program review, as part of the training packet participant received at the training sessions, we included a survey and requested that *certified operators* complete and return the survey at the training session. We collected 171 completed *certified operator* surveys. As a note: some respondent's survey questions were left blank and a few survey questions resulted in more than one answer so percentages will not always equal 100%.

**The initial 7 questions (1 thru 7) asked the *certified operator* to identify at what level they understood specific operator certification components of the Program. They were to respond based on answer A = "don't understand at all" to answer C = "completely understand"**

	A	B	C
1. Classification & Subclassification of Systems	001(01%)	033(19%)	132(77%)
2. Education Requirements	001(01%)	015(09%)	151(88%)
3. Experience Requirements	001(01%)	029(17%)	137(80%)
4. Certificate Renewal Process & Deadlines	000(00%)	019(11%)	147(86%)
5. Certificate Upgrade Process	002(01%)	043(25%)	124(73%)
6. Continuing Education Requirements	002(01%)	014(08%)	150(88%)
7. Who to contact with program questions	008(05%)	042(25%)	119(70%)

**The next 5 questions (8 thru 12) asked the *certified operator* to rate their level of satisfaction with specific components of the Program. They were to respond based on answer A = "least satisfied" to answer C = "most satisfied"**

	A	B	C
8. Exam Availability	067(39%)	058(34%)	040(23%)
9. Exam Location	036(21%)	092(54%)	038(22%)
10. Exam Prep Training	020(12%)	077(45%)	064(37%)
11. Operator Certification Website	006(04%)	072(42%)	090(53%)
12. Earthwise Academy	006(04%)	047(27%)	116(68%)

**The next 16 questions (13 thru 28) relate to the Training & Testing Components of the Program.**

13. Do you feel that the number of certification examinations offered each year is sufficient to meet the demand?

1 = Yes	041(24%)
2 = No	124(73%)

14. Do you feel that the geographic location of examinations offered throughout the Commonwealth has reduced the need for operators to travel long distances to take examinations?

1 = Yes	085(50%)
2 = No	076(44%)

15. Do you feel experience should be required to sit for the certification examination?

1 = Yes	105(61%)
2 = No	060(35%)

16. Do you feel training should be required to sit for the certification examination?

1 = Yes	114(67%)
2 = No	050(29%)

17. The certification examination consisting of 2 parts; a Part I-General exam and a Part II Technology Specific exam has been beneficial for an operator for certification?

1 = Yes	143(84%)
2 = No	021(12%)

18. The primary testing method for certification should be:

1) Hardcopy paper based	090(53%)
2) Electronic computer based	071(42%)

19. If you used an Approved Examination Provider, have they provided guidance in appropriate certification requirements for your facility?

1) Yes	044(26%)
2) No	014(08%)
3) N/A	105(61%)

20. Are there sufficient training opportunities available to prepare for the operator certification examinations?

1) Yes	103(60%)
2) No	060(35%)

21. Were study materials readily available and useful in preparing for the examination?

1) Yes	131(77%)
2) No	026(15%)

22. What study materials did you use?
- |                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| 1) Books                | 095(56%) |
| 2) SAC manuals          | 088(51%) |
| 3) web-based            | 034(20%) |
| 4) DEP Training Modules | 075(44%) |
| 5) Other                | 044(26%) |
23. Did you participate in a DEP approved training course prior to testing?
- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 112(65%) |
| 2) No  | 045(26%) |
24. If yes to question 23, was the training useful in preparing you for the operator certification examination?
- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 113(66%) |
| 2) No  | 012(07%) |
25. Did you pass the certification examination on your first try?
- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 120(70%) |
| 2) No  | 036(21%) |
26. What type(s) of training courses would you prefer?
- |                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| 1) Classroom   | 132(77%) |
| 2) Web-based   | 051(30%) |
| 3) On-Site     | 051(30%) |
| 4) Conferences | 041(24%) |
| 5) Other       | 015(09%) |
27. For continuing education, how would you rate web-based training (WBT) in comparison to classroom training?
- |                                   |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 1) I prefer WBT                   | 014(08%) |
| 2) WBT is okay, if I can't travel | 041(24%) |
| 3) I like both equally            | 066(39%) |
| 4) I don't like WBT               | 038(22%) |
28. Do you feel the current level on continuing education contact hours required for an operator to renew their certificate is?
- |                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1) Excessive         | 052(30%) |
| 2) Not enough        | 008(05%) |
| 3) Appropriate as is | 101(59%) |

**The next 7 questions (29 thru 35) relate to the Outreach & Stakeholder Involvement Components of the Program.**

29. Have you ever contacted DEP certification personnel for guidance or information?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 099(58%) |
| 2) No  | 064(37%) |

30. If yes to question 28, were the DEP certification personnel helpful in responding to your issue/concern?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 103(60%) |
| 2) No  | 015(09%) |

31. My primary source of information about the Operator Certification Program is:

- |                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1) DEP Operator Website        | 087(51%) |
| 2) Other operators             | 012(07%) |
| 3) Training providers          | 041(24%) |
| 4) DEP certification personnel | 014(08%) |

32. The Operator Information Website presents useful information.

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1) Yes                                 | 122(71%) |
| 2) No                                  | 008(05%) |
| 3) Don't know, never accessed the site | 031(18%) |

33. The Earthwise Academy is well organized and easy to use.

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1) Yes                                 | 122(71%) |
| 2) No                                  | 015(09%) |
| 3) Don't know, never accessed the site | 028(16%) |

34. Do you use the Earthwise Academy to identify approved DEP training?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 106(62%) |
| 2) No  | 058(34%) |

35. Do you use the Earthwise Academy to check and track your con-ed contact hours?

- |        |          |
|--------|----------|
| 1) Yes | 128(75%) |
| 2) No  | 035(20%) |

**The next 6 questions (36 thru 41) relate to Program Status & Trends.**

36. In Pennsylvania, I currently hold valid certification in?		
1) Water		053(31%)
2) Wastewater		053(31%)
3) Both		055(32%)
37. My Age?		
1)17-30		010(06%)
2)31-40		029(17%)
3)41-50		046(27%)
4)51-60		063(37%)
5)60+		017(10%)
38. My highest level of education?		
1) High School/GED		089(52%)
2) Associates Degree		019(11%)
3) College Degree		060(35%)
39. Are you a circuit rider?		
1) Yes		016(09%)
2) No		145(85%)
40. If yes to question 39, how many systems do you operate?		
1)1-5		032(19%)
2) 6-10		010(06%)
3) 11-15		002(01%)
4) 16-20		000(00%)
5) >21		003(02%)
41. How many systems do you feel could be adequately operated and still maintain compliance?		
1)1-5		058(34%)
2) 6-10		023(13%)
3) 11-15		004(02%)
4) 16-20		001(01%)
5) >21		006(04%)