Proposed Updates to Wastewater Operator Certification Rule

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is proposing changes to chapter 173-230 WAC, Certification of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants (Rule). This Rule establishes the classifications for wastewater treatment plants and the requirements for certification of wastewater treatment plant operators.

As part of this rulemaking we have focused on the following:

- Establishing a new fee schedule as directed by the Legislature in 2018.
- Providing for an Operator in Training and respective education and experience qualifications for Groups II-IV.
- Updating Rule language to acknowledge new technologies in wastewater treatment.
- Reorganizing the Rule to create standalone sections where more information and clarity are needed.
- Clarifying Rule language to codify existing program practices.

Public Comment Period ends: May 1, 2019.

Submit comments online at http://ws.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=gPMjY or at one of the following:

In-Person Public Meetings & Hearings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April 23, 2019</th>
<th>April 25, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Ecology</td>
<td>Moses Lake Civic Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 Desmond Dr.</td>
<td>401 South Balsam St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lacey, WA 98503</td>
<td>Moses Lake, WA 98837</td>
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Webinar Public Meeting & Hearing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April 23, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo">https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note, any information (e.g., personal or contact) you provide in a comment or in an attachment may be publicly disclosed and posted on the Internet.

Documents available for review:

- Regulatory Analyses: https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/1910016.html
- Other documents, including a Summary of Changes Addendum and SEPA, can be found online https://go.usa.gov/xE8jP.

Ecology expects to adopt this Rule on or after July 10, 2019. If you would prefer to review hard copies of any of these documents please contact Jocelyn W. Jones at jocelyn.jones@ecy.wa.gov or at 360-407-6321.

Fee Changes

By law, Ecology must fund the Wastewater Operator Certification Program with fees; however, the law has capped the fees since the 1980s. Rising costs over almost 40 years have meant that we've been unable to keep up with this obligation. The Legislature recognized this and removed the fee cap from the law and directed Ecology to establish a new fee schedule in the Rule.

Ecology formed and worked with a Rule Advisory Committee (RAC)—made up of certified operators from around the state and from each Group level—to advise us on the proposed changes. The RAC suggested we invert the historic fee structure, placing more of the burden to fund the program on renewal fees instead of application fees.

This change in the structure allowed us to reduce the overall proposed fee increases for both the application and the renewal fees. It also allowed us to keep Group I and Group I Operator in Training application fees unchanged.
Notice to Interested Parties

At a time when the profession is losing its most experienced operators to retirement, we hope keeping entry-level application fees more affordable will incentivize entry into the profession. This was a key concern expressed by the RAC and we worked hard to address it. Table 1 shows the proposed fees for Fiscal Year 2020 & 2021.

Table 1: Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 Fee Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount for Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020)</th>
<th>Amount for Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group I and Group I OIT (Operator in Training) Applications</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups II through IV Applications and Groups II through IV OIT Applications</td>
<td>$59.00</td>
<td>$67.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewals</td>
<td>$64.00</td>
<td>$98.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Operator in Training (OIT) Group II — IV

Ecology is also proposing another update to the Rule to incentivize and encourage entry into and growth within the profession—new OIT Group levels II-IV. These new Group levels are for those that can pass the next Group level exam, but don’t have the operating experience to qualify for a full certification at that higher Group level.

Applicants who already hold a full certification may apply for an OIT certification one level above their full certification level. If they pass the exam for that level, they will hold an OIT certification for that level as well as their full certification.

Group II – IV OIT certifications can be held for two exam cycles, up to 10 years, while gaining the necessary experience to upgrade to the next Group level for full certification. While holding an OIT II-IV certification, operators are only required to meet the professional growth requirements for their full certification and will pay only one renewal fee.

How can I find out more about the Operator Certification Rulemaking?

For more information on the rulemaking, please visit: https://go.usa.gov/xE8jP or contact Jocelyn Jones at jocelyn.jones@ecy.wa.gov or at 360-407-6321 or 360-522-0335.

For information about the Wastewater Operator Certification Program, please visit: ecology.wa.gov/opcert or contact Poppy Carre at poca461@ecy.wa.gov or at 360-407-6449.

Special accommodations

To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-407-6600 or visit https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.
Notice to Interested Parties

El Departamento de Ecología propone enmiendas al Capítulo 173-230 WAC Certificación de operadores de plantas de tratamiento de aguas residuales (Certification of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants). Esta reglamentación establece un programa de tarifas en regla y establece otros cambios para clarificar los requisitos y procedimientos del programa.

Comentarios formales acerca de esta reglamentación se aceptarán hasta el 1 de mayo de 2019.

Audiencia pública en persona:
- 23 de abril de 2019 a la 1:30 PM
  Departamento de Ecología Oficina Central
  300 Desmond Dr. SE
  Lacey, WA 98503
- 25 de abril de 2019
  Moses Lake Centro Civico
  401 South Balsam St.
  Moses Lake, WA 98837

Reunión pública / audiencia a través de webinario
- 23 de abril de 2019 a las 6:00 PM
  https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo
Para más información favor de llamar a Jocelyn Jones al 360-407-6321 y solicitar un intérprete.

北環境部は廃水処理場管理者の資格認定に関連する規則(Chapter 173-230 WAC Certification of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants)を改正します。この改正案には資格認定に必要な要件と手順を補完し、認定に必要なコストが確定されています。

この改正案に対する意見は2019年5月1日まで提出してください。

市民公開会:
- 時間: 2019年4月23日, 午後1時30分
  場所: Dept. of Ecology Headquarters
  300 Desmond Dr. SE
  Lacey, WA 98503
- 時間: 2019年4月25日 午前10時
  場所: Moses Lake Civic Center
  401 South Balsam St.
  Moses Lake, WA 98837

コンピューターを活用した公開会 (Webinar):
- 時間: 2019年4月23日, 午後6時
  https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo

詳細な事項を伺います場合はJocelyn Jonesさん(360-407-6321)に電話して通訳を依頼してください。
Notice to Interested Parties

華盛頓州生態管理署提議進行華盛頓州行政法令173-230章漏廢水處理廠作業員證照(Certification of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants)修訂作業。本規章修訂明確訂定收費標準和作些更改以闡明本章規定和作業程序。

對本規章修訂提供正式建議截止日期為2019年5月1日。

公開聽證會:

2019年4月23日下午1點30分
Dept. of Ecology Headquarters (華盛頓州生態管理署總部)
300 Desmond Dr. SE
Lacey, WA 98503

2019年4月25日早上10點
Moses Lake Civic Center (摩西湖民眾中心)
401 South Balsam St.
Moses Lake, WA 98837

網上公開聽會:
https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo

若需更多訊息或翻譯員服務,請聯絡Jocelyn Jones 電話: 360-407-6321。

Bộ Môi Sinh đang đề xuất sửa đổi Chương 173-230 WAC: Chứng Chi Cho Người Điều Hành Nhà Máy Xử Lý Nước Thái (Certification of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants). Đạo luật này thiết lập một biểu phí theo quy tắc và thực hiện các thay đổi khác để làm rõ các yêu cầu và thủ tục của chương trình.

Thời hạn góp ý cho đạo luật này là ngày 1 tháng 5-2019.

Buổi điều trần cho công chúng:

Ngày 23 tháng 4-2019 vào lúc 1:30 chiều
Dept. of Ecology Headquarters
300 Desmond Dr. SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Ngày 25 tháng 4-2019 vào lúc 10:00 sáng
Moses Lake Civic Center
401 South Balsam St.
Moses Lake, WA 98837

Cuộc họp công cộng / Hội thảo qua mạng
Ngày 23 tháng 4-2019 vào lúc 6:00 chiều
https://bit.ly/2IUsoDo

Để biết thêm thông tin hoặc cần thông dịch viên, xin liên hệ Jocelyn Jones tại số 360-407-6321.