



# FACILITY OPERATORS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

CY 2022 Annual Report to the Water and Wastewater  
Facility Operators Certification Board

Prepared jointly by the Colorado Certified Water Professionals Office  
and the Colorado Water Quality Control Division

## INTRODUCTION

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The goal of the operator certification program is to protect public health and the environment. It does so by ensuring that skilled professionals are certified to oversee the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water as well as the collection and treatment of wastewater prior to discharge. Certification requirements in Colorado comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, and federal and state implementing regulations. Certified operators provide a critical barrier in safeguarding public and environmental health.

The State of Colorado's Operator Certification Program was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency consistent with the requirements of the Final Guidelines for the Certification and Recertification of the Operators of Community and Non-Transient, Non-Community Public Water Systems, 64 FR 5916 on June 22, 2001.

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

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This report provides the Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Board (board) with a comprehensive overview of program activities. It covers the calendar year 2022 and includes data for the previous four years, when available, for comparison and trend purposes. The sources of data used to compile this report are official annual reports to the EPA and records maintained by the board's contractor and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division (division).

## BOARD INFORMATION

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The board is a ten-member, governor-appointed board representing a variety of water and wastewater professionals. The board is established by Article 9 of Title 25, C.R.S. The board published Regulation 100 Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Requirements in accordance with sections 25-9-101 - 110 C.R.S.

During this reporting period, the facility operators certification program, known as Colorado Certified Water Professionals (CCWP), consisted of three distinct groups: the board, including the board administrator; the division; and the board's contractor. They have interrelated responsibilities for activities within the program.

The board is authorized to adopt and amend rules related to operator certification. It also adopts and revises policy and guidance documents as needed. The board hears appeals of any contractor or division decisions that fall within its jurisdiction and determines the appropriate disciplinary action for operator misconduct.

Subject to the board's oversight, the board's contractor administers the operator certification aspect of the program. Colorado Rural Water Association runs the Colorado Certified Water Professionals (CCWP) office to directly serve operators seeking initial or renewed Colorado certification. The CCWP office also reviews and approves training unit credits for courses submitted to meet required operator continuing education. The CCWP Portal automates many of the tasks associated with operator and course provider applications and reviews. This tool is utilized and managed by the CCWP office.

The division is responsible for compliance and enforcement to ensure every water and wastewater facility is under the supervision of a certified operator holding a certificate equal to or greater than the classification of the facility. The division is also responsible for the classification of all water and wastewater facilities in accordance with Regulation 100, Sections 100.4 to 100.9, and for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by certified operators in the performance of their duties. The division serves as staff to the board and as the liaison between the division and the board, board contractor, certified operators, and facility owners. In that role, the division provides compliance assistance, regulation implementation, outreach, training, and education.

# **Colorado Certified Water Professionals Program**

## **2022 Annual Report**



2022 was a successful year for the certified operators of Colorado and the CCWP Program. The program continues to provide timely review of operator applications, customer service and certification trainings to those it serves. The program's goal remains the same: It seeks to serve operators who serve the communities of Colorado.

PSI testing centers continue to provide testing locations and remotely proctored exams for people wanting to take certification exams. CCWP recorded a 3% increase in exam application submitted from 2021 to 2022. PSI reports that there were 144 fewer exams administered in 2022 than in 2021. Further, 58% of the operators who passed their exams did so on their first attempt. Approximately 11% of the 2022 exams were remotely proctored. There were 15.5% fewer certification renewal applications in 2022 than in 2021. Despite the drop in renewals, there are nearly the same number of active Colorado certifications as 2019, 2020 and 2021.

The course providers that deliver professional development courses continue to meet the virtual and in-person training needs of Colorado operators. Operator trainings, schools and conferences are starting to return to pre-pandemic delivery, but trainers still maintain virtual platforms to provide the opportunities for professional development and training unit accrual. The CCWP program continues to uphold its guidance for training unit approval including the requirements for online training and provided one-on-one trainings with every online training provider to ensure that course providers were issuing training for courses that meet Colorado's standards.

The information in this report was collected using CCWP Portal and PSI testing data. The information in this report is a collection of the best information the CCWP Program has at this time, and the program continues to work to validate this data and improve data collection with the partners at LaunchIT, USAePay and PSI to ensure data reports are consistent and accurate.

## Table of Contents

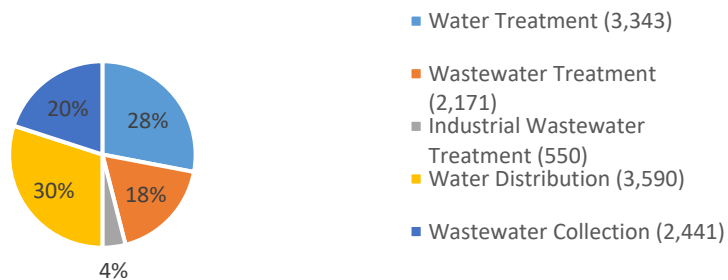
Section	Page
<p>Section 1: Active Certificates and Active Operators (as of 12/31/2022)</p> <p>A. Number of active certificates by category and level (includes restricted certificates)</p> <p>B. Number of active restricted certificates by category and level</p> <p>C. Total number of active operators (includes operators holding restricted certificates)</p> <p>D. Number of active operators holding restricted certificates</p>	Pg. 3
<p>Section 2: 2022 Exams</p> <p>A. Exam Applications</p> <p>B. Exams Administered</p> <p>C. Pass Rates</p> <p>D. Exam Delivery Method</p> <p>E. Trends, issues and problems for board attention or action</p>	Pg. 5
<p>Section 3: 2022 Renewed and Restored Certificates</p> <p>A. Renewed Certificates</p> <p>B. Restored Certificates</p> <p>C. Trends, issues and problems for board attention or action</p>	Pg. 9
<p>Section 4: 2022 Certification by Reciprocity</p> <p>A. Total Requests</p> <p>B. Requests Approved</p> <p>C. Requests Denied</p> <p>D. Trends, issues and problems for board attention or action</p>	Pg. 11
<p>Section 5: 2022 Courses Approved for TUs</p> <p>A. Number of 2021 courses approved for TUs</p> <p>B. Trends, issues and problems for board attention or action training</p>	Pg. 13
<p>Section 6: 2022 Financial Summary</p> <p>A. Fees collected by certificate category and level</p> <p>B. Other fees collected</p> <p>C. Expenditures compared to board-approved budget</p> <p>D. Trends, issues and problems for board attention or action</p>	Pg. 14
Section 7: Staff	Pg. 21

### Section 1: Active Certificates and Active Operators as of 12/31/2022

On December 31, 2022 there were 12,095 Colorado Certified Water Professionals certifications on the CCWP Portal. This number excludes expired certificates within 2-year restoration period and renewed certificates not effective as of December 31<sup>st</sup>. There was a 2% increase in the number of active and restorable certificates compared to 2021. There were the same number of active restricted certificates in 2021 and 2022.

Active Certificates December 31, 2018	Active Certificates December 31, 2019	Active Certificates December 31, 2020	Active Certificates December 31, 2021	Active Certificates December 31, 2022
11,685	11,879	11,851	11,884	12,095

**Active Certificates by Type**



<b>Active and Restorable Certificates on December 31, 2022</b> Number of certificates* by category and level (includes restricted certificates) <i>Information collected using the CCWP Portal</i>	
Certification Type and Level	Active Certificates
<b>Water Treatment Operator</b>	
T	25
S	424
D	939
C	654
B	457
A	844
Water Treatment Operator total	3,343
<b>Wastewater Treatment Operator</b>	
S	160
D	705
C	457
B	262
A	587
Wastewater Treatment Operator total	2,171
<b>Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator</b>	
D	241
C	115
B	68
A	126

Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator total	550	
<b>Active and Restorable Certificates on December 31, 2022 (continued)</b> Number of certificates* by category and level (includes restricted certificates) <i>Information collected using the CCWP Portal</i>		
Certification Type and Level	Active Certificates	Active Restricted Certificates
Water Distribution System Operator		
1	1,349	4
2	882	4
3	530	0
4	829	18
Water Distribution System Operator total	3,590	26
Wastewater Collection System Operator		
1	967	3
2	585	3
3	342	0
4	547	7
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	2,441	13
<b>Grand Total all Categories / Level</b>	12,095	39

\*Active certificates are certificates that are currently effective (excludes expired certificates within 2-year restoration period and renewed certificates that have not become effective yet)

#### Number of Active Restricted Certificates by Category and Level

<b>Active Restricted Certificates by Type and Level on December 31, 2022</b>	
Certification Type and Level	Active Restricted Certificates
Water Distribution System Operator	
1	4
2	4
3	0
4	18
Water Distribution System Operator total	26
Wastewater Collection System Operator	
1	3
2	3
3	0
4	7
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	13
<b>Restricted Certification Total all Categories/Levels</b>	39 in 2022, 39 in 2021

<b>Active Operator Report on December 31, 2022</b> <i>Includes operators holding restricted certificates</i>
Active Operators
5,525 (1.5% increase from 2021)

\*\*Active operators hold at least one active certificates

### Number of active operators holding restricted certificates

Active Operator Report on December 31, 2022	
Operators with Active Restricted Certificates	% of Total Operators
39	< 1%

*\*\*Active operators hold at least one active certificate.*

### Section 2: 2022 Examination Information

#### Certification by Examination

There were approximately 224 exams applications submitted per month in 2022 which reflects a 3% increase in applications submitted in 2022 compared to 2021. Rejected application make up less than one percent of application received and reviewed. They are typically rejected because operators submit applications in error. For example, someone who currently holds a Small Water System certification applies to take a class D Water Treatment certification exam because of changing system requirements without realizing he or she is a candidate for a class C Water Treatment certification exam.

#### Examination Applications

Examination Applications Received and Reviewed January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Application Status	Number of Applications
Approved	2,673
Awaiting Reply	5
Ineligible	11
Total Received Applications	2,689; 2,618 submitted in 2021

#### Number of Applications Approved in 2022

Examination Applications Reviewed January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022		
Application Status	Number of Applications	% of Applications Received
Approved	2,673	99%

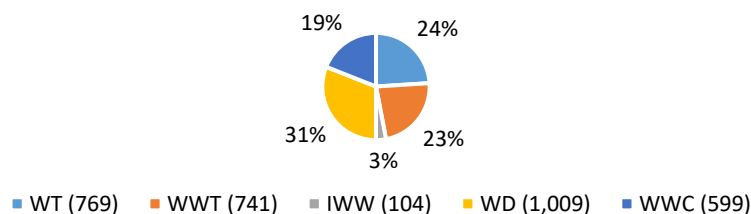
#### Exams Administered by Category and Level

*Data source: PSI Online Database*

PSI continues to administer exams for Colorado operators. Once exam applications are approved, operators contact PSI directly to schedule examinations. When operators pass exams successfully, PSI shares the data with the CCWP Portal, and the CCWP staff issues certifications to operators on the CCWP Portal. There were 3,222 exams administered in 2022 which is a 4% decrease from 2021. Interestingly, the exact same percentage of industrial wastewater, water distribution and wastewater collection certifications were administered in 2020 and 2021, and only a 1% average change in water and wastewater treatment exams administered. Though it seems strange there were far more exams administered per month than applications submitted, operators can take exams multiple times if unsuccessful on their previous attempts without having to reapply.



Exams Administered January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022  
 Total Exams: 935 in 2019/2,526 in 2020/3,366 in 2021/  
 3,222 in 2022



Water Treatment Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Exam Class and Type Administered	Number in 2019/2020/2021/2022
Water Treatment – T	0/1/0/0
Water Treatment – S	16/40/44/54
Water Treatment – D	92/199/257/258
Water Treatment – C	61/130/204/162
Water Treatment – B	43/98/121/128
Water Treatment – A	62/176/185/167
Total Water Treatment Exams Administered	274/ 644/811/769

Wastewater Treatment Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Wastewater Treatment – S	5/13/24/22
Wastewater Treatment – D	85/170/232/252
Wastewater Treatment – C	43/123/190/108
Wastewater Treatment – B	46/132/203/208
Wastewater Treatment – A	38/73/104/151
Total Wastewater Treatment Exams Administered	217/511/753/741

Industrial Wastewater Treatment Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Industrial Wastewater Treatment – D	18/45/42/48
Industrial Wastewater Treatment – C	13/25/38/28
Industrial Wastewater Treatment – B	5/14/13/13
Industrial Wastewater Treatment – A	5/13/29/15
Total Industrial Wastewater Treatment Exams Administered	41/97/122/104

Water Distribution Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Water Distribution – 1	98/304/398/422
Water Distribution – 2	68/262/305/275
Water Distribution – 3	60/150/198/169
Water Distribution – 4	30/111/170/143
Total Water Distribution Exams Administered	256/827/1,071/1,009

Wastewater Collection Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Wastewater Collection – 1	53/171/230/258
Wastewater Collection – 2	40/152/159/146
Wastewater Collection – 3	27/79/142/130
Wastewater Collection – 4	27/45/76/65
Total Wastewater Collection Exams Administered	147/447/609/599

### Examination Pass and Fail Rates

Of the 3,222 exams administered, operators passed 55% of the exams taken in 2022 which represents a <2% decrease in the overall pass rate of 2021. There was also a 2% decrease in 2021 from 2020. Approximately 58% of the operators who passed their exams in 2022 did so on their first attempt. In 2021, 60% passed on their first attempt.

<b>Pass Rate for Certification Exams Administered</b> <b>January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b> <b>Total Exams Administered: 3,222 (13 more than 2021)</b>		
Certification Exam Type	Exams Passed/Total Exams by Type	Pass Rate
Water Treatment	494/769	64%
Wastewater Treatment	288/741	39%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	76/104	73%
Water Distribution	553/1,009	55%
Wastewater Collection	354/599	59%
<b>Overall Pass Rate</b>	<b>1,765/3,222</b> (1,810/3,209 in 2021 and 1,472/2526 in 2020)	<b>55%</b> (56.4% in 2021 and 58.3% in 2020)

<b>Certification Exams Passed on the First Attempt with Pass Rate</b> <b>January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b>		
Certification Exam Type	Exams Passed on First Attempt/Total First Attempts	Pass Rate on First Attempt
Water Treatment	406/546	74%
Wastewater Treatment	166/355	47%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	64/82	78%
Water Distribution	422/663	64%
Wastewater Collection	288/412	70%
<b>Overall First Attempt Pass Rate</b>	<b>1,346/2,058</b> (1,394/2,317 in 2021 and 1209/1794 in 2020)	<b>58%</b> (60.2% in 2021 and 67.4% in 2020)

<b>Certification Exams Failed on the First Attempt with Fail Rate</b> <b>January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b>		
Certification Exam Type	Exams Failed on First Attempt/Total First Attempts	Fail Rate on First Attempt
Water Treatment	140/546	26%
Wastewater Treatment	189/355	53%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	18/82	22%
Water Distribution	241/663	36%
Wastewater Collection	124/412	30%
<b>Overall First Attempt Fail Rate*</b> <b>*8% of exams are re-credentials</b>	<b>712/2,058</b> (760/2,317 in 2021 and 585/1794 in 2020)	<b>35%</b> (32.8% in 2021 and 32.6% in 2020)

Certification Exams Passed on Subsequent Attempt January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022		
Certification Exam Type	Exams Passed on Subsequent Attempt/Total Subsequent Attempt(s)	Pass Rate on Subsequent Attempt(s)
Water Treatment	83/217	38%
Wastewater Treatment	121/385	31%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	10/20	50%
Water Distribution	130/342	38%
Wastewater Collection	63/184	34%
<b>Overall Subsequent Attempt Pass Rate</b>	<b>407/1,148</b> (406/1,039 in 2021 and 263/732 in 2020)	<b>35%</b> (39.07% in 2021 and 35.9% in 2020)

Pass Rates for Certification Exams Administered January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022		
Certification Exam Type	Exams Passed/Total Exams by Type and Class	Pass Rate
Water Treatment		64%
T	-	-
S	44/54	81.5%
D	187/258	72.5%
C	112/162	69.1%
B	90/128	70.3%
A	61/167	36.5%
Wastewater Treatment		39%
S	16/22	73%
D	119/252	47%
C	58/108	54%
B	55/208	26%
A	40/151	26%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment		73%
D	43/48	90%
C	16/28	57%
B	10/13	77%
A	7/15	47%
Water Distribution		55%
1	250/422	59%
2	141/275	51%
3	102/169	60%
4	60/143	42%
Wastewater Collection		59%
1	193/258	75%
2	82/146	56%
3	53/130	41%
4	26/65	40%
<b>Overall Pass Rate and Exam Score</b>	<b>1,765/3,222</b> (1,810/3,209 in 2021 and 1,472/2526 in 2020)	<b>55%</b> (56.4% in 2021 and 58.3% in 2020)

### Identification of trends, issues and problems for board attention or action- 2021 Examinations

- The one certification exam type that has a significantly lower pass rate than the others is wastewater treatment with only a 39% pass rate; in 2021, the pass rate was 40%. Additionally, far fewer people pass wastewater treatment exams on the first or subsequent attempts than any other operator type.
- Of the 3,222 exams administered in 2022, 362 of them used remote proctoring as an online method of taking an operator exam, which is 29 fewer exams than in 2021. This means that 88% of exams were administered in PSI testing centers.

### Section 3: 2022 Renewed and Restored Certificates

All Certification Renewals and Restorations January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022		
Certification Type	Renewals Type and Class	% per Type Renewed
Water Treatment	587 Total	
T	4	1%
S	72	12%
D	116	20%
C	87	14%
B	70	12%
A	238	41%
Wastewater Treatment	386 Total	
S	20	5%
D	93	24%
C	77	20%
B	30	8%
A	166	43%
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	106 Total	
D	35	33%
C	17	16%
B	13	12%
A	41	39%
Water Distribution	605 Total	
(2 restricted certificates included) 1	170	28%
(1 restricted certificates included) 2	126	21%
3	62	10%
(2 restricted certificate included) 4	247	41%
Wastewater Collection	407 Total	
(1 restricted certificate included) 1	126	31%
2	81	20%
3	59	15%
(1 restricted certificate included) 4	141	34%
<b>Total Renewals and Restorations</b>	<b>2,091 (2,447 in 2021)</b>	

Restricted Renewals January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Certification Type and Class	Restricted Renewal
Water Distribution	5 Total
1	2
2	1
3	-
4	2
Wastewater Collection	2 Total
1	1
2	-
3	-
4	1
<b>Total Restricted Renewals</b>	<b>7</b>
Certification Restorations January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Certification Type	Restorations Type and Class
Water Treatment	118
T	0
S	29
D	26
C	19
B	13
A	31
Wastewater Treatment	71
S	4
D	18
C	17
B	5
A	27
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	20
D	11
C	2
B	2
A	5
Water Distribution	146
1	56
2	41
3	20
4	29
Wastewater Collection	97
1	28
2	24
3	20
4	25
<b>Total Restorations</b>	<b>452</b>

\*Note: No restricted certifications were restored in 2022

#### Identification of trends, issues and problems for board attention or action- Renewals

- There were about 100 more restoration applications reviewed in 2022 than in 2021. The number may be slightly higher because of the residual effects on trainings from the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.
- All certification types had fewer renewals in 2022 than in 2021. Overall, there were approximately 2% fewer renewal applications in 2022.

#### Section 4: 2021 Certification by Reciprocity

Reciprocity Applications Received and Reviewed January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022	
Certification Type	Application Type and Class
Wastewater Treatment	11
D	3
C	1
B	3
A	4
Water Treatment	8
D	2
C	2
B	2
A	2
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	0
Water Distribution	12
1	5
2	4
3	1
4	2
Wastewater Collection	3
1	1
2	2
<b>Total Reciprocity Applications</b>	<b>34</b>

<b>Approved and <i>Approved for Exam</i> Reciprocity Applications January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021</b>	
<b>Certification Type</b>	<b>Application Type and Class</b>
Water Treatment	7
D	2
C	2
B	2
A	1
Wastewater Treatment	11
D	3
C	1
B	3
A	4
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	0
Water Distribution	11
1	5
2	4
3	1
4	1
Wastewater Collection	3
1	1
2	2
<b>Total Approved Reciprocity Applications</b>	<b>32</b>

<b>Ineligible and Expired Reciprocity Applications January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b>	
<b>Certification Type</b>	<b>Application Type and Class</b>
Water Treatment	1
A	1
Industrial Wastewater Treatment	0
	0
Wastewater Treatment	0
	0
Water Distribution	1
4	1
Wastewater Collection	0
	0
<b>Total Ineligible and Expired and Pending Applications</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **Identification of trends, issues and problems for board attention or action- Reciprocity**

- There were about 21% fewer reciprocity application in 2022 as in 2021.
- The revised reciprocity policy allows applicants to take Colorado exams equivalent to the type and class they hold in other state to avoid having to take Colorado sequential exams. In 2021, 10 applicants were approved to take these exams. Three of the ten applicants took and passed the Colorado exams.
- Top 3 reasons for reciprocity application denials
  - 1) Applicants did not apply for the appropriate level of certification in Colorado
  - 2) Applicants did not meet the experience requirement in Colorado
  - 3) Applicant did not provide sufficient documentation to approve applications

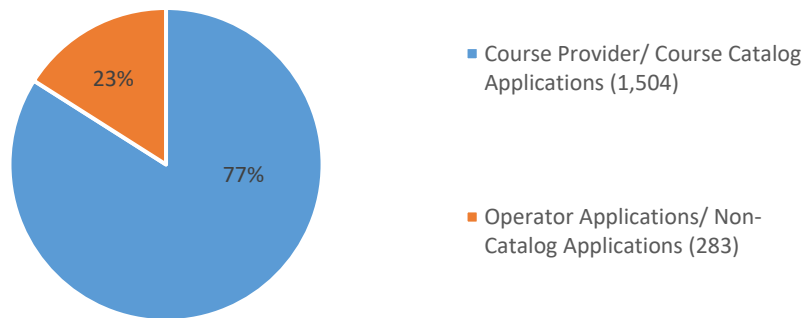
### **Section 5: 2022 Course Provider Applications for TUs**

There was over a 19% increase in course provider applications from 2021 to 2022. Conversely, there were 27% fewer non-catalog training unit applications in 2022 than in 2021. More course providers are uploading TUs into the CCWP portal for people who complete their courses. Please note, there is a higher number of rejected applications than in the past because operators are accidentally submitting non-catalog TU applications without payment for unverifiable webinars.

<b>2022 Course Applications Received/ Reviewed January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b>	
Approved	1,498
Not Approved	0
Expired/ Required More Information from Course Provider	6
Total Applications	1,504

<b>Non-Catalog Course Applications Received/ Reviewed January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022</b>	
Approved	154
Not Approved	64
Resent for more information/ Closed for failure to resubmit	98
Total Applications	283

Training Unit Applications  
1,787/ 1650 Total Application





### Section 6: 2022 Financial Summary

<b>CCWP Portal Fees Collected by Category and Level – Examination Applications</b> <b>January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022</b>			
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fee Amount	Amount Collected
<b>Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator</b>			
D	53	\$50.00	\$2,600.00
C	25	\$50.00	\$1,250.00
B	11	\$50.00	\$550.00
A	9	\$50.00	\$450.00
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator total	98	\$50.00	\$4,850.00
<b>Wastewater Collection System Operator</b>			
1	252	\$50.00	\$12,500.00
2	131	\$50.00	\$6,500.00
3	89	\$50.00	\$4,450.00
4	42	\$50.00	\$2,100.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	514	\$50.00	\$25,550.00
<b>Wastewater Treatment Operator</b>			
S	21	\$50.00	\$1,000.00
D	195	\$50.00	\$9,700.00
C	89	\$50.00	\$4,400.00
B	116	\$50.00	\$5,800.00
A	86	\$50.00	\$4,300.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator total	507	\$50.00	\$25,200.00
<b>Water Distribution System Operator</b>			
1	390	\$50.00	\$19,400.00
2	241	\$50.00	\$12,000.00
3	150	\$50.00	\$7,500.00
4	108	\$50.00	\$5,400.00
Water Distribution System Operator total	889	\$50.00	\$44,300.00
<b>Water Treatment Operator</b>			
T	4	\$50.00	\$200.00
S	50	\$50.00	\$2,050.00
D	236	\$50.00	\$11,600.00
C	146	\$50.00	\$7,300.00
B	101	\$50.00	\$5,050.00
A	104	\$50.00	\$5,150.00
Water Treatment Operator total	641	\$50.00	\$31,350.00
EXAM APPLICATIONS total	2,649	\$50.00	\$131,250
<1% increase from 2021	2,626 in 2021 2,138 in 2020		\$130,600.00 in 2021 \$106,050.00 in 2020

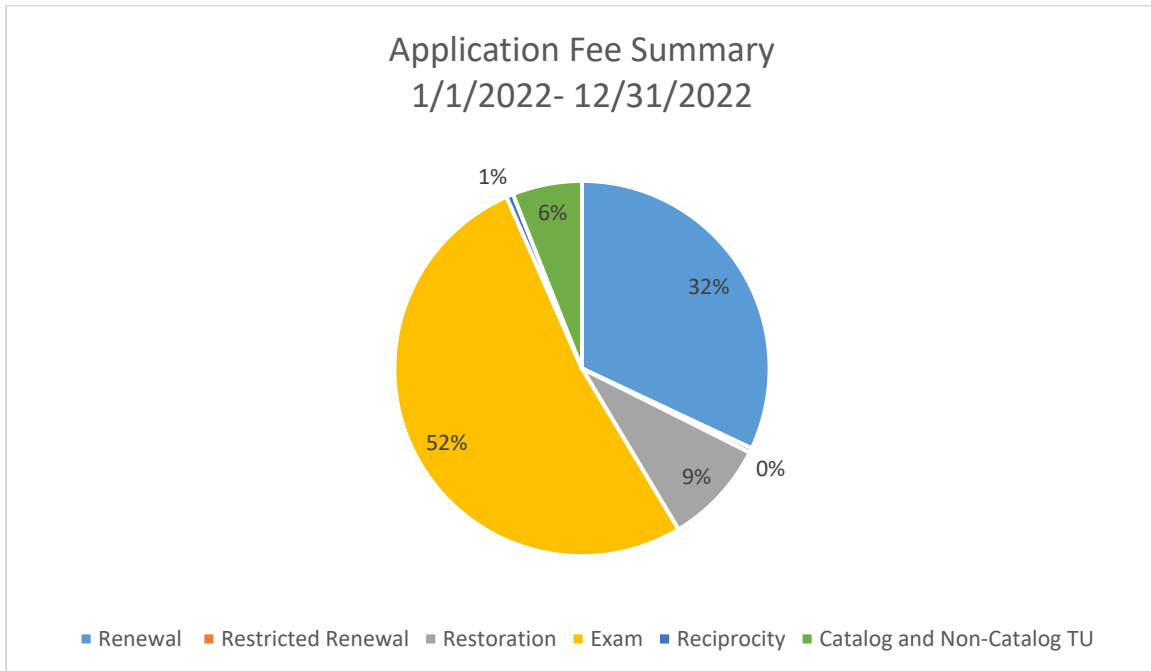
CCWP Portal Fees Collected by Category and Level – Reciprocity Applications January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021			
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fee Amount	Amount Collected
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator			
D			
C			
B			
A			
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator total	0	0	0
Wastewater Collection System Operator			
1	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
2	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
3	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
4	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	3	\$85.00	\$255.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator			
S	1	\$85.00	\$00.00
D	3	\$85.00	\$255.00
C	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
B	3	\$85.00	\$255.00
A	4	\$85.00	\$340.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator total	12	\$85.00	\$935.00
Water Distribution System Operator			
1	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
2	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
3	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
4	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
Water Distribution System Operator total	3	\$85.00	\$255.00
Water Treatment Operator			
T	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
S	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
D	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
C	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
B	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
A	2	\$85.00	\$85.00
Water Treatment Operator total	8	\$85.00	\$595.00
<b>RECIPROCITY total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>\$85.00</b>	<b>\$2,805.00</b>
<b>15% decrease from 2021</b>	<b>41 in 2021</b>		<b>\$3,485.00 in 2021</b>
	<b>43 in 2020</b>		<b>\$3,655.00 in 2020</b>

CCWP Portal Fees Collected by Category and Level – Renewal Applications January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022			
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fee Amount	Amount Collected
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator			
D	24	\$85.00	\$2,040.00
C	15	\$85.00	\$1,275.00
B	11	\$85.00	\$935.00
A	36	\$85.00	\$3,060.00
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator total	86	\$85.00	\$7,310.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator			
1	98	\$85.00	\$8,160.00
2	58	\$85.00	\$4,930.00
3	39	\$85.00	\$3,315.00
4	115	\$85.00	\$9,775.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	310	\$85.00	\$26,180.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator			
S	16	\$85.00	\$1,360.00
D	76	\$85.00	\$6,460.00
C	61	\$85.00	\$5,185.00
B	27	\$85.00	\$2,295.00
A	139	\$85.00	\$11,815.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator total	319	\$85.00	\$27,115.00
Water Distribution System Operator			
1	113	\$85.00	\$9,605.00
2	83	\$85.00	\$7,055.00
3	43	\$85.00	\$3,655.00
4	216	\$85.00	\$18,360.00
Water Distribution System Operator total	455	\$85.00	\$38,675.00
Water Treatment Operator			
T	4	\$85.00	\$340.00
S	44	\$85.00	\$3,740.00
D	90	\$85.00	\$7,650.00
C	68	\$85.00	\$5,780.00
B	57	\$85.00	\$4,845.00
A	210	\$85.00	\$17,850.00
Water Treatment Operator total	473	\$85.00	\$40,205.00
<b>RENEWAL FEES total</b>	<b>1643</b>	<b>\$85.00</b>	<b>\$139,485.00</b>
<b>3% decrease from 2020</b>	<b>2,089 in 2021</b> <b>2,162 in 2020</b>		<b>\$177,140.00 in 2021</b> <b>\$183,090.00 in 2020</b>

CCWP Portal Fees Collected by Category and Level – Restricted Renewal Applications January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022			
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fee Amount	Amount Collected
Wastewater Collection System Operator			
1	1	\$85.00	\$135.00
2	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
3	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
4	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	2	\$85.00	\$220.00
Water Distribution System Operator			
1	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
2	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
3	0	\$85.00	\$00.00
4	2	\$85.00	\$170.00
Water Distribution System Operator total	5	\$85.00	\$475.00

CCWP Portal Fees Collected by Category and Level – Restoration Applications January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022			
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fee Amount	Amount Collected
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator			
A	5	\$135.00	\$675.00
B	2	\$135.00	\$270.00
C	2	\$135.00	\$270.00
D	11	\$135.00	\$1,485.00
Industrial Wastewater Treatment Operator total	20	\$135.00	\$2,700.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator			
1	28	\$135.00	\$3,780.00
2	24	\$135.00	\$3,240.00
3	20	\$135.00	\$2,700.00
4	25	\$135.00	\$3,375.00
Wastewater Collection System Operator total	97	\$135.00	\$13,095.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator			
A	27	\$135.00	\$3,645.00
B	5	\$135.00	\$540.00
C	17	\$135.00	\$2,295.00
D	18	\$135.00	\$2,430.00
S	4	\$135.00	\$540.00
Wastewater Treatment Operator total	71	\$135.00	\$9,450.00
Water Distribution System Operator			
1	56	\$135.00	\$7,290.00
2	42	\$135.00	\$5,535.00
3	20	\$135.00	\$2,700.00
4	29	\$135.00	\$3,915.00
Water Distribution System Operator total	147/ 105	\$135.00	\$19,440.00
Water Treatment Operator			
A	31	\$135.00	\$4,185.00
B	13	\$135.00	\$1,755.00
C	19	\$135.00	\$2,565.00
D	26	\$135.00	\$3,510.00
S	29	\$135.00	\$3,915.00
T	0	\$135.00	\$00.00
Water Treatment Operator total	118/ 74	\$135.00	\$15,930.00
<b>RESTORATIONS total</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>\$135.00</b>	<b>\$60,615.00</b>
<b>27% increase from 2021</b>	<b>356 in 2021</b>		<b>\$47,385.00 in 2021</b>
<b>5% decrease from 2020</b>	<b>367 in 2020</b>		<b>\$49,615.00 in 2020</b>
<b>Grand Total of ALL Certification Applications</b>	<b>4,785</b>		<b>\$334,630.00</b>
<b>6% decrease from 2021 and the average cost per application decreased</b>	<b>5,116</b>		<b>\$358,610.00 in 2021</b>
<b>5% increase from 2020 but the average cost per application decreased.</b>	<b>4,721 in 2020)</b>		<b>\$342,410.00 in 2020</b>

CCWP Portal Fees- Training Unit Applications January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022		
Fee Type	Number of Fees	Fees Collected
Non-Catalog TU application fees collected	41	\$1,000
Catalog Course Application fees collected	256	\$14,650.00
<b>TU APPLICATION FEES total</b>	<b>297</b> <b>283 in 2021</b> <b>283 in 2020</b>	<b>\$15,650.00</b> <b>\$14,600.00 in 2021</b> <b>\$16,150.00 in 2020</b>



2022 Expenditures Compared to Board-Approved Budget			
Description	Budget	Expenditures	Percent to Budget
<b>Income</b>			
App & Admin fees for exams	\$137,500.00	\$131,400.00	96%
App & Admin fees for renewals	\$234,600.00	\$180,455.00	77%
App & Admin fees for reciprocity	\$4,250.00	\$3,570.00	84%
TU Course approval fee	\$14,000.00	\$14,750.00	105%
Late fees	\$18,000.00	\$22,650.00	126%
<b>INCOME TOTALS</b>	<b>\$408,350.00</b>	<b>\$352,825.00</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Salaries and Fringe</b>			
Program Director	\$93,600.00	\$92,340.00	99%
Program Coordinator	\$68,400.00	\$68,400.00	100%
Program Assistant	\$68,400.00	\$68,400.00	100%
Accounting (bookkeeper)	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	100%
Executive Director	\$36,000.00	\$21,000.00	58%
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
Support Services to Launch IT	\$13,020.00	\$11,550.00	89%
Hosting, Maintenance and offsite backup	\$8,400.00	\$8,400.00	100%
IT Services	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	100%
CO Treasurer Certificate Fee	\$24,825.00	\$21,455.00	82%
Bulk mailing, printing and postage	\$2,400.00	\$1,000.00	42%
Credit Card payment Processing	\$15,900.00	\$11,126.35	70%
Financial Audit	\$5,000.00	\$5,500.00	110%
WPI Membership Dues	\$1,800.00	\$0	0%
ABC Conference Attendance	\$6,000.00	\$0	0%
Training, staff	\$6,000.00	\$3,500.00	58%
Training, operators	\$6,000.00	\$3,500.00	58%
Travel Expense for Program Staff	\$6,000.00	\$5,000.00	83%
Office Supplies, Printing	\$2,400.00	\$2,000.00	83%
Office Rent and Utilities	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	100%
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$6,000.00	\$4,000.00	67%
<b>EXPENSE TOTALS</b>	<b>\$403,145.00</b>	<b>\$360,171.35</b>	<b>89%</b>

### **Identification of trends, issues and problems for board attention or action- CCWP Financials**

The efficiency of the CCWP Portal saves operators and course providers both time and money; unfortunately, it negatively impacts the CCWP's earning potential.

- There are very few rejected applications.
- Operators only pay CCWP exam applications fees once and have 180 days to take and pass exams; however, they pay WPI/PSI \$100.00 every time they take an exam.
- Course providers can submit up to ten course applications at once.

### **Section 7: 2022 CCWP Staff**



Vanessa Roy  
CCWP Program Assistant



Paula Martinez  
CCWP Program Coordinator



Larisa Oringdolph  
CCWP Director





**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# FACILITY OPERATORS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

CY 2022 Annual Report to the Water and Wastewater  
Facility Operators Certification Board

April 12, 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Water Quality Control Division's (division) responsibilities for Colorado's water and wastewater facility operators certification program include:

- monitoring, encouraging, and, as needed, enforcing facility compliance with the requirement to operate under the supervision of a certified operator in responsible charge,
- investigating allegations of operator misconduct,
- interacting with stakeholders,
- drafting regulatory, policy and guidance revisions for board consideration,
- outreach, training and education efforts, and
- ensuring that periodic internal and external reviews of the program are done.

Division activities in these areas during the calendar year 2022 are documented in the following sections of this report.

## FACILITY COMPLIANCE

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Article 9 of Title 25, C.R.S., Water and Wastewater Treatment Facility Operators, requires “every water treatment facility, domestic or industrial wastewater treatment facility, wastewater collection system, and water distribution system be under the supervision of a certified operator, holding a certificate in a class equal to or higher than the class of the facility or system.”

Regulation 100, the Water and Wastewater Facility Operator Certification Requirements, uses this statutory language to identify the purpose of the regulation. Compliance with the certified operator in responsible charge (ORC) requirement is determined by the following:

- Has the facility owner reported the ORC's name and operator identification number to the division? (100.10.4)
- Does the ORC have a valid certificate? (100.16.3)
- Is the reported ORC's certificate at or above the level of classification of the facility they are operating? (100.10.2, 100.10.5)

If a response to any of these questions is no, the facility owner is out of compliance with Regulation 100.

### Public Water Systems

Accurate and timely compliance determination is a division priority. Operator data from the CCWP Portal allows the division to monitor the ORC compliance status for all drinking water systems required to comply with Regulation 100. Compliance can be determined at any time, although the division usually runs compliance reports monthly as part of its routine workflow.

Water treatment facilities and water distribution systems are classified separately, impacting the number of unique public water systems in the state. During 2022, 52 public water systems received violations for failing to meet the ORC requirements. Colorado enforces the requirement to provide public notice within 30 days of the violation notice, which is a powerful motive for compliance. Systems that do not return to compliance in a timely manner may be issued a formal enforcement order with penalties.

Although treatment facilities and water distribution systems are classified separately, according to EPA, the operator violation is a system-level violation. That means failure to have both a treatment and a distribution operator, for a system that has both processes, is a single violation. Table 1 lists the number of public water systems by type and their compliance rates. Prior to 2020, the number of systems in

Table 1 indicated the total number of facilities classified as water treatment plus the total number of systems classified as water distribution. For 2020, 2021, and 2022, the count of systems reflects the number of a) treatment only systems, b) distribution only systems, and c) systems that have both water treatment and water distribution components. This simplifies the accounting of the compliance rate.

**Table 1 - Public Water System Facilities and Compliance Status.**

Reporting Year	Treatment and Distribution Systems	Compliance Rate (%)
<b>Community</b>		
2018	1575	98%
2019	1635	98%
2020	911	97%
2021	917	98%
2022	945	98%
<b>Non-transient Non-community</b>		
2018	281	98%
2019	291	99%
2020	174	99%
2021	174	98%
2022	173	99%
<b>Transient Non-community</b>		
2018	1506	98%
2019	1543	98%
2020	970	98%
2021	971	97%
2022	959	97%

## Wastewater Facilities

In 2022, the division issued 186 compliance advisories to industrial wastewater facilities and 105 compliance advisories to domestic wastewater facilities for failure to meet the ORC requirements. By December 31, 2022, 38 industrial wastewater facilities and 12 domestic wastewater facilities under general permits were still under compliance advisories.

Table 2 shows the compliance rates for both domestic and industrial wastewater treatment facilities.

**Table 2 - Wastewater Facilities Required to have an ORC.**

Reporting Year	Permitted Facilities	Compliance Rate (%)
<b>Permitted Domestic Wastewater Facilities</b>		
2018 Individual	248	100%

2018 General	260	100%
2019 Individual	255	92%
2019 General	275	92%
2020 Individual	262	91%
2020 General	266	96%
2021 Individual	249	86%
2021 General	273	86%
2022 Individual	257	99%
2022 General	267	94%
<b>Permitted Industrial Wastewater Facilities</b>		
2018 Individual	119	100%
2018 General	240	100%
2019 Individual	135	70%
2019 General	104	44%
2020 Individual	134	78%
2020 General	102	26%
2021 Individual	129	98%
2021 General	167	15%
2022 Individual	128	99%
2022 General	181	73%

The 2022 industrial values are as of Third Quarter, 2022, because the division did not do compliance oversight for these facilities during Fourth Quarter, 2022, due to the lack of resources (the division was in the midst of employee transitioning within the clean water enforcement unit).

Overall increases in compliance rates from 2021 to 2022 are likely due to the following:

- consistent outreach and compliance advisories issued to all facilities on a quarterly basis;
- the division had issued more formal enforcement actions (Notice of Violation/Cease and Desist Order) for operator violations over the past couple of years, specifically within the domestic general permit sector;
- lowest compliance rates continue to be within the industrial general permits. The reasons are primarily the high number of short-term discharges with ORC requirements (lack of understanding/education, short-term discharges and a misconception that these do not need ORC coverage, and a shortage of industrial ORCs willing/able to contract for short-term discharges). Rates improved significantly between 2021 and 2022, from 15% to 73%.

A number of industrial facilities are automatically exempted from the ORC requirement. Per Regulation 100.1.6, automatic exempted facilities include facilities that discharge pursuant to a Colorado Discharge Permit System general permit for:

- Industrial stormwater.
- Construction stormwater.
- Municipal stormwater.

- Water treatment plant wastewater discharge.
- Construction dewatering activities.
- Aquatic animal production.
- Sand and gravel mining and processing stormwater.
- Sand and gravel mining wastewater and stormwater combined.
- Minimal industrial discharge.
- Subterranean dewatering or well development.
- Hydrostatic testing of pipelines, tanks, and similar vessels.
- Non-contact cooling water.
- Pesticides application.
- Commercial washing of outdoor structures.

Per 100.1.6, the WWFOCB can grant discretionary exemptions from the ORC requirement under certain conditions. In 2022, one discretionary exemption was granted for meeting the passive or no treatment requirement of Regulation 100.1.6(c)(i).

## FACILITY ENFORCEMENT

In 2022, three formal drinking water enforcement actions and one formal wastewater notice of violation (NOV) were issued to facilities that failed to comply with the ORC requirement. By the end of the year, all were still in the process of working with their compliance and enforcement specialists on returning to compliance.

Table 3 - Notices of Violation with Status.

Reporting Year	Drinking Water	Wastewater	Total DW and WW NOVs Issued	Returned to Compliance
2018	5	0	5	4
2019	2	3	5	5
2020	5	2	7	5
2021	3	1	4	3
2022	3	1	4	0

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION INVESTIGATIONS

The board is authorized to take disciplinary action against a certified operator under sections 25-9-104(6) and -104(6.5) C.R.S. This authority provides the board with the discretion to reprimand a certified operator or suspend or revoke an operator's certification. As delegated in statute, the division investigates allegations of operator misconduct and makes recommendations to the board for action.

Complaints are received in writing by email or mail. Complaints come from facility customers, co-workers, supervisors, subordinates, etc., and division staff from a variety of interactions including on-site inspections and visits. Confidentiality is maintained throughout the complaint investigation.

Below is a summary of complaints received against a certified operator for misconduct in the exercise of their duties.

Table 4 - Disciplinary Action Investigations Conducted

Type of Action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Formal Letter of Reprimand	0	0	1	1	3
Consent Agreement	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension or Revocation	0	0	2	6	0
Informal Letter of Reprimand	4	1	3	0	0
Closed - Lack of Evidence	1	0	4	0	0
Voluntary Relinquishment	0	0	0	0	1
Investigation Still Open at End of the Year	0	0	1	1	4
<b>Total Investigations</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

## STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND PARTICIPATION

The EPA identified stakeholder involvement as important to the public health objectives of the program. Stakeholders help ensure the relevancy and validity of the program and the confidence of all interested parties. States are required to include ongoing stakeholder involvement in the revision and operations of state operator certification programs. Stakeholder involvement goes beyond public comment on rule revisions and participation in board meetings.

### Examples of Stakeholders:

- Certified operators.
- Contract operators.
- Drinking water system owners.
- Domestic and industrial wastewater permittees.
- Local government officials
- Environmental/public health groups.
- The general public.
- Consumer groups.
- Technical assistance providers.
- Utility managers.
- Trainers.
- Water and wastewater professional organizations.

In addition to providing an opportunity for public comment at the beginning of every meeting, the board received feedback from stakeholders during a “town hall” session in May.

### Specific Staff Participation:

A number of division staff participate in a variety of activities with stakeholders. These include:

- Rocky Mountain Section American Water Works Association and Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association Joint Small Systems Committee.
- Colorado Water and Wastewater Utility Councils.
- Water Quality Management Program advisory boards at Red Rocks Community College and Arvada West High School.
- Colorado Rural Water Association annual and regional conferences.

## REGULATION REVISIONS

Table 5 identifies revisions to Regulation 100, 5 CCR 1003-2, adopted by the board in the past 5 years, along with the associated effective dates. For a detailed description of changes, refer to the corresponding statements of basis and purpose comprising sections 100.54-100.59 of Regulation 100.

Table 5 - Regulation 100, 5 CCR 1003-2 Revisions.

Reporting year	Regulation 100 Revisions	Statement of Basis and Purpose
2018	Amended 09/25/18, effective 03/01/19	Section 100.55
2018	Amended 11/27/18, effective 03/01/19	Sections 100.56 and 100.57
2019	Amended 11/26/19, effective 1/30/20	Section 100.58
2020	Amended 9/29/20, effective 11/30/20	Section 100.59
2021	Amended 1/26/21, effective 3/31/21	Section 100.60
2021	Amended 3/30/21, effective 5/15/21	Section 100.61
2021	Amended 9/28/21, effective 11/30/21	Section 100.62
2022	None	N/A

## DIVISION OUTREACH AND EDUCATION EFFORTS

The division's outreach and education efforts through the Local Assistance Unit focused on three main areas in 2022:

- Course providers continued to reach rural and small systems during the pandemic through monthly in-person and webinar training events.
- Coaches continued to focus on building a culture of health with operators and system staff.
- Division training specialists continued to develop specialized training curriculum including:
  - Mandatory Regulatory training for water and wastewater;
  - Monitoring and Operating for Regulatory Compliance;
  - Sanitary Survey Preparation;
  - Building Resilience in the Water Sector: Emergency Planning and Asset Management;
  - Tabletop exercises conducted with groups and individual systems; and
  - Seasonal System 101.

Additional training events were provided by technical assistance providers through contracts with the Local Assistance Unit. Contracted training event curriculum included:

- Navigating division tools;
- Creating operations and maintenance tools;
- Regulatory updates, including the Lead and Copper Rule Revision;
- Storage Tank Rule;

- How to navigate a boil water order and subsequent public notification;
- Water Hauling best management practices; and
- Standard Operating Procedure development.

The Local Assistance Unit provided 28 group training events in 2022, reaching 681 operators from 481 systems. In addition, division coaches provided one-on-one assistance at 69 facilities.

## DIVISION PROGRAM EXPENSES

The division liaison to the board position is the only staff person wholly dedicated to the facility operator certification program. Many duties assigned to the division through facility operator certification statute and regulation are performed as part of the routine duties for nearly 100 division staff including compliance, enforcement, sanitary survey and inspection, design review and approval, facility classification, administrative support, and management oversight.

Division management recognizes a correlation between compliance with Regulation 100 and overall compliance with permits or drinking water regulations. To facilitate an efficient and effective approach to interactions between division staff and the regulated community and to efficiently use limited resources, each water and wastewater facility is assigned to a single compliance specialist. The compliance specialist oversees the facilities' compliance with all applicable regulations including Regulation 100. The drinking water specialist oversees compliance with the primary drinking water regulations and with Regulation 100 for drinking water facilities. The clean water specialist oversees compliance with the permit and with Regulation 100 for wastewater facilities.

Table 6 shows the salary expenses for the board administrator and the division liaison for the calendar year 2022. The costs associated with the routine tasks assigned to other division staff members are not included in Table 8. The salaries of the liaison to the board and the board administrator were paid through state general funds, federal grants, and drinking water and permitted facility fees.

**Table 6 - Board Administrator and Division Salary Expenses.**

Salary expenses for board administrator and division program staff <sup>1</sup>		Full time equivalent (FTE)
2018	\$121,983	1.2 FTE 0.1 Management, 0.1 PAII (for 7 months), 1.0-EPS III <sup>1</sup>
2019	\$153,356	1.6 FTE 0.6 Management, 1.0-EPS III <sup>1</sup>
2020	\$155,584	1.6 FTE 0.6 Management, 1.0-EPS III <sup>1</sup>
2021	\$160,636	1.6 FTE 0.6 Management, 1.0-EPS III <sup>1</sup>
2022	\$177,796	1.6 FTE 0.6 Management, 1.0-EPS III <sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Directly assigned to the operator certification program (does not include the nearly 100 other staff who have some responsibility for operator certification program implementation)

## REVIEWS

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### Internal and External Reviews

As part of the Final Guidelines for the Certification and Recertification of the Operators of Community and Non-transient Non-community Public Water Systems, February 5, 1999, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends that states perform periodic internal reviews and occasional external or peer reviews. Examples of items to review include: regulations, exam items for relevancy and validity, compliance, enforcement, budget and staffing, training relevancy, training needs through examination performance, and data management systems.

The division conducts routine internal reviews of regulations and policies. Through its contract with ABC, the board ensures regular reviews of exam items. The division continually assesses compliance and enforcement, while the board oversees budget and staffing with regard to its contract with CRWA. The CCWP office reviews training courses at least annually and routinely evaluates training needs by assessing examination performance data.

The program continues to seek input from external sources through periodic peer reviews.

### Sunset Review

The sunset review is the analysis and evaluation of regulatory agencies to determine the least restrictive regulation consistent with the public interest. The purpose of the sunset review is to evaluate the need for the continued existence of existing regulatory bodies in accordance with the criteria established in statute.

Sunset reviews provide valuable information for the program, but in accordance with the Operator Certification Guidelines Implementation Guidance, January 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determined a sunset review does not meet the periodic external or peer review requirement.

In accordance with Section 25-9-103(4), C.R.S., the last sunset review report was released in October 2019. In 2020, the state legislature implemented the recommendations contained in the 2019 sunset report by continuing the Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Board until September 1, 2031.

## SUMMARY

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The division focused on ensuring that skilled, certified water professionals throughout Colorado were overseeing the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water as well as the collection and treatment of wastewater prior to discharge to waters of the state. The division remains committed to providing training and assistance to help operators succeed and to increasing compliance by facility owners by appropriately applying all the tools at our disposal.