

## Measuring Competency With Certification

CWEA, through the Technical Certification Program (TCP), develops and administers competency tests for wastewater personnel in the specialties of :

- ◆ Collection System Maintenance
- ◆ Wastewater Treatment Plant Maintenance
- ◆ Laboratory Analysis
- ◆ Biosolids Land Application Management
- ◆ Environmental Compliance Inspection
- ◆ Industrial Treatment Plant Operations

The tests are being constantly developed and revised by CWEA member subject matter experts. Tests are given twice per year in the six specialties, with up to four grade levels per specialty, in California, Michigan, and Alaska. Certificates of competence are issued to successful examinees.

## Meeting the Demand for Professional Certification

The TCP program has grown over the last 25 years because personnel in the wastewater field have overwhelmingly demanded it. There are 7000 members of CWEA and there currently are 3577 certificate holders. We give 1100 tests each year. Many agencies use the certificate as a basis for hiring and promotion decisions.

## How Test Are Developed and Administered

Administering a program that is used in hiring and promotion decisions has legal ramifications. The program must be valid and defensible. Administering a program with as many participants as CWEA requires that it be well-organized, consistent and efficient. For these reasons, CWEA has spent \$250,000 over the last five years upgrading the program to ensure that it is job-related, non-discriminatory and technically defensible from the point of view of psychometrics, the measurement of knowledge. Thousands of hours of time from consultants and mostly CWEA subject matter experts have gone into the process. The result is that certification criteria are job related and comply with federal regulations and guidelines pertaining to certifying organizations thereby ensuring the value of the certificates issued to wastewater personnel. This upgrade will allow California to remain on the leading edge of efforts to offer certification nationally and internationally.

## Why Support TCP?

Every agency has a general obligation to perform due diligence in ensuring the competency of the personnel providing the public service and working at the public facilities. A TCP certificate provides agencies with written confirmation that the holder has demonstrated a certain level of job-related knowledge, skills and abilities. It provides a documented level of assurance that employees are competent in safe work practices. TCP certification provides concrete evidence to board members and citizens that the agency is staffed with people who know what they are doing and is competitive in any comparison of quality of service.

### Selected Agencies Utilizing the Technical Certification Program

- Orange County Sanitation District
- Eastern Municipal Water District
- Selma-Kingsburg-Fowler CSD
- Union Sanitary District
- Central Contra Costa SD
- Carmel Area Wastewater District
- City of Redding
- Encina Wastewater Authority
- Carpinteria Sanitary District
- Tahoe City Public Utility District

**The Technical Certification Program is tailor-made for wastewater personnel by wastewater professionals.**



## Certificate Candidate Support

### Study Guides

CWEA offers study guides at a nominal cost for each family of certifications. All study guides are currently being re-written. The new study guides will be ready for sale as early as Spring 2000.

### Local Test Preparation Study Sessions

Through its local sections, CWEA offers test preparation study sessions at various locations in California. The one-day study sessions are held about two months before each certification test.

### Candidate Handbooks

As part of the application package, each applicant is given a Candidate Handbook that explains the application procedure, lists TCP policies, outlines test content, and gives sample test questions.

### CWEA's Mission

is to enhance the education and effectiveness of California wastewater professionals through training, certification, dissemination of technical information, and promotion of sound policies to benefit society through protection and enhancement of the water environment.

CWEA is a tax-exempt California nonprofit corporation, and is a member association of the Water Environment Federation, and a member of the National Organization for Competency Assurance.

For more information about CWEA's Technical Certification Program please call 510-382-7800, or visit the CWEA web site at [www.cwea.org](http://www.cwea.org).

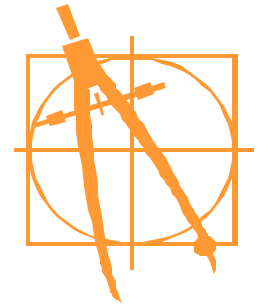


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