



Experience

Students may be able to gain operational experience through summer jobs or internships at local water and wastewater facilities. The experience will allow a student the chance to see if this is a career for him or her.

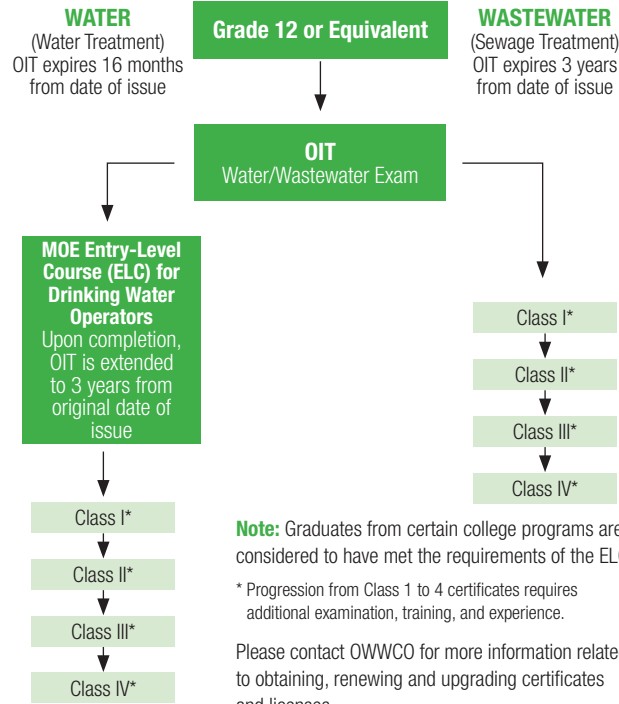
Opportunity

“It’s been estimated that almost 50% of today’s water and wastewater operators will retire within the next five to seven years. They’ll need to be replaced. Because qualified operators are expected to be in short supply, those with ambition may see more opportunities for advancement, a choice of locations and utility size, work schedule flexibility, employer-supported training, and negotiable wages and benefits.”

~ *The American Water Works Association*

“As water and wastewater treatment ...are of critical importance to human health and the environment, municipalities need to ensure that these facilities are appropriately staffed with skilled and engaged workers. With the expected retirements of many senior personnel municipalities will have to work actively on succession planning and recruitment strategies.”

~ *ECO Canada – Labour Market Study*



0.Reg 128/04 - Drinking water operators and water quality analysts
0.Reg 129/04 - Wastewater operators

Additional Information

**Ontario Water
Wastewater
Certification Office
(OWWCO)**
302 The East Mall, Suite 600
Etobicoke, ON, M9B 6C7
Email: info@owwco.ca
Website: www.owwco.ca
Tel: 416-231-2100
Toll Free: 1-877-231-2122
Fax: 416-231-2107

**Walkerton Clean Water
Centre**
20 Ontario Rd.
P.O. Box 160
Walkerton, ON, N0G 2V0
Email: inquiry@wcwc.ca
Website: www.wcwc.ca
Tel: 519-881-2003
Toll Free: 1-866-515-0550

For information about various careers in the water industry, please visit www.acareerinwater.ca/careerinwater.html



A Student's Guide to Drinking Water and Wastewater Operator Certification



A Challenging & Rewarding Job

Water and wastewater operators serve their communities by helping to ensure the safety of our drinking water and protecting the natural environment. Drinking water and wastewater just might be one of the most important industries in the world as no one can live without clean water.

It takes knowledgeable, conscientious people to deliver clean, potable water and to ensure that wastewater is discharged in an environmentally safe manner. People who like to work with their hands and have an interest in biology, chemistry, and mathematics are well suited for the job.

Operators wear many hats and no two days are the same. One day they may be repairing a leak in the water line, operating disinfection equipment, welding pipe and fixing a pump. On another day, they may be interpreting laboratory samples for pathogens and presenting their findings to council or the public.

Qualifications

Water operators are certified under the Certification of Drinking Water Operators and Quality Analysts Regulation (O. Reg. 128/04, Safe Drinking Water Act). Wastewater operators are licensed under the Licensing of Sewage Works Operators Regulation (O. Reg. 129/04, Ontario Water Resources Act).

There are minimum educational and experience requirements for the various certification levels (Operator-in-Training; Class 1 to 4) for both water operators and wastewater operators.



Operator-in-Training (OIT) Certification

An OIT certificate allows a new operator to gain the one year of operational experience that is required to become a Class 1 operator. The minimum requirements to apply for an OIT certificate are:

- High school diploma (OSSD) or equivalent
- Pass the OIT examination

For Drinking Water Operators

OIT certificates expire 16 months after they are issued unless the OIT completes the Entry Level Course for Drinking Water Operators (ELC). If the OIT completes the course within the 16 months, the certificate will be extended to three years from the date it was originally issued.

Students wishing to work as an operator only during work terms or summer jobs can choose to obtain a temporary OIT certificate, which can be renewed a maximum of four times. Students holding a temporary OIT certificate need not complete the ELC while holding their temporary certificate.

Please refer to Guideline 2.4 Drinking Water OIT Certificate Requirements for additional information.

For Wastewater Operators

OIT certificates expire three years from the issue date and may be renewed.



Entry-Level Course for Drinking Water Operators (ELC)

The ELC is a mandatory course for all drinking water operators developed by the Ministry of the Environment. It addresses subject matter that should be known by an entry-level operator. The course is available to any individual wishing to pursue a career in drinking water treatment or distribution. It is offered through the Walkerton Clean Water Centre (WCWC).

The ELC has been incorporated into the curriculums of many environmental and technical programs at Ontario colleges. Students who are enrolled in these programs can complete the ELC as part of their college classwork.

Contact the WCWC for more details about the ELC. Their contact information is on this brochure under 'Additional Information'.

Requirements for Higher Certificates

For Drinking Water (Class 1) Certification

- Operator-in-Training Certification
- Entry-Level Course for Drinking Water Operators
- One year of hands-on operational experience in a drinking water system
- Pass the Class 1 exam

For Wastewater (Class 1) Certification

- Operator-in-Training Certification
- One year of hands-on operational experience in a wastewater system
- Pass the Class 1 exam