

Operational Guideline for Manitoba Water Suppliers

Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Regulation

Purpose

This guideline ensures public and semi-public drinking water system owners throughout the Province of Manitoba meet regulatory requirements of the Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Regulation.

Legislation

All water systems in Manitoba must be classified and operators certified as per the [Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Regulation](#) (MR 77/2003) under The Environment Act.

Classification of facilities

Water systems have the following categories:

- a) water treatment facility (WT);
- b) water distribution facility (WD);

Within each category, water systems fall under one of the following classes based on criteria set out in Schedule A of MR 77/2003.

- a) small system
- b) class 1
- c) class 2
- d) class 3
- e) class 4

Water distribution systems are classified based on population served:

Class	Population
Small system	500 or less
Class 1	501 – 1, 500
Class 2	1,501 – 15,000
Class 3	15,001 – 50,000
Class 4	50,001+

Water treatment systems are classified based on the number of points assessed under Schedule A of MR 77/2003.

The exceptions to this are secure groundwater systems with no treatment other than disinfection and serving a population less than 500, which are classified as a small system water distribution.

Range of Classification Points	Classification
0 to 30	Class 1
31 to 55	Class 2
56 to 75	Class 3
76 or more points	Class 4

It is important to provide clean, safe, and reliable drinking water. In order to do so, the water supply system including the source, treatment plant, and distribution system must be designed and operated efficiently, regardless of the classification level. Facility owners and operators should not omit or remove treatment processes from the facility classification application to avoid an increase in facility classification level and operator certification requirements.

Applying for classification

All public and semi-public water system owners must complete an application form for each water treatment and water distribution facility it owns. There is no cost to apply and the application forms are available on line at: https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/permits_licenses_approvals/forms/index.html?wg=facility_class

Facility classification certificates do not expire unless there are changes or alterations to the facility, in which case the owner must re-apply for classification prior to commissioning the new works.

An application form for facility classification should be included when submitting a permit to construct or alter a water system.

Certification of operators

Water system owners are responsible for employing certified operators. To be eligible for certification the individual must meet the education, exam, and experience requirements. An operator certificate is valid for five years and is renewable with required continuing education units (CEU).

The regulation requires all operators to hold a valid certificate. At least one operator-in-charge (OIC) must hold a certificate that is at least the same class as the facility. Other operators can be certified to the same class, lower, or higher, as the facility; or, at the very least, hold an operator-in-training (OIT) certificate.

Certification Exam

A completed exam registration form including proof of payment must be submitted at least two weeks before the exam date. Operators that fail an exam must wait 4 months before re-writing it. Exams must be written in sequence starting at the lowest level (Class 1) and increasing to the highest level required. Exam results are valid for three years; therefore an individual must apply for certification as soon as they become eligible.

Exam registration form is available at https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/pubs/waste_management/wastewater/exam_registration.pdf

Exam schedule is posted at https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/pubs/waste_management/wastewater/current_exam_schedule.pdf

Applying for certification

All operators applying for a new certificate or applying to upgrade their certificate must become certified sequentially (i.e. a new operator must start from OIT or Class 1 (whichever is applicable) first then up to the required level; or a Class 2 operator cannot apply for Class 4 right away but needs to apply for Class 3 first). All certification renewals will continue to be at the current level of certification (i.e. a Class 4 operator will renew at Class 4).

Information bulletin posted online summarizes the requirements for operator certification https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/eal/certification/info_cert.pdf

Table 1 provides general minimum requirements for operators to qualify for unrestricted certification. Education and experience requirements may be substituted from Class 2 to Class 4. There are no substitutions allowed for Class 1 certification.

Facility class	Must currently hold this certificate ¹	Certification Exam (Passing grade is 70%)	Education	Post-high school education	Operating experience	Direct responsible charge (DRC) operating experience ^{***}
Small System		Small System	Grade 10 / GED 10	N/A	0.5 years	
Class 1		Class 1			1 year*	
Class 2	Class 1	Class 2	Grade 12 / GED 12	2 years of applicable post-secondary education or 90 CEUs	4 years in a class 2 facility, or a facility of a higher class**	2 of the 4 years must be DRC experience obtained while holding a Class 2 certificate
Class 3	Class 2	Class 3				
Class 4	Class 3	Class 4				
				2 years of additional applicable post-secondary education or additional 90 CEUs.	4 years in a class 3 facility, or a facility of a higher class**	2 of the 4 years must be DRC experience obtained while holding a Class 3 certificate

¹ Must hold this certificate for at least one year.

* At same Class or higher.

** 50% can be substituted with relevant post secondary education or continuing education units (CEUs);

***50% can be substituted with CEUs up to a maximum of 45 CEUs (equal to one year of DRC experience)

Operators must submit the following to become certified:

Completed application form

- Application for OIT, first time applicant, or certificate upgrades;
- Application for renewal of operator certificate; or
- Application for reciprocity.

The application form for an operator certificate is available at:

https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/permits_licenses_appovals/forms/index.html?wg=operator_cert

Application fee

- \$100.00 for OIT, first time application or certificate upgrade; or
- \$75.00 for renewal with no change to previously held certification; or
- \$75.00 for certification through reciprocity

Proof of education

- Transcripts for Grade 12/GED 12 or highest grade completed, as well as for college/university/continuing education & training/courses/seminars if applicable (submit copies, not originals); or

- Continuing education units for each year the person held the certification, if they are applying for renewal:
 - 0.6 CEU/year for small system
 - 1.2 CEU/year for Classes 1 to 4.

Operator-in-Training (OIT)

Operators that do not qualify for unrestricted certification may apply for OIT certification. The requirements are completion of Grade 12/GED 12 (Grade 10 for Small Systems) and either: be currently employed at one or more WT or WD, facilities; or have completed an operator course approved by the director. No substitutions for education are available.

Operating requirements

Table of organization

Water system owners are required to submit a current table of organization. The table must contain the following:

- Name of owner, name of the water system(s), and contact information;
- Hierarchy of the organization and staffing coverage to comply with MR 77/2003;
- Name, position, and certification classification of all water system(s) operators; and
- Date (and version, if applicable) of the table of organization.

Templates are available online at https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/permits_licenses_approvals/forms/index.html?wg=table_org

Posting of classification and operator certification certificates

Facility classification and operator certificates must be current, aligned with the table of organization, and displayed at the water treatment plant in a clearly visible location. If that is not practical, they may be posted in another location where they can be available for inspection.

Access to emergency response plan

The water system owner is required to have an emergency response plan covering comprehensive operation and manuals for all systems and equipment. This would include plans, drawings, and process descriptions to aid in the safe and efficient operation of the facility.

Responsibilities of the operator-in-charge (OIC)

An operator in charge must take all steps reasonably necessary to operate the water supply in accordance with operations manuals in a safe and efficient manner.

The operator in charge is responsible for ensuring processes are monitored, sampled, and tested to allow for necessary process adjustments and proper record keeping.

Compliance with the regulation

Regional drinking water officers are including the following requirements in their routine inspection process:

- Facility classification – accurate and posted
- Operator certification – accurate and posted
- Table of organizations – accurate and submitted
- Emergency response plans – developed and in place.

If a water system is or appears to be non-compliant in any of these areas, the Water and Wastewater Facilities Operator Program Specialist will be copied on the inspection letter. Operators and facility owners can contact the program specialist to get clarification on what is needed to come into compliance.

MR 77/2003 is now included in the Preset Fines and Offence Descriptions Regulation. This means that a ticket may be issued for non-compliance with this regulation.

<https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2022/008.pdf>

Office of Drinking Water

Regional [drinking water officers](#) are available for operational and monitoring advice and to provide technical assistance.

After hours, please call the Environmental Emergency Response line at 204-944-4888 and ask for the on-call drinking water officer.

For more information on Manitoba's drinking water and how it is regulated, visit: www.manitoba.ca/drinkingwater

For more information related to the Manitoba Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Regulation, visit: www.manitoba.ca/certification