**DIRECTOR APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION GUIDE FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS**

**PURPOSE**

To provide training providers with:

- criteria for Director Approved continuing education training for purpose of Drinking Water Operators and Water Quality Analysts complying with the training requirements in the *Certification of Drinking Water System Operators and Water Quality Analysts* regulation, O. Reg. 128/04 of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* (SDWA); and

- the process for having continuing education training assessed.

This guide should not be considered legal advice. In the event of a conflict between this guide and the requirements of the legislation, the legislation shall govern.

**CONTEXT**

Under O. Reg. 128/04, Drinking Water Operators (Operator) and Water Quality Analysts (WQA) must complete Director Approved continuing education training in order to renew their certificate. The underlying principle of training is to enhance operator competency.

For information regarding Operator and WQA training requirements, please see the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change’s (MOECC) *Guide to Drinking Water Operator Training Requirements in O. Reg. 128/04*.

**CRITERIA**

The following criteria must be met in order for continuing education to be approved by the Director under Subsections 29(4) and 31(4) of O. Reg. 128/04:

1. **Is a structured course** that involves contact between the learner and training provider. Contact involves two way communication such as:
   - the instructor providing feedback to participants in the form of answers to questions and/or comment on assignments, etc.; and
   - the instructor monitors/evaluates the participants’ progress.

   Such training could include classroom training, or distance learning such as a correspondence, computer-based or online courses.

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1 ‘Course’ in this context means a series of lectures, instructions, or lessons on a particular subject.
2. **Has documented learning objectives.** The training course contains learning objectives which clearly state what participants will learn and/or be able to do as a result of completing the course.

3. **Includes a means to verify that the participant has learned the material covered in the course.** This could include performance demonstrations under real or simulated conditions, written or oral examinations, written reports, completion of a project, or self-assessment.

The training provider must maintain a policy regarding successful course completion, which includes criteria for testing a participant’s mastery of the material and attendance requirements.

4. **Includes a course evaluation form, acceptable to the ministry, to be completed by each participant at the end of the course.** Such course evaluations must be anonymous in both submission and participant identification. The form should solicit feedback on both the course and the instructor.

5. **Is planned and provided by a qualified training provider.** A training provider is the organization responsible for the design and/or delivery of the continuing education course. A training provider can be an educational institution, public utilities commission (PUC), municipality, a public or non-profit training organization, or an individual.

For the purpose of Director Approved continuing education training, to be considered qualified to design the course, the training provider must, either through education, training or experience, have knowledge of how to develop lesson plans and structure the training appropriate to the course subject matter and audience. Specifically, the training provider must meet one of the following criteria:

- have received formal education in ‘adult education’ as evidenced by a diploma or certificate;
- have received structured training in designing/organizing training from an expert holding an adult education certificate; or
- be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Director an ability to design curriculum/training programs, e.g. through sample curriculums or training programs, student evaluations of training program/course, experience designing training.

For the purpose of Director Approved continuing education training, to be considered qualified to deliver the training, the training provider must meet one of the following criteria:

- have at least one (1) year of experience as a full-time\(^2\) instructor;
- have at least three (3) years of experience as a part-time\(^3\) instructor;

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\(^2\) ‘full-time’ means training preparation and delivery takes approximately 1,000 to 1,800 hours per year.

\(^3\) ‘part-time’ means the preparation and delivery takes approximately 500 to 1,000 hours per year.
• have at least three (3) years of experience directly relevant to the subject matter being taught;
• have been formally trained or educated on the subject matter being covered; or
• other qualifications acceptable to the Director

6. **Includes a course completion certificate issued by the training provider to participants who successfully complete the course.** Such course completion certificates should be retained by the training provider for a minimum of three years, and contain at minimum the following information:

• training provider’s name;
• participant’s name;
• training event title or description;
• start and completion date of training course;
• number of contact hours or Director Approved continuing education units (CEUs)⁴;
• signature of training provider or authorized representative; and
• MOECC Course ID. Note: This number is sent to training providers upon successful completion of the Director Approval assessment process.

The training provider may elect to state on the certificate that the course is approved by the Director. If so, the following wording shall be used:

“Approved by the Director under O. Reg. 128/04 for x continuing education hours.”

7. **Is on subject matter that is directly related to the duties typically performed by an Operator or a WQA such as:**

*Treatment and Distribution:*
- Operation of drinking water systems
- Drinking water treatment processes/equipment
- Distribution system maintenance (flushing, cleaning, tapping, repair)
- Leak detection
- Water storage
- Pump operation/pumping station operation

*Regulatory/Health and Safety:*
- Act, regulations, policies, standards and guidelines governing Ontario’s drinking water systems
- MOECC standards, policies and procedures related to drinking water
- Health and safety directly related to the duties of an operator
- American Water Works Association (AWWA), Ontario or site specific standards or operating procedures

⁴ ‘Continuing education unit (CEU)’ means ten (10) contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education or training event.
Water Quality:
- Chemistry, physics and other applied sciences related to the operation of a drinking water system
- Water quality
- Microbiology/drinking water pathogens
- Sampling and laboratory techniques
- Monitoring

Basic Concepts:
- Source water protection
- Disinfection
- Applied engineering related to drinking water supply, treatment and distribution
- Applied mathematics
- Hydraulics
- Well operation and hydrogeology

Operational Support:
- Drinking water equipment maintenance/preventative maintenance
- SCADA and process control
- Computer programs directly related to drinking water systems
- Cross connection control
- Backflow prevention
- Residuals management

Management of Systems:
- Professional effectiveness training which can be directly related to the duties of a drinking water operator
- Management of drinking water systems
- Management/supervision of water system staff
- Emergency management
- System security
- Customer relations
- Professional responsibility of an operator

Training which may not be Director Approved

The Director generally will not approve training which meets the subject matter criteria, but that is designed for the orientation of participants on site-specific or proprietary processes, equipment or software, or that is promotional in nature and/or a sales presentation. This type of training may be used by an operator or WQA towards meeting their on-the-job practical training requirements.

Training on subject matter specific to wastewater or stormwater will not be Director Approved.
Conferences

Conferences sponsored by the Ontario Water Works Association, Ontario Municipal Water Association, Aboriginal Water Wastewater Association of Ontario and the American Water Works Association may be approved as Director Approved continuing education, provided they meet the following criteria:

- participants are verified to have attended the full conference session;
- participants are issued a certificate which includes the number of hours of conference sessions; and
- the seminar or conference is on the subject matter specified in the criteria section of this guideline.

Operators may use conferences to meet up to 25% of their Director Approved continuing education hour requirements. Any excess hours above the 25% can be applied to the on-the-job training hours.

Other Considerations

The Director may decline to approve and may rescind approval of a course, consistent with his/her authority regarding operator and WQA certification.

The Director may, but generally does not, review courses for accuracy of content, quality of instruction or overall effectiveness. Furthermore, training providers shall not state directly or indirectly anything in any manner or any media that suggests the Director and/or the ministry has endorsed or approved the specific content of a course, its instruction and/or effectiveness.

Training providers shall not alter the course content or duration substantially after Director Approval has been given. Please see the Reassessment section of this guideline for the rules on resubmitting for re-approval.

Training providers must create and deliver courses in an ethical and professional manner. It is the responsibility of training providers to ensure that course content and delivery meet all relevant legal requirements, for example:

- the Ontario Human Rights Code;
- the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and its regulations
- the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations
- copyright and licensing law
- law in relation to slander and/or libel
- law in relation to drinking water system operation

A training provider shall not issue a certificate to any participant prior to his/her successful completion of the course.
Advertising

Training providers who have Director Approved continuing education may advertise that a course has been approved. Training providers submitting a course for assessment may only advertise the course as Director Approved once confirmation has been received and the course review fee paid. Additionally, training providers shall not advertise a course as “pending approval”.

If advertising a course that has been Director Approved, the following is the only acceptable wording that shall be used:

“This course has met the requirements under O. Reg. 128/04 as Director Approved Continuing Education.”

PROCESS FOR HAVING CONTINUING EDUCATION TRAINING ASSESSED

Courses that meet the criteria and are approved by the Director will be placed on the “Director Approved Course Listing”, which is maintained by the Program Administrator, the Ontario Water Wastewater Certification Office, on its website (www.owwco.ca). Operators and WQAs can refer to this list when selecting a training course/event.

Out of province CEUs successfully obtained from other provinces in Canada will be granted the same Director Approved CEUs in Ontario provided the training meets the subject matter requirements included above, up to a maximum of 0.7 CEUs per day.

Water and Wastewater Operator Certification System (WWOCS)

Training Providers who wish to have a course assessed for CEUs and Director Approval should contact the Program Administrator in order to obtain a login and password to the ministry’s database, known as WWOCS. To request access to WWOCS, Training Providers must complete the Training Provider User Access Request for Water Wastewater Operator Certification System form which is available on the ministry website. Training Providers can get more information on how to use WWOCS from the WWOCS Functions for Training Providers guide, which is available on the Program Administrator’s website. Once access to WWOCS is obtained, training providers can submit their application for course assessment through the database.

All courses must be successfully completed (i.e. passed) in order for CEUs to be assigned. Training providers are required to upload the course completion results of participants who have successfully completed training within two (2) months of the date of completion as a condition of course approval. Training providers who do not upload course completion results may have their course approvals rescinded.
Documents Required from Training Providers

Should a training provider wish to have their courses assessed for approval as Director Approved training, the training provider must submit the course curriculum and/or other training material (see exception below) together with a completed Director Approved Continuing Education Training Assessment form, which needs to be processed through WWOCS. The following information is required:

- Course title and description of subject matter;
- Number of hours of contact time;
- Training method (e.g. classroom, correspondence, computer-based, online, etc.);
- Learning objectives;
- Training Materials (e.g. manuals, booklets, handouts, presentation materials, etc.);
- Participant learning verification method (e.g. tests, demonstration checklist, etc.);
- Sample participant course completion record (i.e. certificate or letter);
- Course evaluation form (form through which the participant gives feedback on course and instructor);
- Timetable which demonstrates the instructor’s use of time with respect to the delivery of the learning objectives, quizzes/tests, and breaks;
- Information that demonstrates the training provider is qualified by virtue of training, education or experience to design the training. Such evidence could include an adult education certificate, resume, or equivalent;
- Evidence that the instructor is qualified to provide the training. Such evidence could include an adult education certificate, resume, or equivalent.

Community Colleges, Universities or Other Academic Institutions

Training providers of courses which are part of a degree, diploma or certificate program offered by community colleges, universities or other academic institutions, please contact the Program Administrator for information on the process for having these courses assessed for Director Approval.

Notification of Assessment

The Program Administrator will review the information and advise the training provider in writing as to whether the training event meets the criteria. If the training event meets the criteria, the Program Administrator will provide the assessed CEU value. If the training event fails to meet the criteria, the Program Administrator will advise the training provider of the reason(s).

Course Fees

Training providers are required to pay a course review fee for each course assessed that meets the criteria for Director Approval. Details of the review fee are included on the notification of
approval. This fee must be paid before the course application process can be finalized and the course placed on the Director Approved Training List.

A course review fee must also be paid in the following circumstances:

- a course is resubmitted as a result of a change in content or duration; and
- an existing classroom course is converted to an online or computer based training course.

An administrative fee will be charged in the following circumstances:

- course name changes; and
- change of course ownership.

No fee applies in the following circumstances:

- a training provider submits a new or additional instructor to a Director Approved course; and
- a training provider delivers an existing course through a webinar without changing the content or durations of the course.

**Reassessment**

Where the learning event has been altered substantially, such as a significant change in course objectives or content by 25% or more, the training provider will be required to resubmit the learning event material for re-approval. Similarly, any alteration which results in a change of course duration by one (1) hour or more will also require the learning event to be resubmitted for re-approval. Training providers resubmitting training events for re-approval are required to pay the full course assessment fee.

Where the course instructor has changed, the training provider should submit to the Program Administrator the required information providing evidence that the new instructor is qualified to train.

**Renewal of Course Approvals**

The Director may require a training provider to resubmit courses for Director Approval on a regular basis to confirm that the course is still being offered and still meets the criteria for Director Approval.