

Requirements for the Issuance of Drinking Water Operator and Water Quality Analyst Temporary Certificates

As a Drinking Water Operator or Water Quality Analyst (WQA), you must renew your certificate(s) every three years to maintain your certification. To have your certificate renewed, you are required to complete the following three types of training during the three year duration of your certificate:

- the mandatory certificate renewal course through the Walkerton Clean Water Centre (course content is revised every three years)
- the required number of hours of Director Approved continuing education
- the required number of hours of on-the-job practical training

If you haven't completed the required training

If you haven't met your training requirements before your certificate is up for renewal, you may be issued a temporary certificate (valid for up to six months) if the Director is satisfied that you will complete the required training before it expires. A temporary Drinking Water Operator certificate is called a "subsection 7(6) certificate renewal". The equivalent certificate issued for WQAs is referred to as a "subsection 16(6) certificate renewal".

Process to apply for a temporary certificate

To apply for a temporary certificate, along with your renewal application you must include a letter that explains why you could not complete the required training before your certificate expired. The Director may issue a temporary certificate renewal for the following reasons:

- extended illness (must be documented by a physician)
- severe operational issues which resulted in planned training being cancelled or postponed
- scheduled training was cancelled by the training provider
- submitted on-the-job practical training was not accepted
- operator was on an extended leave of absence during the last year of the certificate
- other reasons as approved by the Director

Training you complete during the temporary certificate period

The training you complete while holding a temporary certificate that is over and above what is required to meet your outstanding training requirements cannot be used to meet training requirements the next time you are renewing your certificate.

Learn more about these requirements at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/drinking-water-operations-training-and-certification>.

Click to download a copy of the [Drinking Water Certificate Renewal Application Form](#).

Fees for Temporary Certificate Renewals

Effective January 1, 2016, new fees for temporary certificate renewals will be the same as the fee for all certificate renewals, \$145.

Paying for temporary certificate renewals:

- If you apply for a temporary certificate renewal the payment provided with your application will be used for your temporary certificate renewal
- Once you complete your outstanding training, for your 3 year certificate renewal application to be processed, you must:
 - Submit a completed Drinking Water Certificate and Wastewater Licence Renewal Application Form;
 - Submit proof of the outstanding training; and
 - Pay the required renewal fee

Temporary Certificate Renewals

- Must be requested (Letter must be included with your renewal application form)
- Valid reason required for not completing training
- Certificates may be issued for up to 6 months
- Pay the required renewal fee

Submitting Training and Renewing for 3 years

- Certificates are renewed for a period of 3 years from the temporary certificate's expiry date once the:
 - Outstanding training is submitted, and
 - Required renewal fee is paid

Training Obtained Under a Temporary Certificate Renewal

- Training over and above that required, obtained while holding a temporary certificate, cannot be applied to the next three year renewal period

*A temporary certificate issued for class I to IV operator's certificate is called a subsection 7(6) renewal. The equivalent certificate issued for water quality analysts is called a subsection 16(6) renewal.

Questions and Answers – Temporary Certificate Renewals

Drinking Water Operators and Water Quality Analysts

1. What does subsection 7(6) refer to?

Subsection 7(6) refers to the part of O. Reg. 128/04 *Certification of Drinking Water System Operators and Water Quality Analysts* that deals with the Director's discretion whether to temporarily renew a certificate, despite the fact that the applicant has not completed their training requirements.

2. How do I apply for a temporary (subsection 7(6)) certificate renewal?

To apply for a temporary certificate renewal, you must:

- Complete and submit the Drinking Water Operator and Water Quality Analyst Renewal Application Form;
- Include a letter explaining the reason why you have not completed the required training signed by yourself and your supervisor; and
- Include any training you may have completed during the renewal period.

3. What are the reasons accepted by the Director for issuing a temporary certificate renewal?

The accepted reasons include:

- Extended illness (must be documented, e.g., signed letter from employer)
- Severe operational issues which resulted in planned training being cancelled or postponed
- Scheduled training was cancelled by the training provider
- Operator was on an extended leave of absence during the last year of the certificate
- Submitted on-the-job practical training was not accepted
- Other reasons as approved by the Director

4. What will happen if I did not complete the required training and sent in my renewal application without a letter that includes an acceptable reason for not completing it?

You will not receive a temporary certificate. Under the new process, with your renewal application, you must include a letter that provides an acceptable reason for not meeting your training requirements. You will need to complete your required training in order for your certificate to be renewed. If your certificate expires, it is no longer valid and you will not be able to operate.

5. I received a temporary certificate renewal and I've now completed the outstanding training. How do I get my three year renewal?

Submit your training documentation (i.e., certificates of completion, signed training list) to the Ontario Water Wastewater Certification Office (OWWCO). Make sure to include a cover page with your name, Operator ID and the certificate you are applying to renew.

6. Who is responsible for an operator's training?

An operator's training is the responsibility of both the operator and the owner/operating authority of a subsystem. It is the responsibility of the operator to complete the required training, and it is the responsibility of the owner/operating authority to take reasonable steps to ensure that every operator employed in their subsystems completes the required hours of training.

7. I submitted my renewal 2 weeks before my certificate expires and have been informed that I do not have enough training. Do I have enough time to submit a request for a temporary certificate renewal?

Yes. However, your certificate may not be renewed before it expires. If your certificate is expired it is not considered valid. If you do not hold a valid certificate for a drinking water system you cannot operate that system. To avoid having your certificates lapse, please ensure your renewal is submitted at least one month prior to expiry.

8. I never had to pay for a temporary drinking water certificate. Why am I now being charged for this?

When the ministry analyzed the costs associated for each fee, they reviewed the amount of time, effort and skills that are required to provide each service. A considerable amount of time and technical knowledge is dedicated to review all aspects of each certificate application, including temporary certificates. This could include analyzing education, training and viable experience as well as all the possible substitutions which may apply. Offering temporary drinking water certificates at no cost poses a burden on the program which now needs to be addressed.

Owners / Operating Authorities of Drinking Water Systems

1. I received an email notifying me that one of our operators has not met their training requirements, and that as a result, our municipality is possibly out of compliance. Why would the municipality be out of compliance?

If an operator employed by your municipality has not completed their required training and it is found that the municipality did not take reasonable steps to ensure that the operator completed their training, then the municipality would be out of compliance with section 29(1) of O. Reg. 128/04.

2. If an operator receives a temporary certificate renewal, is the municipality still possibly out of compliance?

Yes. Even though a temporary certificate renewal was issued to an operator, the owner or operating authority may still be out of compliance with section 29 of O. Reg. 128/04.

3. What would be considered "reasonable steps" to be taken by the owner or operating authority to ensure that every operator completes their training requirements?

Depending on the situation, reasonable steps could include scheduling continuing education training, or on-the-job training for employees, or providing employees with the opportunity to complete the required training on their own. What would be considered reasonable steps ultimately depends on the circumstances of the operator and owner/operating authority.

4. How would it be determined if an owner/operating authority has taken reasonable steps?

This would be determined as part of the inspection process.