



Need-to-Know Criteria

Wastewater Collection

Operator Class II

A Need-to-Know Guide when preparing for the:

Wastewater Collection Operator Class II Certification Exam



The Associated Boards
of Certification

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Before You Dive In...

What is the Need-to-Know Criteria?

This Wastewater Collection Operator Class II Need-to-Know Criteria was developed to assist operators in understanding the content that will be covered in the Standardized Wastewater Collection Operator Class II exam. A methodical and comprehensive international investigation was conducted to determine the most significant job tasks performed by wastewater collection operators. The content covered on the exam represents the job tasks identified through this research as essential operator competencies, and is not limited to the practices of your system/facility. The following pages organize these job tasks into Content Areas and identify the amount of the test devoted to each area.

Is this Need-to-Know Criteria relevant to MY exam?

WPI offers a variety of standardized and customized exam services. This document is reflective only of the Standardized Wastewater Collection Operator Class II exam; older editions of the standardized exam and various customized exams are also administered by various certification programs. Please contact your certifying authority to determine whether they have implemented this exam for your program.

Pre-Test Questions

Your exam may include up to 10 extra questions that have not been used on previous versions of the exam. These are known as “pre-test” questions and allow WPI to gather valuable data about the new questions before they are included in future tests. Pre-test questions are unidentified and scattered

throughout the exam so you will answer them with the same care in which you address scored questions. The pre-test questions are not included in your final score.

Exam Preparation Resources

Visit gowpi.org to access the Formula/Conversion Table administered with this exam, a list of approved references, information on purchasing study guides available from partner organizations, and more.

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Exam Content

The Wastewater Collection Operator Class II exam will test you on essential job tasks. These job tasks have been categorized into the Content Areas detailed in the following pages. The table displayed on Page 4 of this document summarizes the areas that are included on the exam, the number of test questions in each of these areas, the cognitive format of the test questions, and number of calculation questions in each area.

Just as operator job duties vary in their complexity, so will the questions you are asked on the exam. Some will be simpler, whereas others will be more complex or cognitively demanding. The following two cognitive levels are used to describe the format of the questions you will encounter on this exam:



Recall – Tasks at this cognitive level typically require the simple recall or recognition of specific facts, concepts, processes, or procedures, with little to no problem-solving involved. You may be asked to identify, illustrate, recall, and/or recognize specific information. An example of a Recall type item follows:

Although the required contact time for chlorine to kill bacteria may vary depending on certain water characteristics, the typical industry standard is:

- A. 15 minutes
- B. 30 minutes**
- C. 45 minutes
- D. 60 minutes




Application – Tasks at this level will involve some basic problem-solving, calculations, or the interpretation and application of data. You may be asked to calculate, categorize, classify, compare, differentiate, explain, specify, translate, and/or apply knowledge. An example of an Application type item follows:

In the activated sludge process, some of the activated sludge MUST be wasted to:

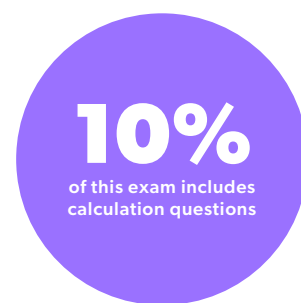
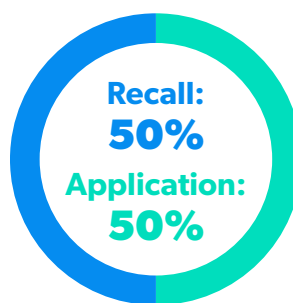
- A. increase digester gas production
- B. prevent excessive solids build-up**
- C. prevent clogging of the sludge return line
- D. prevent overloading of sludge return pumps
















Exam Content Continued

 **Units for Calculations** – This exam requires numerical calculations. The number of calculation items is detailed in the Exam Content Outline below. WPI’s standardized examinations are designed to be utilized in both the United States and Canada, therefore calculation items are presented in both US Standard units and Metric units. Each item is solvable in both units independently. The US Standard units will appear first in the question followed by the metric units in parentheses. An example of a Calculation item follows:

If a water reservoir 12 ft (4 m) in diameter has a static water level of 21 ft (7 m) what is the pressure on the bottom of the tank?

- A. 6 psi (46 kPa)
- B. 9 psi (69 kPa)
- C. 12 psi (92 kPa)
- D. 21 psi (161 kPa)



NUMBER OF QUESTIONS	CONTENT AREA	COGNITIVE FORMAT OF JOB TASK EXAM CONTENT
25	Equipment Operation, Evaluation, and Maintenance	 10  15  01
25	Collection System Operation, Maintenance, and Restoration	 10  15  04
18	Lift Station Operation and Maintenance	 08  10  05
16	Collection System Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment	 09  07  00
16	Security, Safety, and Administrative Procedures	 08  08  00
100	Total	

* Your exam may contain up to 10 extra unscored pre-test questions (see *Before You Dive In* for more details).

Wastewater Collection Operator Class II | Need-to-Know Criteria

Exam References

Each question on the standardized Wastewater Collection Class II Examination is referenced to widely accepted, peer-reviewed publications from California State University, Office of Water Programs, American Water Works Association, or the Water Environment Federation. A complete listing of references used for the development of this exam can be found on WPI's website at:

<https://www.gowpi.org/services/abc-testing/exam-references/>

In order to assist with exam preparation, the table below provides both primary and secondary reference materials for each content area on this examination. Please note that exam questions may be referenced to any WPI approved source, however, the following matrix identifies the two most prominent sources in each content area.

NUMBER OF QUESTIONS	CONTENT AREA	PRIMARY REFERENCE	SECONDARY REFERENCE
25	Equipment Operation, Evaluation, and Maintenance	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1, 8th Edition
25	Collection System Operation, Maintenance, and Restoration	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1, 8th Edition	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition
18	Lift Station Operation and Maintenance	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1, 8th Edition	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition
16	Collection System Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition
16	Security, Safety, and Administrative Procedures	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 2, 8th Edition	CSUS - Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Collection Systems, Volume 1, 8th Edition



 10 Recall

 15 Application

 1 Calculation Item

Equipment Operation, Evaluation, and Maintenance

Calibrate and operate air detectors/gas meters, flow meters portable or stationary, and blowers

Clean the collection system

- Hydraulic cleaning (e.g., balling, flushing, poly pigs)
- Jet rodding
- Blockage removal
- Rodding (e.g., hand and/or continuous)

Operate the following equipment

- Computers
- Heavy equipment (e.g., backhoe, mini-excavator, combination truck, etc.)

Evaluate and maintain the operation of equipment

- Inspecting
- Measuring temperature
- Reading charts
- Reading gauges
- Reading meters
- Maintenance records/logs

Evaluate and maintain the operation of electrical equipment

- Variable frequency drives (VFD's)
- Motor control centers
- Low voltage equipment (e.g., flow meters, float switch, PID controls, pressure sensors).

Inspect system using physical inspection (e.g., CCTV, dye and smoke testing, acoustic evaluation, visual, etc.)

Rehabilitate and repair collection system

- Lift station (e.g., wet wells, fittings, and piping)
- Manholes (e.g., collar, risers, cone, barrel, invert)
- Sewer lines (e.g., pipe bursting, pipe lining, pipe repair, etc.)
- Taps (e.g., top hat, grouting, protruding laterals)
- Eliminate infiltration, inflow, and exfiltration

Inspect equipment or monitor operating conditions, meters, and gauges to determine load requirements and detect malfunctions of the lift station

Inspect the operation of equipment to determine malfunction

Perform system inspections (e.g., air release valves, inlets, manholes, outfalls, overflows, regulators, inverted siphons, sluice gates)

Perform preventative maintenance including repair, replacement, and installation of equipment

- Motors
- Pumps
- Valves
- Engines
- Generators
- Level sensing equipment



10 Recall



15 Application



1 Calculation Item

Equipment Operation, Evaluation, and Maintenance

Operate equipment and/or tools

- Aeration equipment and blowers
- Air compressors
- Backflow prevention devices
- Chain pull hoists and overhead cranes
- Pumps (fixed and portable, all types)
- Flushing unit (e.g., dumping water into the system)
- Hydrant operations
- Metal detectors and pipe locators
- Precision measuring instruments
- High pressure jetting
- Manhole guide rollers
- Testing equipment
- Fans (e.g., forced air, air extraction)



10 Recall



15 Application



4 Calculation Items

Collection System Operation, Maintenance, and Restoration

Clean and maintain tanks (e.g., wet wells, chemical, holding)

Collect and document data from charts, gauges, and other instrumentation

Excavate wastewater lines

Use high pressure hydraulics to clean wastewater mains and lines

Inspect structures (e.g., manholes, vaults, wet wells for damage, trench cave-ins, and debris)

Interpret blueprints, GIS, and sketches of the system showing location and configuration of collection system components

Maintain all equipment (e.g., pumps, motors, chlorinators, chemical feeds) in accordance with SOP/OEM specifications

Maintain an inventory of chemicals and materials

Monitor panel board and adjust controls to regulate flow rates

Operate pumping equipment during emergency bypass operations

Hydro excavation

Update GIS and/or asset management (e.g., manhole location, GPS, pictures, etc.)

Identify and respond to system failures (e.g., sanitary sewer overflows - SSO, collapsed pipes, pump failure, etc.)

Perform maintenance and inspection through the use of

- Hydraulic cleaning (e.g., nozzle selection, pipe size, grade, type of pipe, level of flow, etc.)
- Locating and inspection (e.g., CCTV, acoustic evaluation, visual, drone, etc.)



8 Recall



10 Application



5 Calculation Items

Ensure that electrical devices (e.g., fuses, motors, relays, starters, etc.) are functioning properly

Ensure that electronic devices (e.g., alarms, controllers, gas detection, level detection system, telemetry – RTU's, SCADA, PLC's, control devices, etc.) are functioning properly

Ensure that devices (e.g., piping, pressure relief valves - compressors, water heaters, chemical addition, pumps, valves, wet wells/ vacuum valves - force mains, air relief, seals, air exchangers/exhaust fans, bar screens, etc.) are functioning properly

Adjust equipment (e.g., SCADA, VFD, PLC, control panel, etc.) to increase or decrease pumping capacity for proper flow

Perform calculations to ensure proper operations



9 Recall



7 Application



0 Calculation Items

Collection System Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment

Perform adjustments on the following components of the collection system

- Flow monitoring
- Force mains
- Gravity sewers
- Lift stations
- Manholes/cleanouts
- Measuring and control systems (e.g., PLC, SCADA, VFD, etc.)

Analyze long-term collection system operations for defects

Calibrate and adjust

- Atmosphere testers
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA)
- Level and flow meters

Identify physical and/or abnormal characteristics of the wastewater

Inspect pipe installation (e.g., grade, joints, bedding, backfill, pipe defects, pressure test)

Monitor, evaluate, and adjust electric motors, pumps, and valves

Repair and/or replace lines (e.g., force mains, combined sewer, sanitary sewer, storm drains, etc.)

Review SCADA and revise settings as required

Monitor flow sensors



8 Recall



8 Application



0 Calculation Items

Analyze/estimate costs (e.g., equipment, material, power, fuel, staffing, etc.)

Analyze regulatory and compliance requirements

Authorize equipment repairs

Comply with all health and safety procedures and protocols

Conduct safety inspections

Configure traffic plans and set up signs for traffic control

Coordinate wastewater program activities with other divisions and outside agencies, contractors, and developers

Determine location of underground utilities (e.g., combined sewers, cross connections, cross bores, force mains, inlets, laterals, manholes, outfalls, sanitary sewers, laterals, etc.)

Determine shift schedules and assign work crews to ensure both daily and long-term continuity of operation

Develop preventive maintenance procedures

Develop safety procedures

Develop training programs (e.g., start-up and testing, standard operating procedures, and technical documentation for operations)

Comply with safety standards and safety programs

Ensure compliance of discharge limits are in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations

Analyze system logs/records

Investigate various customer issues (e.g., sewer backup and/or odor complaints)

Maintain knowledge of regulatory permit requirements

Maintain records and file reports (e.g., internal, or regulatory requirements, etc.)

Maintain knowledge of current regulatory requirements

Monitor status of customer work orders to ensure good customer service

Monitor work and job site conditions to ensure the protection of workers, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic

Perform the following administrative activities: safety/security evaluation and compliance



8 Recall



8 Application



0 Calculation Items

Perform the following administrative activities

- Operation and maintenance plan development
- Employee supervision and performance evaluations
- Planning and organization of work activities
- Record keeping and evaluation of data
- Responses to public complaints
- Report writing (e.g., federal, internal, state, etc.)

Engage in the proper safety procedures for

- Calibration of atmospheric testing
- Chemical spill responses
- Confined space entry
- Electrical grounding, hazards, and arc flash
- Fires (e.g., prevention, fire extinguishers)
- First aid
- Hazardous materials
- Infectious diseases/blood borne pathogen protection
- Lifting
- Lockout/tagout
- Personal protection equipment (e.g., respiratory protection, safety glasses, gloves, hardhats, fall protection)
- Shoring, trenching, and excavation
- Traffic control/work zone safety

Prepare Emergency Response Plans (e.g., system failures, disasters, interagency assistance, etc.)

Purchase equipment

Train new operators

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