

Wastewater Operator Certification Transition to Computer-Based Testing (CBT)

Current Way



New Way



Wastewater Operator Certification testing will change from a pencil & paper test to a computerized test beginning March 16, 2015.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is Computer-Based Testing (CBT)?

A. Computer-Based Testing (CBT) is a method to take licensing examinations in a secure, proctored environment at a dedicated testing center. For your Wastewater Operator Certification exam, you will answer questions on a computer terminal rather than taking a conventional paper & pencil test.

Q. Why is this change being made?

A. CBT will modernize Maine DEP's Wastewater Operator Certification process and testing. The change from paper exams to CBT will give you a more convenient testing schedule, more opportunities to take the exam (*including at least one Saturday per month*), and allow you to receive your results immediately upon completing your exam. Also, as soon as your application is approved, you can schedule your exam at a date and time convenient for you. CBT has successfully been used by Maine's Drinking Water Certification Program since 2012, as well as by other New England wastewater operator certification programs.

Q. Where will the tests be offered?

A. Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) provides testing services for the Wastewater Operator Certification exam. You can take the exam at any AMP Assessment Centers in the United States. There are two AMP Assessment Centers in Maine – Portland and Holden, as well as a location in Portsmouth NH. Currently AMP does not have a testing center in Northern Maine, so DEP will continue to offer a paper exam in Presque Isle twice a year (May and November). A current listing of Assessment Centers, including addresses and driving directions, may be viewed at www.goAMP.com.

Q. When does the change take place?

A. Applications for CBT will be accepted in the NEIWPC/JETCC office beginning January 12, 2015 and CBT testing will become available beginning March 16, 2015. Paper based testing will still be available for everyone on May 13, 2015 at the three historic testing locations in Portland, Bangor and Presque Isle to allow for a transition period. After the May 2015 exam, paper testing will only be offered in Presque Isle.

Q. Will the test questions be different?

- A.** No, both the paper exams and CBT will have the same question set. Maine will be using a customized exam, which Maine DEP and Associated Boards of Certification (ABC) have constructed. The Wastewater Operator Certification exams will still be 100 multiple-choice questions. The passing grade is still 70 percent. The testing time will remain at 3 hours (running time).

Q. What is the application process? How do I apply?

- A.** There are no application deadlines and you may apply to take the exam at any time. The CBT process takes place in two steps. First, you apply through NEIWPC/JETCC using a paper application that can be found at <http://jetcc.org/certification-exam-forms.php>. The application form includes relevant education and work experience, and must be signed and notarized in accordance with Department regulations. Mail the completed application form and \$75 application fee to NEIWPC/JETCC. The \$75 payment covers the administrative costs of processing the application and mailing the final certificates. The application is reviewed by Maine DEP to determine your eligibility to sit for a particular wastewater grade level exam.

Next, you will receive a postcard and email confirmation from AMP with instructions for scheduling your exam, as well as a unique ID#. You then go to the website www.goamp.com or call 800-345-6559 to schedule an appointment and pay for the exam. The CBT exam fee is \$96, which covers the AMP testing services. The approval is valid for up to two years.

*Applications for the paper exams are due in the NEIWPC/JETCC office six weeks prior to the test date.

Q. Can I submit my application to the NEIWPC/JETCC electronically?

- A.** No, not at this time due to the requirement for the application to be notarized. However, the Department is exploring the possibility of electronic submittals for applications in the future.

Q. What are the new test dates?

- A.** There are no designated test dates for computerized tests. Once you have applied through NEIWPC/JETCC and received your confirmation from AMP, you schedule an appointment with AMP to take the CBT (www.goamp.com or call 800-345-6559). Testing times are available Monday through Friday at 9:00 AM and 1:30 PM, with slots at least one Saturday per month. Test dates for paper exams in Presque Isle will continue to be held twice a year in May and November.

Q. How do I pay for CBT?

- A.** You can pay for CBT in several ways: 1) by credit card online at the AMP website, 2) by credit card over the phone by calling AMP, or 3) by mail with a company check, bank check or money order payable to AMP (personal checks, purchase orders or vouchers are **not** accepted). See www.goamp.com for payment details.

* Payment for a paper exam remains the same: Credit Card, Checks, or Money Orders payable to NEIWPC/JETCC.

Q. What is the total cost for the CBT exam under the new system?

- A.** Application to NEIWPC/JETCC: \$75; AMP exam: \$96. The total cost will be \$171 for your first attempt.

Q. What is the cost if I need to retake an exam?

A. If you do not pass the exam after your first attempt, you may retake the same grade level exam as many times as needed within your two-year approval period and pay only the AMP exam fee of \$96 for each additional attempt. Unless you are applying for a different grade level or the two-year approval period has expired, it is not necessary to reapply to NEIWPC/JETCC or pay another application fee.

Q. What is the total cost for the paper exam in Presque Isle?

A. The application and exam fee for the paper exam will remain a total of \$125 for each attempt payable to NEIWPC/JETCC.

Q. What do I bring to the test site?

A. Two forms of identification (one must be a current government-issued photo ID with signature) and a non-programmable calculator. Pencils, scratch paper and ABC formula/math conversion sheet will be provided. No other writing instruments, no electronic devices for the storage, display, or transmission of data, such as cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), programmable calculators, computers, cameras, or personal belongings are allowed. If you wear special glasses when working at a computer, you should bring those glasses.

Q. What if I am late for my 9:00 or 1:30 test time?

A. AMP policy states that you will not be allowed to take the test if you appear more than 15 minutes late for an examination.

Q. What if I can't make my scheduled test time?

A. You may reschedule your examination appointment once without penalty if you contact AMP a minimum of two business days prior to your scheduled examination date.

Q. How long do I have to complete the test?

A. You will have 3 hours (running time) to complete the CBT exam. This is the same time allowed for the paper test.

Q. I'm not familiar with computers or computer testing. Will that hurt my ability to pass the test?

A. Before starting the test at the AMP Assessment Center, you may complete a short exercise to become familiar with the computer, question layout, and features of the computerized testing. You choose the correct answer by using a mouse or typing the appropriate letter. Historically, operators with limited computer skills have not had problems completing the test.

Q. Are there special arrangements for candidates with disabilities?

A. If you have a disability and may require reasonable accommodations, you must complete the "Request for Special Examination Accommodations" form found on the AMP website. In addition, AMP is equipped with Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) to assist deaf and hearing-impaired candidates who wish to apply for the exam.

Q. What material do I get at the AMP Assessment Center?

A. The ABC formula/math conversion sheet. Pencil and scratch paper are provided.

Q. When do I get my results?

A. Your test results are printed and given to you immediately after completing the test.

Q. If I successfully pass the exam, what do I need to do to get my license?

A. You don't need to do anything. NEIWPCC/JETCC will be notified by AMP when you pass the exam. NEIWPCC/JETCC will update your records and make arrangements to have your new operator certificate printed, signed, and mailed to you within 4 weeks of passing the exam.

Q. What if I fail the exam?

A. If you fail the CBT exam, you may schedule a new CBT exam date and time with AMP as many times as needed during your two-year approval period. After the two-year period, you need to submit a new application to NEIWPCC/JETCC to be eligible to take the exam.

Q. Can I retake the exam without applying again to NEIWPCC/JETCC?

A. Yes. Your approval is valid for 2 years. During that time you may retake the exam as many times as needed to pass without paying the NEIWPCC/JETCC application fee. You must however pay the \$96 exam fee to AMP each time you take the test.

Q. Does the change from paper exams to CBT affect my ability to get reciprocity in other states?

A. No, the computerized test is still an ABC certification test, just like the written exam. With any reciprocity, you must still meet all the requirements of the state you are applying to for certification.

Q. Will there be changes to the Spray Irrigation Treatment System (SITS) exam?

A. The SITS exam will not change. It will continue to be a 100-question, 3-hour paper exam as it has been in the past. Registration and payment of \$125 will be handled by NEIWPCC/JETCC. The SITS will not be a regularly scheduled exam, but will be offered on an as-needed basis at three testing locations, Portland, Bangor, and Presque Isle.

If you have questions or comments, please contact the NEIWPCC South Portland/JETCC office at:

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