

Certification Training Changes for '08

by Jamie Herman,
Training Specialist



Initial certification training for water operators in New York State has been as varied as the regions in which you take the course. Depending on where you take a course, the subject matter may vary from what other instructors are teaching. The NYRWA has only offered home study courses that allow operators to work at their own pace and complete assignments for certification.

In an effort to create a more uniform approach to training new operators, the NYS Dept. of Health has created a "Model Curriculum" for each level of certification that stresses all the points the Dept. of Health has recognized as necessary for a new operator to become certified. The new curriculum will go into effect as of January '08.

This means that all initial certification training providers must design a course meeting all the requirements of the model curriculum, and have it approved by the NYS Dept. of Health, by January '08. I will not write as to what other training providers are doing to achieve this goal. However, recognizing the necessity, the staff at NYRWA has been working to continue our goal of providing this service to operators and systems throughout the state. We have developed a classroom Grade D Certification Course that has been approved by the NYSDOH. This course meets all the requirements as prescribed by the NYSDOH, and should be available in the spring of '08. The course will be three days of classroom training, much of which will be "hands on" practical training, followed by a final exam. The exam will likely be administered two weeks after the conclusion of the training, to allow attendees to review the course materials prior to the exam.

Our staff are currently working on a Grade C Course following the model curriculum, and hope to have a completed, and approved, version by the end of '07. This is a very time consuming process that the NYRWA Board and Staff feel are necessary to fulfilling our commitment to you, the operators.

As far as the home study courses are concerned, we are trying to work with the NYSDOH to create an acceptable version, at least for the Grade C & D Operators. If approved, the home study course would be similar to our classroom curriculum, with the exception, that a 1 day class with "hands on" laboratory training would be required. The 1 day session would also include

a refresher on rules and regulations as outlined in the NYS Sanitary Code, with emphasis on Subpart 5-1 & 5-4. We will keep you updated on the progress of the home study course.

It is important to note that this effort, initiated by the NYSDOH, is not intended to punish operators, or make the process more difficult. It is intended to ensure that we, the training providers of NYS, are presenting a uniform course that provides our future operators with the knowledge they need to provide a safe and pleasing product for years to come. As the process evolves, I think it will be easier for operators to apply for reciprocity when seeking employment in another state.

If you have any comments or suggestions in regards to this matter please feel free to contact me at 1-888-697-8725 Ext. 13, or email me at Herman@nyruralwater.org ●