

MEMORANDUM

April 18, 2001

TO: Wastewater Program Staff, Certified Designers, Master Installers, Pumpers and Interested Persons

FROM: Greg Bishop, Supervisor, Wastewater Program
Ellen Marson, Wastewater Program
Environmental Health Division, Public Health – Seattle & King County

RE: **On-Site System Maintainer (OSM) Certification Process**
OSM Certification Renewal Process
Application for Certificate of Competency - OSM

ON-SITE SYSTEM MAINTAINER APPLICATION

Applications will be accepted beginning June 1, 2001 for the new Certificate of Competency category of “On-Site System Maintainer” (OSM). An OSM conducts periodic on-site sewage system (OSS) monitoring, ensures that each system owner is properly operating and maintaining his/her system and that the system is functioning properly. The OSM requires a minimum level of experience and education as well as to pass the Maintainer Competency Exam given by Public Health – Seattle & King County (PH) to become certified. Continuing education credits are required to obtain annual renewals.

INSPECTION DUTIES AND REPAIR LIMITATIONS

During the inspection the OSM must complete an On-Site Sewage System Operation/Performance Monitoring Report form provided by PH. The report is to be given to the OSS owner at the time of the inspection and to PH, along with a \$10 filing fee, within 30 days of the inspection.

The OSM may only perform preventive maintenance activities (e.g. filter cleaning) and limited repairs to the system. ‘Limited repair’, as defined in the King County On-Site Sewage Code, Title 13 (13.08.226), means:

“the replacement, addition or alteration of a broken or malfunctioning building sewer pipe, sewage tank lid, sewage tank baffles, sewage tank pumps, pump control floats, pipes connecting multiple sewage tanks and drainfield inspection boxes and ports where the subsurface soil absorption system is not failing.”

A limited repair permit application must be filed with PH within 5 days of the completion of the limited repair. The limited repair permit signed by the OSM must be submitted with the monitoring report to PH. Identification of cause(s) of system malfunction and/or failure component should be written in the space provided on the monitoring report form.

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MAINTAINER COMPETENCY EXAM DATES:

The first exam will be scheduled within the second half of June 2001. Various dates will be scheduled according to the number of applications received in the first two weeks of June. The exam, which will be closed book and will take approximately 4 hours to complete, will most likely be scheduled 8am-12pm (time is subject to change). A letter with your exam date will be sent shortly after PH receives your application.

M101 COURSE IN JUNE 2001 AT THE NORTHWEST ON-SITE WASTEWATER TRAINING CENTER - PUYALLUP

The training center has indicated that there may be another M101 course added to the schedule for June 4 - 6, 2001 if there are at least 15 people interested in taking the course. If you are interested in attending, please contact Ellen Marson, (206) 205-8962, by **May 7, 2001**.

NOTE: There is still space available for the May 14 – 16, M101 Basics of Monitoring course in Puyallup.

ATTACHMENTS

The certification program outlined in this memo includes:

- step-by-step instruction for becoming a certified OSM;
- step-by-step instruction for renewing your certification;
- applicant checklist for the certification process; and
- application form: Application for Certificate of Competency – OSM.

Please note that WAIVER NOTICES have been issued throughout this memo because the certification program is beginning mid-year. If you have any questions regarding OSM certification, please call Ellen Marson at the Eastgate District Office, (206) 205-8962 or e-mail at ellen.marson@metrokc.gov.

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cc: Todd Yerkes, Acting Principal, Community Environmental Health Section
Roman Welyczko, Enforcement Coordinator

ON-SITE SYSTEM MAINTAINER (OSM) CERTIFICATION

I. OSM CERTIFICATION PREREQUISITES

1. Two years work experience as a designer, installer or pumper.
2. Proof of successful completion within the previous 12 months of at least one Public Health – Seattle & King County Health Officer or his/her representative (health officer) – recognized course of instruction in the operation, monitoring and maintenance of OSS.
See Part IV – OSM Certification Process, #2.c. for details.

WAIVER NOTICE:

Due to possible class schedule time constraints between June 1, 2000 and June 1, 2001, Public Health – Seattle & King County will implement a one-time waiver of the 12-month requirement. *This waiver will allow health officer-recognized classes that were taken from December 1, 1999 to June 1, 2001 to be acceptable for this requirement until December 1, 2001. The waiver expires and the 12-month restriction will be enforced on December 1, 2001.*

3. Pass the Maintainer Competency Exam given by Public Health – Seattle & King County.
See Part IV – OSM Certification Process, #3.a-g for details.

WAIVER NOTICE:

The health officer may waive the exam for designers who perform monitoring of only those systems that they have designed.

4. The application may be denied if in the health officer's judgment the applicant is for any reason not qualified to monitor and maintain OSS. These reasons include previous findings of negligence, incompetence, misrepresentation or failure to comply with the King County On-Site Sewage Code, Title 13, Code of the King County Board of Health.

II. CONDITIONS FOR MAINTAINING OSM CERTIFICATION

1. Must submit evidence of and maintain at all times compliance with State of Washington minimum performance bonding requirements (Revised Code of Washington, Chapter 18.27).
2. Must consistently demonstrate reasonable care and skill in performing OSM work and comply with all applicable state and county on-site sewage system rules and regulations.
3. Mandatory informational/educational meetings will be held for all certified OSMs with the minimum of a 4 weeks mailed notice of the meeting time and location. Failure to attend the required meetings, without prior approval of the health officer, is cause for withholding re-certification until an OSM exam is successfully completed.

III. OSM CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION & FEES

1. Expiration date of your OSM Certificate of Competency is DECEMBER 31ST OF EACH YEAR. The OSM may not conduct performance monitoring inspections or preventive maintenance of OSS after December 31st unless the certification has been renewed.
2. Initial Application and Maintainer Competency Exam fee: \$250.00
3. OSM Certificate of Competency fee after successful completion of Maintainer Competency Exam: \$250.00
WAIVER NOTICE:
From June 1, 2001 – December 31, 2001, the OSM Certificate of Competency fee will be \$125.00. After December 31, 2001, the fee will be \$250.00 for a one-year certification.
4. All fees are non-refundable.

IV. OSM CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Please read carefully the following steps for obtaining OSM certification. Attached is a checklist for your convenience.

1. **Request an Application for Certificate of Competency - On-Site Sewage System Maintainer** from Public Health – Seattle & King County, Environmental Health Division, 14350 SE Eastgate Way, Bellevue, (206) 296-4932 or print the application from Public Health's website: www.metrokc.gov/health/wastewater/forms
2. **Submit completed application to address indicated on the form, including:**
 - a. Evidence of 2 years experience such as:
 - Written proof of employment on company letterhead
 - b. \$250.00 Initial Application and Maintainer Competency Exam fee
 - c. Proof of successful completion (i.e. certificate of completion) within the previous 12 months of at least one health officer-recognized course of instruction in the operation, monitoring and maintenance of OSS. *Note waiver notice in Section I – OSM Certification Prerequisites, #2.*

Health officer-recognized courses are offered at the **Northwest On-Site Wastewater Training Center**, located at the Washington State University Research & Extension Center, 7612 Pioneer Way E, just west of Puyallup, Washington. There are four Maintenance classes offered at the Northwest On-Site Wastewater Training Center:

1. M101 Basics of Monitoring (novice – approximately 2-4 years experience)
2. M102 Basics of Maintenance (novice – approximately 2-4 years experience)
3. M201 Troubleshooting & Repairs (experienced professionals – approximately 4 years +)
4. M202 Wastewater Sampling (experienced professionals – approximately 4 years +)

For a copy of the Training Center's Class Schedule class booklet and registration, contact:

Washington On-Site Sewage Association (WOSSA)
(253) 927-4403
PO Box 25348
Federal Way, WA 98093-2348

For information regarding content, contact:

Dave Lenning
Training Center Coordinator
(360) 455-8880
dlenning@prodigy.net

- If you have completed a course through a different training center, please submit copy of agenda/syllabus showing date, time, subject matter, presenter, sponsor and evidence of actual participation. Public Health will review the course material to determine if it meets the standards of a health officer-recognized course in monitoring and maintenance.

3. Maintainer Competency Exam:

WAIVER NOTICE:

The exam may be waived for designers who perform monitoring of only those systems they have designed.

- a. The exam will take approximately 4 hours to complete and covers all aspects relating to the operation, problem diagnosis, and maintenance of OSS. It includes, but is not limited to, an extended knowledge of the following:
 - King County On-Site Sewage Code, Title 13, Code of the King County Board of Health;
 - Washington State Department of Health Recommended Standards and Guidance documents;
 - Northwest On-Site Wastewater Training Center's *Basics of Monitoring*; and
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Design Manual.

See Documents Price List regarding obtaining some of these documents (sent with 2/1/01 Memo – On-Site Sewage System Maintainer Application Prerequisites).
 - b. The exam will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.
 - c. A basic, hand-held calculator is allowed.
 - d. Results will be mailed to the address indicated on the application.
 - e. Applicants receiving a near-failing grade may be required to pass a verbal test addressing weak subject areas on the written test.
 - f. **IF YOU PASSED THE EXAM**, a letter will be included with the exam results requesting:
 - a copy of proof of performance bond (i.e. specialty or general contractor's license) **and**
 - a letter on official letterhead from your present employer stating employment (if not already sent with initial application)
 - g. **IF YOU FAILED THE EXAM**, you may schedule a re-take of the exam on the next scheduled exam date.
 - A new application form and \$250.00 application and exam fee is required
4. **Submit OSM Certificate of Competency fee of \$125.00** (*Note waiver notice in Section III – OSM Certification Expiration and Fees, #3.*) **after successful completion of the exam.**
 5. **After Public Health receives the OSM Certificate of Competency fee payment, copy of proof of performance bond, official letter proving present employment, and grants final approval of the application, your proof of OSM certification will be mailed to the address indicated on the application.**

ON-SITE SYSTEM MAINTAINER (OSM) CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

I. OSM CERTIFICATION RENEWAL PREREQUISITES

1. At least one continuing education credit (CEU) must be earned during the previous calendar year. See Part III – OSM Certification Renewal Process, #2.a. for details.

WAIVER NOTICE:

OSMs certified in 2001 will be given until their renewal application is submitted for their 2003 Certificate of Competency to earn one CEU. OSMs certified in 2001 are still required to apply for their 2002 Certificate of Competency renewal.

2. Attendance at all mandatory informational/educational meetings held by Public Health. Failure to attend a required meeting, without proof of prior written approval for absence from the health officer, may cause withholding of re-certification until the applicant re-takes and successfully completes the Maintainer Competency Exam.
3. Shown consistent demonstration of reasonable care and skill in performing OSM work and compliance with all applicable state and county on-site sewage system rules and regulations.

II. OSM CERTIFICATION RENEWAL DEADLINES & FEES

1. Expiration date of the OSM Certificate of Competency is DECEMBER 31st OF EACH YEAR. The OSM may not conduct performance monitoring inspections or perform preventive maintenance of OSS after December 31st unless the certification has been renewed.
2. Applications for renewal will be accepted annually beginning in mid-November.
3. The exam re-take ***IS NOT*** required if the renewal application is received prior to February 4th of the certification year.
4. The exam re-take ***IS*** required if the renewal application is received after February 4th of the certification year.
5. OSM Certificate of Competency renewal fee: \$250.00
6. A late fee of 25% of the renewal amount (\$62.50) will be charged for a renewal application received after January 15th.
7. All fees are non-refundable.

III. OSM CERTIFICATION RENEWAL PROCESS

Please read carefully the following steps for obtaining an OSM certification renewal.

- 1. Request an Application for Certificate of Competency On-Site Sewage System Maintainer** from Public Health – Seattle & King County, Environmental Health Division, 14350 SE Eastgate Way, Bellevue, (206) 296-4932 or print the application (same form as initial application) from Public Health’s website: www.metrokc.gov/health/wastewater/forms.
- 2. Submit completed application to address indicated on the form, including:**
 - a. Evidence of at least 8 hours of education (continuing education units) regarding operation and maintenance earned during the previous calendar year. *Note waiver notice in Section I – OSM Certification Renewal Prerequisites, #1.*
 - Hours may be totaled from one or several courses, seminars, workshops etc.
 - Unless specified, Public Health – Seattle & King County sponsored conferences, seminars or industry meetings do not count as continuing education units
 - Courses are offered at the Northwest On-Site Wastewater Training Center, located at the Washington State University Research & Extension Center, 7612 Pioneer Way E, just west of Puyallup, Washington
 - For a copy of the Training Center’s Class Schedule booklet, contact the Washington On-Site Sewage Association (WOSSA) at (253) 927-4403
 - For information regarding class content, contact Dave Lenning, Training Center Coordinator, at (360) 455-8880 or dlenning@prodigy.net
 - b. Copies of any waivers that were received excusing the applicant from mandatory Public Health meetings.
 - c. Copy of performance bond (i.e. specialty or general contractor’s license).
 - d. OSM Certificate of Competency renewal fee:

Renewal application received January 15 th or before	\$250.00
Renewal application received after January 15 th	\$312.50

- 3. If the renewal application and application fee is received after February 4th of the year following the expiration, the exam re-take IS required.**
 - a. Please follow the steps in the OSM Certification, Section IV- OSM Certification Process, #3. a-g.
 - b. Maintainer Competency Exam: \$250.00
- 4. After Public Health receives the OSM Certificate of Competency renewal fee payment, copy of proof of performance bond, official letter proving present employment, and grants final approval of the application, your proof of OSM certification will be mailed to the address indicated on the application.**

OSM CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANT

Application for Certificate of Competency On-Site System Maintainer

0	ITEM
	Evidence of 2 years experience as a designer, installer or pumper, i.e. written proof of employment on company letterhead
	Proof of successful completion within the previous 12 months of at least one Public Health Officer-recognized course of instruction in the operation, monitoring and maintenance of on-site sewage systems
	\$250.00 Initial Application and Maintainer Competency Exam fee

Maintainer Competency Exam

0	ITEM
	Exam is waived because I am a designer who will be performing monitoring of only those systems designed by me.
	Received letter with possible exam dates. <i>DATE OF EXAM:</i>
	Received letter with passing exam results and: ___ Sent copy of proof of performance bond (i.e. specialty or general contractor's license). <u>Contact information:</u> Department of Labor and Industries Contractor Registration Section P.O. Box 44450 Olympia, WA 98504-4450 Phone (360) 902-5226 Fax (360) 902-5228 ___ Sent letter on official letterhead from present employer stating employment (if not already sent with application)
	Received letter with failing exam results and scheduled re-take of exam for: _____ (a new application form and \$250.00 application and exam fee is required)

OSM Certificate of Competency Fee

0	ITEM
	Sent OSM Certificate of Competency fee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$125.00 if applied between June 1, 2001 and December 31, 2001, OR ▪ \$250.00 if applied after December 31, 2001.

OSM Proof of Certification

0	ITEM
	Received proof of OSM certification