

North Dakota Operator
Certification Program
2026 Annual Report to the
U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency
July 30, 2026

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Appendices

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Introduction

In 1999, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued operator certification program guidelines specifying minimum standards for certification and recertification for the operators of community and non-transient non-community public water systems. The goal of the operator certification program is to protect human health by ensuring that skilled professionals are overseeing the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water. Operator certification is a crucial step in promoting and maintaining compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), and oversight of the program ensures that these steps are taken.

The State of North Dakota's Operator Certification Program was approved as consistent with the Final Guidelines for the Certification and Recertification of the Operators of Community and Non- Transient Non-Community Public Water Systems, on September 27, 2000.

Due to a recent change in Century Code and Administrative Rule, North Dakota has implemented upcoming changes to take place in January, 2027 that will affect the costs of exams, the state fiscal year changing to calendar year, and types of exams offered. More information can be found under "Certificate Renewal" starting on page 8, as well as in the "Conclusion/Summary" on page 13. This report details how the program ran as of July 1st, 2025, unless specifically noted how these new rules impacted the program.

This is North Dakota's annual program report to EPA for the state fiscal year 2026. In accordance with the guidelines, this report addresses the status and continued implementation of North Dakota's program for the nine baseline standards for both community and non-transient non- community water systems. The nine program components include:

1. Authorization
2. Classification of systems, facilities, and operators
3. Operator qualifications
4. Enforcement
5. Certification renewal
6. Resources needed to implement the program
7. Recertification
8. Stakeholder involvement
9. Program review

Authorization

The State of North Dakota's Department of Environment Quality (NDDEQ), Division of Municipal Facilities (DMF), has been delegated responsibility for the oversight of public water systems in the State of North Dakota to ensure compliance with and enforcement of the provisions of the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) Title 23.1 and the North Dakota Administrative Code (NDAC) Article 33.1-19. This Century Code and Administrative Code help ensure that the following public health objectives are met:

1. Customers of any public water system are provided with an adequate supply of safe drinking water.
2. Consumers are confident that their water is safe to drink.
3. Public water system operators are trained and certified and they have knowledge and understanding of the public health reason or drinking water standards.

The operator certification program rules have changed as of April 2026 and are noted throughout the document as necessary. No backsliding has occurred within the last year. A new Attorney General certification is attached in Appendix C.

Classification of Systems, Facilities, and Operators

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality is responsible for classifying all public water systems' (PWS) treatment and distribution facilities in accordance with the provisions of NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-08 and 08.1. Treatment classification is based on specific design features that include treatment processes and their complexity, source water type, and design capacity. Water treatment facilities are classified as Class 1A, Class I, Class II, Class III, or Class IV. Class IV is the highest level of classification. Distribution systems are classified based on the population they serve. The classification level descriptions of systems can be found in Appendix A in NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-08 and NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-08.1.

CERTIFIED OPERATOR

NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-03 and 11 requires all community and non-transient water facilities to be operated under the supervision of a certified operator in direct responsible charge who holds a certificate equal to or greater than the classification of the facility. All operator certifications, names, identification, and the classification of the PWSs, are tracked in the NDDEQ Operator Certification Portal. The NDDEQ Operator Certification Portal, implemented in May of 2023 provides an environment that more easily allows operators to see their status, update information and allows NDDEQ to evaluate operator status. The regulation also leaves all process control and system integrity decisions to the certified operator in direct responsible charge or another operator holding a certificate equal to or greater than the classification of the facility. The certified operator in direct responsible charge or another operator who holds a certificate equal to or greater than the classification of the facility must always be available during operating hours of a water treatment or distribution facility.

Compliance with operator certification requirements is North Dakota's Safe Drinking Water Program's priority (Table 1) as determined on July 20, 2026.

Non-compliance is a result of one of the following circumstances:

1. A certified operator has not been designated by the system's owner.
2. The operator's certificate has expired.
3. The operator's certificate is not at the correct level for the facility they are operating.

Table 1. Number of Facilities by PWS Type and Classification Level

Water System Types	Total Number of Facilities	Facilities in Compliance	Compliance Rate %
CWS	456	284	62.3
NTNCWS	7	4	57.1
Total	463	288	62.2

Water Treatment		Water Distribution	
Level		Level	
1A	42	1A	203
I	8	I	70
II	26	II	57
III	37	III	7
IV	10	IV	3
Total	123	Total	340

Table 2. System Compliance Rates

System Types	Number of Facilities	Facilities in Compliance	Compliance Rate %
CWS Treatment	120	79	65.8
CWS Distribution	336	205	61
NTNC Treatment	2	2	100
NTNC Distribution	5	2	40.0
Total	463	288	62.2

ACTIVE OPERATORS

The State of North Dakota requires that each operator must have a high school diploma or GED and have a defined minimum of on-the-job experience before taking an examination. Each operator must also pass an exam that demonstrates that the operator has the necessary skills, knowledge, ability, and judgement as appropriate for the classification of the system to which they are applying. The state requires separate treatment and distribution certificates, and many operators hold multiple certificates.

How operators are classified can be found in NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-12. Classification is based on system classification level, level of education and years of experience. The classification level descriptions for operators can be found in Appendix A in NDAC Article 33.1-19-01-12.

North Dakota has a group of field inspectors, operators, staff engineers, rule managers and management that discuss changes to the exams when new rules are implemented or when significant changes to the base knowledge, skills, and abilities of any classifications of operators are made. Annually, the Operator Certification Coordinator works with operators to get feedback on exams and the training courses that were provided throughout the year.

There were 926 active certificates with a total of 336 treatment certificates and 590 distribution certificates (Table 3). The number of active certificates for 2026 is 72 higher than the number of active certificates in 2025.

Table 3. Number of Operators

Active Operator Certificates		
Grade	Water Treatment	Water Distribution
IA	53	154
I	78	206
II	83	121
III	41	67
IV	81	42
Total	336	590

Certified Operators		
Water Treatment Only	Water Distribution Only	Both
121	373	216

EXAMS

North Dakota has a group of field inspectors, operators, staff engineers, rule managers and management that evaluate the need for changes to the exams when new rules are implemented or when significant changes to the base knowledge, skills, and abilities of any classifications of operators are made. Annually, the Operator Certification Coordinator works with operators to get feedback on exams and the training courses that were provided throughout the year. There were no changes made to any of the exams, but when there are changes, all exam questions are validated for appropriateness.

NDDEQ staff conducted ten examinations. Examinations are on the last Tuesday of each month except the months of June and July due to certification renewals. North Dakota had a decrease of 4 exams taken in 2026 over 2025.

The average pass rate for treatment exams was 53.42%, and the average pass rate for distribution exams was 65.04%. The overall pass rate for water treatment and distribution for state fiscal year 2026 was 59.25% (Table 4). Approximately 98% of the PWSs in North Dakota are small systems (i.e., PWSs with populations $\leq 3,300$ customers). These small systems employ only one water operator with water operations being only one fraction of their overall responsibilities (e.g., mowing, clearing roads, and animal control). Operators are generally lost due to retirement or resignation with recruitment of qualified operators hampered by declining population and financial constraints.

Table 4. Exam Passage Rates

Grade	Water Treatment		Water Distribution	
	Exams Given #	Exams Passed %	Exams Given #	Exams Passed %
1A	22	54.55	38	89.47
I	60	50	93	53.76
II	43	48.84	51	52.94
III	15	40	17	82.35
IV	19	73.68	15	46.67

GRANDPARENTING

North Dakota did not implement the grandparenting options. North Dakota requires that all affected PWSs employ operators certified at an appropriate level under North Dakota Administrative Code (NDAC) Article 33.1-19-01-03 and 11.

PROVISIONAL AND TEMPORARY CERTIFICATES

With EPA approval, North Dakota has implemented an alternative testing method for operators of small, under 500, water distribution systems. This alternative method consists of a water exam booklet that can be requested by an operator. The booklet is an open book style exam that is simultaneously providing education and testing. The booklet can only be requested one time by an operator. Once the operator has requested and paid for the exam, the booklet is sent to the operator. The operator has two weeks to complete the exam booklet and return to the Department for grading. Upon return, with a passing grade, the operator is issued a restricted water distribution 1A certificate. This certificate is only good for six months and is restricted to the operator's system. If the operator remains with the system for six months and fulfills the experience requirement, the Department will issue the operator a standard water distribution 1A certificate.

Enforcement

FACILITY ENFORCEMENT

NDAC Article 33.1-17 and NDCC Chapter 61-28.1 provide the statutory authority to issue an Administrative Order for violations of SDWA regulations. The NDDEQ has the authority to bring this action pursuant to NDCC Chapter 61-28.1-03.

In State Fiscal Year 2026, no certificate renewals have occurred yet (see *Certificate Renewal* and Table 5). Currently, North Dakota allows operators one year to pay their certification renewal fees. However, both the payment timeframe and the renewal activation date will change beginning in January 2027.

North Dakota has the authority to suspend licenses, however it is rarely used and has not been used for several years. Certificates can be revoked for multiple reasons including the operator is deceased, lack of continuing education credits (CECs), or the non-payment of fees.

OPERATOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In state fiscal year 2026, no enforcement action was needed based solely on operator certification. NDDEQ, through the Operator Certification Portal, sends quarterly emails to systems that are out of compliance due to lack of a properly certified operator. In state fiscal year 2026 there was one instance (Oberon) where NDDEQ staff included operator certification deficiencies with other system violations during enforcement proceedings. This system was the same one identified in 2025 but have not yet achieved compliance for operator certification.

Certificate Renewal

CERTIFICATE RENEWAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NDCC Chapter 23.1-07 provides the NDDEQ the legal authority to promulgate rules necessary to administer an operator certification program. A certificate issued under these provisions is valid for one year and expires the first of July the following year.

As of April 1st, 2026, changes to both Century Code and Administrative Code were approved. The state will raise examination fees from \$50 per exam to \$150 per exam, as well as raise certification fees from \$25 per certificate to \$40 per certificate. We have also moved our annual renewal date from July 01 of every year to January 01 every year and shortened the renewal fee payment timeline from 360 days to 90 days. The July 2026 renewal period has been moved forward to January 2027 to match the Administrative Code change. Due to the 2026 exam dates already being selected, prior to the April 1st Administrative Code effective date, the state will keep exam fees at the current rate until January 01, 2027. Renewal notifications, reimbursement cards, and monthly emails are generated by the new database and sent to the operators as a reminder to pay for their annual renewal. Operators will now have 90 days to make a payment or return a signed reimbursement waiver before certification is revoked. Operators are required to have a minimum of twelve current, continuing education credits (CECs) for annual certificate renewal. Credits are obtained by attending training programs, seminars, and workshops developed or officially recognized by the NDDEQ. Credits within the current three-year certification period can be applied to renewals, those outside the three-year period are not applicable.

Table 5. Operator Certificate Renewal, as of July 1st, 2025*

Grade	Water Treatment	Water Distribution
IA	34	82
I	49	145
II	69	93
III	37	58
IV	72	26
Total	261	404

*- No renewals have occurred as of July 1st, 2026 due to the rule change

78 courses were approved for operator professional development, and approximately 1167 attendees were at the training courses offered. Many of these classes were held multiple times within the state fiscal year 2026. The price for each course varies from no charge to several hundred dollars for multiple-day training events.

Trainers submit applications for CECs training courses to be approved by NDDEQ, and upon completion of the training courses, the course is entered into the database. Trainings that we know about in advance (e.g., MAP and NDRWSA) are provided on our website at <https://deq.nd.gov/MF/> and on our website calendar at <https://deq.nd.gov/calendar.aspx>.

RECERTIFICATION

Certificates are valid for one year from the date of issue. Once an operator's certificate has expired, they are no longer certified. A certificate may be restored, through renewal, for up to one year after the

expiration date. A certificate is automatically revoked one year after the expiration date of the certification. Subsequently, if a person desires to re-certify they are treated as a new applicant in the certification process and must then re-test.

Resources Needed to Implement the Program

Program resources continue to be provided through the collaborative effort of existing NDDEQ programs and stakeholder involvement. The experience and expertise of program staff, technical assistance providers, and the many professional organizations involved contribute to and enhances program success.

The NDDEQ continues to provide financial assistance through state-funded Operator Expense Reimbursement, Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) administrative fees, and Public Water System Supervision Program.

NDCC 23.1-07-05 allows NDDEQ to charge a fee for certificates issued under this chapter, but the fees may not exceed fifty dollars for the initial certificate, or twenty-five dollars for the annual renewal certificate. All receipts from the fees must be deposited in the state treasury to be credited to a special fund to be known as the "operators' certification fund," to be used by the NDDEQ to administer, enforce, and financially assist the NDDEQ in conducting operator training programs. Any surplus at the end of the fiscal year must be retained by the department for future expenditures.

Operator certification fees help fund agency staff. All agency staff funding is provided through state general funds, general program fees, and various federal grants. The division has one full-time employee dedicated to operator certification. In addition, compliance is checked by the drinking water and enforcement staff during on-site field inspections (i.e., sanitary surveys). Facility classification is done at the time of design review by engineering section staff. The division's data system, management, and administrative staff members provide necessary support for the program as well. In total, there are three division staff members with responsibilities or input related to the certified operator program, and there has not been a decrease or increase of the mentioned staff members. Under the current organization, North Dakota has sufficient resources to implement its operator certification program now and into the future.

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION-CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Midwest Assistance Program (MAP) and North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA) work in partnership with NDDEQ. The partnership between these two entities impacts operators and system owners on a grassroots level to improve compliance, enhance water quality, help managerial, financial, and technical efforts for the system's future, and to protect public health. MAP and NDRWSA's purposes are to provide technical, managerial, and financial assistance, by conducting one-on-one and/or group trainings to public water systems so they can strengthen their knowledge and ability to supply safe drinking water to the public and to protect their source water.

The division has increased outreach to operators to address the identified areas of concern. The Division sponsors no or low-cost trainings offered in multiple sites across the state with a focus on operations, math, and regulations.

- MAP and NDRWSA provided 44 on-site, individual operator training sessions at no cost, and classroom-style training sessions and presentations.

- NDDEQ provided grants through DWSRF set-asides to NDRWSA and MAP to provide no cost training to operators and to also provide onsite meetings with uncertified operators to develop a plan to become properly certified.
- Division compliance, operator certification, and engineering staff regularly present at conferences, seminars, and other training venues throughout the state on various regulatory compliance topics.
- MAP and NDRWSA provide support for North Dakota's Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (NDWARN) and works with NDDEQ to provide systems and operators with emergency preparedness and response training.
- NDRWSA has an apprenticeship program to provide operators with experience and training in preparation for exam testing.

SYSTEMS SEEKING CERTIFICATION

Midwest Assistance Program (MAP) and North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA) work with under-certified systems and new systems to develop plans to achieve certification compliance. MAP and NDRWSA assisted 50 distribution systems and 27 treatment systems develop plans to achieve certification (Table 6).

Table 6. Systems Seeking Certification Compliance

Systems Seeking Certification Compliance		
Water Treatment	Water Distribution	Contract Operator
27	50	1

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement continues to be a critical element instrumental to program success.

NDDEQ and the North Dakota Water and Pollution Control Conference (NDWPCC) continue to offer annual training sessions. The NDWPCC also jointly sponsored the 97th Annual NDWPCC conference with the North Dakota Water Environment Association (NDWEA), the North Dakota Chapter of the American Water Works Association (NDAWWA), the North Dakota Chapter of the American Public Works Association (NDCAPWA), and the North Dakota Chapter of the North American Stormwater and Erosion Control Association (NASECA). The North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA) and North Dakota Environmental Health Association (NDEHA) also continue to provide annual training, conferences, and expositions.

The NDDEQ continues to contract with local/district health units, and technical assistance providers such as NDRWSA and the MAP. Contracts with health units provide continued support to the public water supply and inspection programs. Contracts continue with technical assistance providers to help systems with system start-ups, fiscal management reports, capacity development, operator certification outreach, and follow-ups with issues relating to level I and level II assessments that have already been completed on PWSs by the NDDEQ. Also, the NDRWSA, MAP, and NDAWWA will continue to provide additional training events for operators.

Operators had the opportunity to attend one annual conference, one RCAP/AWWA small systems training, the Rural Water Expo, 5 MAP half-day regional trainings, 10 NDRWSA traveling training sessions with a total of 427 people in attendance. NDRWSA sessions included: operator certification, exam training, operations, and maintenance training, NDDEQ regulatory training, wastewater training, system viability, and funding training.

One hundred and twenty-one system operators requested operator expense reimbursement for 35 events in state fiscal year 2026.

OPERATOR WORKGROUPS/COMMITTEES

Two operator workgroups/committees meet during the year. The first is internal to the NDDEQ and is conducted in September/October of every year, and its members consist of seven NDDEQ staff members. This workgroup examines the previous year and looks for areas to recommend improvements.

The Operator Certification Advisory Committee is an external committee that holds its meeting in October of every year and its members consist of four water/wastewater operators, a NDDEQ staff, a utility manager, a conference representative, a representative of the public, and a technical assistance provider. This committee also examines the previous year and looks for areas to recommend improvements as well as seek input for the drinking water community at large.

WATER NEWSLETTER

DEQ publishes the Official Bulletin (OB) three times a year (i.e., beginning of January, beginning of May, and beginning of September of each state fiscal year), and the publication is sent by email to approximately 800 individuals that consists of regulators, NDWPCC members, engineering firms, advertisers, consulting firms, communities, and a handful of colleges and universities. Fifty printed copies of the Official Bulletin have also been created. The official bulletin can be viewed on the NDDEQ website at the following link <https://deq.nd.gov/MF/NDWPCC/default.aspx>.

Each newsletter contains at least one article specifically focusing on operator certification topics of interest and any changes to regulation. Other articles are provided by consulting firms. The OB also provides the minutes from internal and external board meetings.

Program Review

The North Dakota Operator Certification Advisory Committee completed an external review on October 15, 2025, in association with the 97th Annual NDWPCC Conference. An internal review by NDDEQ Drinking Water and Operator Certification Program staff was held September 15th, 2025. Minutes of both meetings are found in Appendix C. NDDEQ continues to work toward developing a standardized approach to conducting both internal and external reviews.

Conclusion/Summary

The State of North Dakota's facility operator certification program is meeting and exceeding all applicable requirements for the nine Baseline Standards for community and non-transient non-community water systems in accordance with the guidelines. Within our workforce, a new inspector and a new Operator Certification Officer have been hired. Our department remains in the office full-time.

As stated previously, operators need a minimum amount of experience (time with the system) to qualify for exam testing. When operators apply for an exam, the operator certification database verifies that the minimum amount of experience has been met. This is calculated using the operator's start date as indicated on their application to test. Letters of acceptance or rejection for exam testing are then sent to the applying operator.

A new operator certification portal, placed in service in 2023, assists in meeting certification compliance via automated emails about CECs and system certification compliance status. System managers can also track employee certifications and progress within their facility's page, providing additional oversight of operators within their system.

Starting in January of 2027, the state will raise examination fees from \$50 per exam to \$150 per exam, as well as raise certification fees from \$25 per certificate to \$40 per certificate. We have also moved our annual renewal date from July 01 of every year to January 01 every year and shortened the renewal fee payment timeline from 360 days to 90 days. We have also implemented a new test booklet that provides an open-book exam, approved through the EPA, to our lowest-compliant systems in Water Distribution 1A. This booklet provides education while testing their knowledge on the systems they work on from source to tap while still holding our standards for the grading scale, requiring a passing score of 70%.

APPENDIX A

ARTICLE 33.1-19 CERTIFICATION OF WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS OPERATORS

Chapter

33.1-19-01 Certification of Water Treatment Facility Operators, Water Distribution and Storage System Operators, Wastewater Treatment Facility Operators, and Wastewater Collection and Transfer System Operators

CHAPTER 33.1-19-01 CERTIFICATION OF WATER TREATMENT FACILITY OPERATORS, WATER DISTRIBUTION AND STORAGE SYSTEM OPERATORS, WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY OPERATORS, AND WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TRANSFER SYSTEM OPERATORS

Section

33.1-19-01-01	Responsibility
33.1-19-01-02	Definitions
33.1-19-01-03	General
33.1-19-01-04	Application for Certification
33.1-19-01-05	Examinations
33.1-19-01-06	Fees for Certification
33.1-19-01-07	Issuance of Certificates
33.1-19-01-08	Water Treatment Facility Classifications
33.1-19-01-08.1	Water Distribution and Storage System Classifications
33.1-19-01-09	Wastewater Treatment Facility Classifications
33.1-19-01-09.1	Wastewater Collection and Transfer System Classifications
33.1-19-01-10	Change of Classification
33.1-19-01-11	Certification Requirements
33.1-19-01-12	Operator Qualifications
33.1-19-01-13	[Reserved]
33.1-19-01-14	[Reserved]
33.1-19-01-15	[Reserved]
33.1-19-01-16	Substitutions or Equivalents

33.1-19-01-01. Responsibility.

It is the responsibility of any person or persons operating a water treatment, water distribution and storage, wastewater treatment, or wastewater collection and transfer facility or system to comply with this chapter pursuant to North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-02. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

1. "Direct responsible charge" means full and active performance of onsite operation of a water or wastewater treatment facility or a water distribution and storage or wastewater collection and transfer system, where the operator is responsible for technical support of the facility or system and provides direction to other operators, is onsite or on call during shift operations, is responsible for the operation of a major segment of a facility or system, or is the sole person employed as the facility or system operator.
2. "Official census" means the census taken each decade or a special census taken by the United States bureau of the census.
3. "Person" means any individual, corporation, partnership, firm, association, trust, estate, public or private institution, group, agency, political subdivision of this state, any other state or political subdivision or agency thereof and any legal successor, representative agent, or agency of the foregoing.
4. "Water treatment facility" includes the source or sources of water or the water treatment plant or both.
5. "Water distribution and storage system" means that portion of the water supply system which obtains, stores, and conveys water from the treatment facility or other supply point to the premises of the consumer.
6. "Wastewater treatment facility" means those systems using mechanical, nonmechanical, or both types of process units for the treatment of wastewater and for the treatment and disposal of solids removed from such wastes.
7. "Wastewater collection and transfer system" means that portion of a wastewater system in which wastewater is conveyed to a treatment facility from the premises of a contributor.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-03. General.

1. The official census must be used to determine the population served by a water treatment facility, water distribution and storage system, wastewater treatment facility, or wastewater collection and transfer system if population equivalent data is not available.
2. The total number of people served on an annual average daily basis must be used to determine population served by a water treatment facility, water distribution and storage system, wastewater treatment facility, or wastewater collection and transfer system if official census data is not available.
3. Facilities or systems with sufficiently complicated processes may be raised to a classification higher than that indicated by population equivalent or census.
4. Any facility which may have a combination of treatment processes, some of which may be in different facility classes, must be classified based on the treatment process which requires the highest numerical classification.

5. An operator who has direct responsible charge shall hold a certificate that is at least equal to the classification of the facility or system where the operator is employed.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-04. Application for certification.

Applications for certification must be approved by the department fifteen days prior to the examination on appropriate forms. An application remains valid for a period of six months from the date of submission.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-05. Examinations.

1. An examination must be used in determining knowledge, ability, and judgment of the applicant. Examinations may be written, oral, or electronic at the discretion of the department.
2. Examinations must be held at places and times set by the department. At least one examination session must be held annually. Additional examination sessions may be held at the discretion of the department.
3. Separate examinations must be prepared for each facility or system classification.
4. All examinations must be graded by personnel or a third-party examination service designated by the department.
5. An examination may be retaken once within one year from the date on which the original examination was taken. A new certification application and the required fee must be submitted to the department to retake an examination.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-06. Fees for certification.

1. Fees for certification are one hundred fifty dollars per examination.
2. Fees for annual renewals are forty dollars per certificate.
3. The certification fee from a qualified applicant is nonrefundable and must be received by the department prior to the examination. Applicants must be notified of the results of the examinations. Papers and test material remain the property of the department or the department's designated examiner. Applicants may, upon request, review the results with the department or the department's designated examiner.
4. Fees received from operators whose application for certification has been rejected will be returned.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective January 1, 2022; April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-05, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-07. Issuance of certificates.

1. Upon satisfactory compliance with the certification qualifications, fee, and examination requirements provided herein, the department shall issue a certificate to the applicant. The certificate must indicate the operator certification grade, the class of facility or system the applicant is certified to operate, the certificate number, and date of issuance.
2. To maintain certification, all certified operators shall earn continuing education credits by attending training programs, seminars, workshops, and schools established or officially recognized by the department.
 - a. The number of continuing education credits that can be earned by attending officially recognized training programs, seminars, workshops, and schools must be established and regulated by the department.
 - b. The number of continuing education credits to be earned within a three-year period of time is twelve.
 - c. Training programs offered by other government agencies, educational institutions, and operator organizations may be used for the continuing education credit requirements at the discretion of the department.
 - d. Certified operators who no longer operate facilities or systems within the boundaries of the state are exempt from the continuing education credit requirements. They may maintain valid North Dakota operator's certificates by paying the required annual renewal fees. If they return to work as an operator in the state, the continuing education credit requirements are in effect and they must earn the required number of training credits during their first year upon returning to North Dakota.
 - e. A certified operator not in compliance with the continuing education credit requirements, as determined by the department, is subject to revocation or suspension of the operator's certification.
3. Certificates are valid for a maximum of one year and expire on the first day of January. Certificates that have been revoked for a cause, invalidated, or replaced by one of higher grade are not renewable, except as noted in this chapter. Annual certificate renewal cards must be issued by the department upon receipt of the renewal fee as previously set forth.
4. An operator whose certification is invalidated because of failure to renew may apply for renewal within ninety days following the certificate's expiration date. The operator may be issued a certificate of the same category, grade, and classification if the request for renewal is received by the department within ninety days after the expiration date of the certificate, the continuing education requirements are satisfied, and all delinquent fees are paid. Failure to renew certification for a period of more than ninety days following expiration of the certificate requires requalification by reapplication, reexamination, and payment of examination fees before recertification is granted.

5. Certificates remain valid as long as the operator exercises reasonable care and judgment in the application of duties and satisfies the continuing education and annual renewal requirements as previously set forth. Certificates may be revoked as provided in North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07. A certificate is invalid if obtained through fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or the submission of false or inaccurate data, information, or qualifications.

6. The department may issue certificates by reciprocity, without examination, to any person holding a certificate from any other state, territory, possession of the United States of America, or any country providing the requirements for certification of operators under which the operator's certificate was issued are equal to or higher than specified under this chapter for a like certificate and reciprocal privileges are granted to certified operators in North Dakota.

7. Certificates in an appropriate category, grade, and classification may be issued without examination to qualifying operators as provided by North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07.

8. A temporary restricted operator's permit may be issued by the department upon application by the facility or system owner on behalf of the operator where circumstances may exist to warrant issuance. A temporary restricted operator's permit is valid for one year from the date of issuance. If the operator satisfies the minimum grade level qualifications and requirements for certification, the operator shall submit an application for certification to the department and complete the appropriate category and class examination during the first examination session offered by the department following the date of application.

9. The department may revoke or suspend the certificate of an operator issued hereunder if the department finds the operator has practiced fraud or deception by willfully changing records or by omission, knowingly giving false information to the department, failed to take corrective action required by the department, failed to take required samples, or failed to protect the public health or the state's water resources; or if the department finds reasonable care, judgment, or the application of the operator's knowledge or ability was not used in the performance of the operator's duties. A certificate may not be revoked or suspended except after a hearing before the department. If an operator whose certificate was suspended or revoked submits a new application for certification, the department may grant a new certificate to the operator if the operator corrects the violations upon which suspension or revocation was based, and evidence of this fact has been satisfactorily submitted to the department.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-08. Water treatment facility classifications.

Water treatment facilities must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of treatment, raw water quality and volume of water to be treated, and complexity of sludge handling units. Facilities may be classified at the discretion of the department if the facility has special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of raw water unusually difficult to treat, volume of water treated, or a combination of such conditions or circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All water facilities using simple chemical or physical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of five hundred to five thousand persons. This includes water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a minor degree of operational control.
3. **Class II.**
 - a. All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of five thousand to fifteen thousand persons. This includes water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a moderate degree of operational control.
 - b. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than one thousand persons.
 - c. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than one thousand five hundred persons.
 - d. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than two thousand persons.
 - e. All water plants using processes requiring a moderate degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions b, c, and d and serving a population of less than two thousand persons.
4. **Class III.**
 - a. All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of fifteen thousand persons or more. This will include water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a high degree of operational control.
 - b. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of one thousand to five thousand persons.
 - c. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of one thousand five hundred to ten thousand persons.

d. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of two thousand to fifteen thousand persons.

e. All water plants using processes requiring a high degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions b, c, and d and serving a population of two thousand to fifteen thousand persons.

5. **Class IV.**

a. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of five thousand or more persons.

b. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of ten thousand or more persons.

c. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of fifteen thousand or more persons.

d. All water plants using processes requiring a high degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions a, b, and c and serving a population of fifteen thousand or more persons.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-08.1. Water distribution and storage system classifications.

Water distribution and storage systems must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of distribution and storage system, and the volume of water to be handled. Systems may be classified at the discretion of the department by reason of the incorporation in the system of special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, conditions of volume and flow, or a combination of such conditions and circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of less than five hundred persons.

2. **Class I.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of five hundred to one thousand five hundred persons.

3. **Class II.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of one thousand five hundred to fifteen thousand persons.

4. **Class III.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand persons.

5. **Class IV.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of fifty thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-09. Wastewater treatment facility classifications.

Wastewater treatment facilities must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of treatment, character and volume of wastes to be treated, and the use and nature of the water resources receiving the facility effluent. Facilities may be classified at the discretion of the department if the facility has special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of a waste unusually difficult to treat, conditions of flow, or the receiving water quality classification requiring an unusually high degree of facility operational control, or a combination of such conditions or circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other nonmechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other nonmechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of five hundred to less than ten thousand persons.
3. **Class II.**
 - a. All mechanical facilities, mechanically aerated stabilization ponds, oxidation ditches, or other facilities requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of less than ten thousand persons.
 - b. All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other nonmechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.
4. **Class III.**
 - a. All mechanical facilities, mechanically aerated stabilization ponds, oxidation ditches, or other facilities requiring a moderate degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.
 - b. All activated sludge facilities, trickling filter facilities, rotating biological contactor facilities, separate sludge stabilization facilities, or other mechanical facilities requiring a high degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of less than ten thousand persons.
5. **Class IV.** All activated sludge facilities, trickling filter facilities, rotating biological contactor facilities, separate sludge stabilization facilities, or other mechanical facilities requiring a high degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-09.1. Wastewater collection and transfer system classifications.

Wastewater collection and transfer systems must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of collection and transfer system, and the character and volume of wastes to be handled. Systems may be classified at the discretion of the department by reason of the incorporation in the system of special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, conditions of flow, or a combination of such conditions and circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of five hundred to one thousand five hundred persons.
3. **Class II.** All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of one thousand five hundred to fifteen thousand persons.
4. **Class III.** All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand persons.
5. **Class IV.** All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of fifty thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-10. Change of classification.

Classification of any treatment facility or distribution and storage or collection and transfer system may be changed at the discretion of the department by reason of changes in any condition or circumstance on which the original classification was based. The department shall provide notice of any classification change to the owner of the facility or system.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-11. Certification requirements.

1. Operator certification is mandatory for all persons in direct responsible charge of the operation or maintenance of water treatment facilities, water distribution and storage systems, wastewater treatment facilities, or wastewater collection and transfer systems as required by North Dakota Century Code section 23.1-07-07 and applicable federal laws and regulations.
2. Five grades of operators for water treatment facilities, water distribution and storage systems, wastewater treatment facilities, and wastewater collection and transfer systems are established. To qualify for certification in a given grade, an applicant must satisfy the education and experience requirements, or their equivalents, of the grade for which the certification application is submitted.

3. All applicants must pass a certification examination for the class of facility or system for which the certification application is submitted.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-12. Operator qualifications.

The following grade qualifications are intended to be as nearly compatible as possible to the corresponding facility or system classification.

1. Grade IA.

- a. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum of six months of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class IA or higher.
- b. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. A substitute is not permitted for minimum experience requirements, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

2. Grade I.

- a. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum one year of acceptable operation of a facility or system class I or higher; or
- b. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. A substitute is not permitted for minimum experience requirements, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

3. Grade II.

- a. A four-year college degree and a minimum one year of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- b. Two years post high school education and a minimum two years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. A substitute is not permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

4. Grade III.

- a. A four-year college degree and a minimum two years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- b. Two years post high school education and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum four years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. A substitute is not permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

5. Grade IV.

- a. A four-year college degree and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- b. Two years of post high school education and a minimum four years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must be in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent and a minimum five years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. A substitute is not permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-13. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-14. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-15. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-16. Substitutions or equivalents.

In determining the qualifications of operators desiring to be certified, the following substitutions or equivalents may be used:

1. One year of acceptable operating experience may be considered equivalent to one year of high school.
2. Experience applied to the educational requirement may not also be applied to the experience requirement.
3. An acceptable high school equivalency certificate may be used to substitute for graduation from high school.
4. Substitutions or equivalents are not allowed in lieu of the minimum acceptable experience in the operation of water treatment, water distribution and storage, wastewater treatment, and wastewater collection and transfer facilities or systems.
5. The department may waive the experience requirements in an exceptional set of circumstances.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective April 1, 2026.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06

APPENDIX B

CHAPTER 33.1-19-01

CERTIFICATION OF WATER TREATMENT FACILITY OPERATORS, WATER DISTRIBUTION AND STORAGE SYSTEM OPERATORS, WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY OPERATORS, AND WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TRANSFER SYSTEM OPERATORS

Section

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- 33.1-19-01-02 Definitions
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- 33.1-19-01-10 Change of Classification
- 33.1-19-01-11 Certification Requirements
- 33.1-19-01-12 Operator Qualifications
- 33.1-19-01-13 [Reserved]
- 33.1-19-01-14 [Reserved]
- 33.1-19-01-15 [Reserved]
- 33.1-19-01-16 Substitutions or Equivalents

33.1-19-01-01. Responsibility.

It is the responsibility of any person or persons operating a water treatment, water distribution and storage, wastewater treatment, or wastewater collection and transfer facility or system to comply with this chapter pursuant to North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-02. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

1. "Direct responsible charge" means full and active performance of onsite operation of a water or wastewater treatment facility or a water distribution and storage or wastewater collection and transfer system, where the operator is responsible for technical support of the facility or system and provides direction to other operators, is onsite or on call during shift operations, is responsible for the operation of a major segment of a facility or system, or is the sole person employed as the facility or system operator.
2. "Official census" means the census taken each decade or a special census taken by the United States bureau of the census.

3. "Person" means any individual, corporation, partnership, firm, association, trust, estate, public or private institution, group, agency, political subdivision of this state, any other state or political subdivision or agency thereof and any legal successor, representative agent, or agency of the foregoing.
4. "Water treatment facility" includes the source or sources of water or the water treatment plant or both.
5. "Water distribution and storage system" means that portion of the water supply system which obtains, stores, and conveys water from the treatment facility or other supply point to the premises of the consumer.
6. "Wastewater treatment facility" means those systems using mechanical ~~or~~, nonmechanical, or both types of process units for the treatment of wastewater and for the treatment and disposal of solids removed from such wastes.
7. "Wastewater collection and transfer system" means that portion of a wastewater system in which wastewater is conveyed to a treatment facility from the premises of a contributor.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; ~~amended effective _____, 2025.~~

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-03. General.

1. The official census must be used to determine the population served by a water treatment facility, water distribution and storage system, wastewater treatment facility, or wastewater collection and transfer system if population equivalent data is not available.
2. The total number of people served on an annual average daily basis must be used to determine population served by a water treatment facility, water distribution and storage system, wastewater treatment facility, or wastewater collection and transfer system if official census data is not available.
3. Facilities or systems with sufficiently complicated processes may be raised to a classification higher than that indicated by population equivalent or census.
4. Any facility which may have a combination of treatment processes, some of which may be in different facility classes, must be classified based on the treatment process which requires the highest numerical classification.
5. An operator who has direct responsible charge shall hold a certificate that is at least equal to the classification of the facility or system where the operator is employed.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-04. Application for certification.

Applications for certification must be ~~filed with~~approved by the department fifteen days prior to the examination on appropriate forms. An application remains valid for a period of six months from the date of submission.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-05. Examinations.

1. ~~Written examinations~~An examination must be used in determining knowledge, ability, and judgment of the applicant. ~~Oral examinations may be used in lieu of or in conjunction with the written examinations~~Examinations may be written, oral, or electronic at the discretion of the department.
2. Examinations must be held at places and times set by the department. At least one examination session must be held annually. Additional examination sessions may be held at the discretion of the department.
3. Separate examinations will be prepared for each facility or system classification.
4. All examinations must be graded by personnel or a third-party examination service designated by the department.
5. An examination may be ~~rewritten~~retaken once within one year from the date on which the original examination was ~~written~~taken. A new certification application and the required fee must be submitted to the department to ~~rewrite~~retake an examination.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-06. Fees for certification.

1. Fees for certification are ~~fifty~~one hundred fifty dollars per examination.
2. Fees for annual renewals are ~~twenty-five~~forty dollars per certificate.
3. The certification fee from a qualified applicant is nonrefundable and must be received by the department prior to the examination. Applicants will be notified of the results of the examinations. Papers and test material remain the property of the department or the department's designated examiner. Applicants may, upon request, review the results with the department or the department's designated examiner.
4. Fees received from operators whose application for certification has been rejected will be returned.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective January 1, 2022; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-05, 23.1-07-06

33.1-19-01-07. Issuance of certificates.

1. Upon satisfactory compliance with the certification qualifications, fee, and examination requirements provided herein, the department will issue a certificate to the applicant. The certificate will indicate the operator certification grade, the class of facility or system the applicant is certified to operate, the certificate number, and date of issuance.
2. To maintain certification, all certified operators are required to earn continuing education credits by attending training programs, seminars, workshops, and schools established or officially recognized by the department.

- a. The number of continuing education credits that can be earned by attending officially recognized training programs, seminars, workshops, and schools must be established and regulated by the department.
 - b. The number of continuing education credits to be earned within a ~~three-year~~three-year period of time is twelve.
 - c. Training programs offered by other government agencies, educational institutions, and operator organizations may be used for the continuing education credit requirements at the discretion of the department.
 - d. Certified operators who no longer operate facilities or systems within the boundaries of the state are exempt from the continuing education credit requirements. They may maintain valid North Dakota operator's certificates by paying the required annual renewal fees. If they return to work as an operator in the state, the continuing education credit requirements are in effect and they must earn the required number of training credits during their first year upon returning to North Dakota.
 - e. A certified operator not in compliance with the continuing education credit requirements, as determined by the department, is subject to revocation or suspension of the operator's certification.
3. Certificates are valid for a maximum of one year and expire on the first day of ~~July~~January. Certificates which have been revoked for a cause, invalidated, or replaced by one of higher grade are not renewable, except as noted in this chapter. Annual certificate renewal cards must be issued by the department upon receipt of the renewal fee as previously set forth.
 4. An operator whose certification is invalidated because of failure to renew may apply for renewal within ~~one-year~~ninety days following the certificate's expiration date. The operator may be issued a certificate of the same category, grade, and classification if the request for renewal is received by the department within ~~one-year~~ninety days after the expiration date of the certificate, the continuing education requirements are satisfied, and all delinquent fees are paid. Failure to renew certification for a period of more than ~~one-year~~ninety days following expiration of the certificate will require requalification by reapplication, reexamination, and payment of examination fees before recertification is granted.
 5. Certificates remain valid as long as the operator exercises reasonable care and judgment in the application of duties and satisfies the continuing education and annual renewal requirements as previously set forth. Certificates may be revoked as provided in North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07. No certificate will be valid if obtained through fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or the submission of false or inaccurate data, information, or qualifications.
 6. The department may issue certificates by reciprocity, without ~~written~~ examination, to any person holding a certificate from any other state, territory, possession of the United States of America, or any country providing that the requirements for certification of operators under which the operator's certificate was issued are equal to or higher than specified under this chapter for a like certificate and providing further that reciprocal privileges are granted to certified operators in North Dakota.
 7. Certificates in an appropriate category, grade, and classification may be issued without examination to qualifying operators as provided by North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07.
 8. A temporary restricted operator's permit may be issued by the department upon application by the facility or system owner on behalf of the operator where circumstances may exist to warrant issuance. A temporary restricted operator's permit will be valid for one year from the date of

issuance. When the operator satisfies the minimum grade level qualifications and requirements for certification, the operator shall submit an application for certification to the department and ~~write~~complete the appropriate category and class examination during the first examination session offered by the department following the date of application.

9. The department may revoke or suspend the certificate of an operator issued hereunder if it is found by the department that the operator has practiced fraud or deception by willfully changing records or by omission, or knowingly giving false information to the department, or failed to take corrective action required by the department, or failed to take required samples, or failed to protect the public health or the state's water resources; or when it is found that reasonable care, judgment, or the application of the operator's knowledge or ability was not used in the performance of the operator's duties. A certificate may not be revoked or suspended except after a hearing before the department. ~~If a certificate is suspended or revoked as herein provided, a new application for certification may be considered by the department if, when, and after the conditions upon which suspension or revocation was based have been corrected and evidence of this fact has been satisfactorily submitted to the department. A new certificate may then be granted by the department. If an operator whose certificate was suspended or revoked as herein provided submits a new application for certification, the department may grant a new certificate to the operator if he or she corrects the violations upon which suspension or revocation was based, and evidence of this fact has been satisfactorily submitted to the department.~~

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-08. Water treatment facility classifications.

Water treatment facilities must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of treatment, raw water quality and volume of water to be treated, and complexity of sludge handling units. Facilities may be classified ~~one level higher than indicated solely by population~~ at the discretion of the department if the facility has special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of raw water unusually difficult to treat, by reason of volume of water treated, or by reason of a combination of such conditions or circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All water facilities using simple chemical or physical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of five hundred to five thousand persons. This will include water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a minor degree of operational control.
3. **Class II.**
 - a. All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of five thousand to fifteen thousand persons. This will include water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a moderate degree of operational control.
 - b. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than one thousand persons.

- c. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than one thousand five hundred persons.
- d. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population of less than two thousand persons.
- e. All water plants using processes requiring a moderate degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions b, c, and d and serving a population of less than two thousand persons.

4. Class III.

- a. All water facilities using chemical treatment processes and designed to serve a population of fifteen thousand persons or more. This will include water facilities utilizing disinfection, fluoridation, corrosion control, sequestering, or combinations of these processes or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and a high degree of operational control.
- b. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of one thousand to five thousand persons.
- c. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of one thousand five hundred to ten thousand persons.
- d. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of two thousand to fifteen thousand persons.
- e. All water plants using processes requiring a high degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions b, c, and d and serving a population of two thousand to fifteen thousand persons.

5. Class IV.

- a. All water plants using chemical softening processes and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of five thousand or more persons.
- b. All water plants using coagulation, sedimentation, and filtration for clarification requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of ten thousand or more persons.
- c. All water plants using chemical oxidation of iron or manganese and filtration requiring a high degree of operational control serving a population of fifteen thousand or more persons.
- d. All water plants using processes requiring a high degree of operational control but not listed in subdivisions a, b, and c and serving a population of fifteen thousand or more persons.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-08.1. Water distribution and storage system classifications.

Water distribution and storage systems must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of distribution and storage system,

and the volume of water to be handled. Systems may be classified ~~one level higher than indicated solely by population~~ at the discretion of the department by reason of the incorporation in the system of special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of conditions of volume and flow, or by reason of a combination of such conditions and circumstances.

1. Class IA. All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of five hundred to one thousand five hundred persons.
3. **Class II.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of one thousand five hundred to fifteen thousand persons.
4. **Class III.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand persons.
5. **Class IV.** All water distribution and storage systems serving a population of fifty thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-09. Wastewater treatment facility classifications.

Wastewater treatment facilities must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of treatment, character and volume of wastes to be treated, and the use and nature of the water resources receiving the facility effluent. Facilities may be classified ~~one level higher than indicated solely by population~~ at the discretion of the department if the facility has special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of a waste unusually difficult to treat, by reason of conditions of flow, or by reason of the receiving water quality classification requiring an unusually high degree of facility operational control, or by reason of a combination of such conditions or circumstances.

1. **Class IA.** All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other nonmechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of less than five hundred persons.
2. **Class I.** All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other non-mechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of five hundred to less than ten thousand persons.
3. **Class II.**
 - a. All mechanical facilities, mechanically aerated stabilization ponds, oxidation ditches, or other facilities requiring a moderate degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of less than ten thousand persons.
 - b. All wastewater stabilization ponds, land treatment facilities, wetlands treatment facilities, or other nonmechanical facilities requiring a minor degree of operational control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.

4. **Class III.**

- a. All mechanical facilities, mechanically aerated stabilization ponds, oxidation ditches, or other facilities requiring a moderate degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.
- b. All activated sludge facilities, trickling filter facilities, rotating biological contactor facilities, separate sludge stabilization facilities, or other mechanical facilities requiring a high degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of less than ten thousand persons.

5. **Class IV.** All activated sludge facilities, trickling filter facilities, rotating biological contactor facilities, separate sludge stabilization facilities, or other mechanical facilities requiring a high degree of operational and laboratory control serving a population equivalent of ten thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-09.1. Wastewater collection and transfer system classifications.

Wastewater collection and transfer systems must be classified in one of five classes. Classifications must be based on population served, design population, type of collection and transfer system, and the character and volume of wastes to be handled. Systems may be classified ~~one level higher than indicated solely by population~~ at the discretion of the department by reason of the incorporation in the system of special design features or complex features or characteristics unusually difficult to operate, by reason of conditions of flow, or by reason of a combination of such conditions and circumstances.

1. Class IA. All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of less than five hundred persons.
2. Class I. All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of five hundred to one thousand five hundred persons.
3. Class II. All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of one thousand five hundred to fifteen thousand persons.
4. Class III. All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand persons.
5. Class IV. All wastewater collection and transfer systems serving a population of fifty thousand persons or more.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22

33.1-19-01-10. Change of classification.

Classification of any treatment facility or distribution and storage or collection and transfer system may be changed at the discretion of the department by reason of changes in any condition or circumstance on which the original classification was based. The department shall provide notice of any classification change to the owner of the facility or system.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-11. Certification requirements.

1. Operator certification is mandatory for all persons in direct responsible charge of the operation or maintenance of water treatment facilities, water distribution and storage systems, wastewater treatment facilities, or wastewater collection and transfer systems as required by North Dakota Century Code section 23.1-07-07 and applicable federal laws and regulations.
2. Five grades of operators for water treatment facilities, water distribution and storage systems, wastewater treatment facilities, and wastewater collection and transfer systems are hereby established. To qualify for certification in a given grade, an applicant must satisfy the education and experience requirements, or their equivalents, of the grade for which the certification application is submitted.
3. All applicants must pass a certification examination ~~as developed and administered by the department~~ for the class of facility or system for which the certification application is submitted.
4. All applicants must pass a certification examination for the class of facility or system for which the certification application is submitted.

History: Effective January 1, 2019; amended effective _____, 2025.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-04, 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-12. Operator qualifications.

The following grade qualifications are intended to be as nearly compatible as possible to the corresponding facility or system classification.

1. **Grade IA.**
 - a. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum of six months of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class IA or higher.
 - b. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. No substitute may be permitted for minimum experience requirements, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.
2. **Grade I.**
 - a. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum one year of acceptable operation of a facility or system class I or higher; or
 - b. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. No substitute may be permitted for minimum experience requirements, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.
3. **Grade II.**
 - a. A four-year college degree and a minimum one year of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;

- b. Two years post high school education and a minimum two years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class I or higher, one year of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. No substitute may be permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

4. Grade III.

- a. A four-year college degree and a minimum two years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- b. Two years post high school education and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent, and a minimum four years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class II or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. No substitute may be permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

5. Grade IV.

- a. A four-year college degree and a minimum three years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge;
- b. Two years of post high school education and a minimum four years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must be in a position of direct responsible charge;
- c. Completion of high school or equivalent and a minimum five years of acceptable operation of a facility or system of class III or higher, two years of which must have been in a position of direct responsible charge; or
- d. A combination of education qualifications and experience that will be satisfactory to the department. No substitute may be permitted for the minimum experience requirement, unless an exception is granted under section 33.1-19-01-07.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

33.1-19-01-13. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-14. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-15. [Reserved].

33.1-19-01-16. Substitutions or equivalents.

In determining the qualifications of operators desiring to be certified, the following substitutions or equivalents may be used:

1. One year of acceptable operating experience may be considered equivalent to one year of high school.
2. Experience applied to the educational requirement may not also be applied to the experience requirement.
3. An acceptable high school equivalency certificate may be used to substitute for graduation from high school.
4. No substitutions or equivalents will be allowed in lieu of the minimum acceptable experience in the operation of water treatment, water distribution and storage, wastewater treatment, and wastewater collection and transfer facilities or systems.
5. The department may waive the experience requirements in an exceptional set of circumstances.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 4~~

Law Implemented: NDCC 23.1-07-03, 23.1-07-06; ~~S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 22~~

APPENDIX C

ATTORNEY GENERAL STATEMENT FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM SUPERVISOR & DRINKING WATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

I hereby certify, pursuant to my authority as Assistant Attorney General and in accordance with 40 C.F.R. Section 142.11, it is my opinion that the laws of the State of North Dakota meet the requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 142 and provide adequate authority to supervise the State of North Dakota's public water system program as set forth in the documentation submitted by the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality. The specific authorities are contained in duly enacted statutes and promulgated regulations in effect as of the date this Statement is signed.

The statutory authorities for the Department of Environmental Quality to supervise the State of North Dakota's public water system program are found in North Dakota Century Code, Chapter 61-28.1, and the regulations promulgated thereunder in North Dakota Administrative Code, Article 33.1-17.

I further certify that the State of North Dakota has duly enacted statutes requiring the certification of operators of drinking water distribution and wastewater systems that are found in North Dakota Century Code, Chapter 23.1-07, and regulations found in North Dakota Administrative Code, Article 33.1-19, and that these laws are fully effective and enforceable as of the date this Statement is signed.



Signature

Matthew Sagsveen

Name

Assistant Attorney General

Title

July 31, 2026

Date

From: [Weigel, Suzie N.](#)
To: [Merkens, Anine](#)
Subject: Re: NDDEQ - AG Statement for Safe Drinking Water Operator Certification
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2026 4:05:02 PM

Hi Anine,

Drew would like Matt to be the rep.

Thanks

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Merkens, Anine <amerkens@nd.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, 29 July 2026 08:45:30
To: Wrigley, Drew H. <dwrigley@nd.gov>
Cc: Ness, Claire J. <cjness@nd.gov>; Sagsveen, Matthew A. <masagsve@nd.gov>; Weigel, Suzie N. <snweigel@nd.gov>
Subject: NDDEQ - AG Statement for Safe Drinking Water Operator Certification

Good morning Attorney General Wrigley,

The EPA requires the Department of Environmental Quality to submit an updated Attorney General statement under the federally delegated Safe Drinking Water Act due to the recent adoption of certain amendments to the operator certification administrative rules. This was last done in 2022 and you delegated it to Maggie Olson as shown in the attached .pdf and email.

If you would like to sign, I'd kindly ask that Suzie to make changes to the attached .docx to fit your signature preferences. If you would like to delegate it to Matt or I, please respond to this email stating as much so that it may be included in the Department's submittal. Please note that the statement is due to the EPA by COB on Friday, July 31. Thank you.

Best regards,

Anine Merkens
Assistant Attorney General
NORTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
Email: amerkens@nd.gov
Phone: 701-328-3640

APPENDIX D

Minutes
For the
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
INTERNAL REVIEW
Division of Municipal Facilities (DMF)
Environmental Health Section
North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality
September 15, 2025

The annual Operator Certification Program Internal Review by the DMF was held at the Normandy Building, 4201 Normandy Street, Bismarck, ND, at 9:01 a.m. on September 15, 2025.

The following individuals were in attendance:

- David Bruschwein, Director of Division of Municipal Facilities
- Shannon Fisher, SRF Administrator
- Jacob Schafer, Secretary of Operator Certification Advisory Committee
- Tressa Cook, Operator Certification Officer
- LeeAnn Tillotson, Operator Reimbursement Coordinator
- Shawn Heinle, OTCFI Administrator/Manager

Tressa Cook opened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. by welcoming those in attendance. It was noted that Greg Wavra and Stacey Herreid will be invited to next year's internal review to provide additional input.

The first item of business was the review and approval of the September 23, 2024, Operator Certification Program Internal Review minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shawn Heinle and seconded by LeeAnn Tillotson. The motion carried.

Jacob Schafer provided an update on the upcoming annual External Review conducted by the Operator Certification Advisory Committee. The review will take place on October 15, 2025, at the NWPCC Conference in Fargo, North Dakota. Minutes from the 2024 Special Advisory Committee meeting were published in the Conference edition of the Official Bulletin. Jacob also noted that traveling exams began this past year, expanding access to certification testing.

LeeAnn Tillotson presented the Operator Expense Reimbursement update for the 2023–2025 biennium, which ended on June 30, 2025. Of the \$125,000 in available funding, \$122,309.51 was used, covering 274 reimbursement requests from small water systems.

A summary of Operator Training and Examination efforts was provided. In 2025, three departmental operator training courses were conducted with 126 attendees. From January 1 through September 15, 2025, 261 exams were given, with 148 passing and 113 failing, reflecting a 57% pass rate and an average score of 68. Spring 2026 training sessions are scheduled to include three water classes in April (two for groundwater and one for surface water) and two wastewater classes in May. The Fall 2025 training conference is scheduled for October 14–16 in Fargo, North Dakota.

David Bruschwein submitted the SFY25 Annual Operator Certification Submittal Report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 on July 30, 2025. The report indicated that large systems continue to meet certification requirements, while smaller systems remain under-certified. Discussion followed regarding ways to increase certification compliance among small systems. Shawn Heinle is working to submit a Water Distribution 1A booklet to the EPA to support restricted certifications for small systems in the most critical areas.

An update was provided on the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) contract with the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA) and the Midwest Assistance Program (MAP). This contract provides technical assistance to public water systems (PWSs) that do not meet Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) operator certification requirements. In 2025, MAP assisted five systems and NDRWSA assisted nine systems.

Under old business, a summary of changes implemented or underway from 2024 was reviewed:

1. Input from the March 11, 2024, Special Advisory Meeting – Completed
2. Increased exam openings and introduction of two traveling exam events – Completed
3. Departmental attendance at Rural Water's 40th Anniversary on July 1, 2024 – Greg Wavra attended
4. Exploration of ABC testing – Ongoing
5. Ongoing collaboration with Rural Water for monthly exam preparation trainings
6. Allowance of partial credits for Water and Pollution Control Conference based on proof of attendance
7. Department website updates – Completed
8. Clarification of Industrial Equivalents – Completed by Elizabeth
9. Updates to ND Century and Administrative Codes – In Progress
10. Enhancements to the Operator Portal – Ongoing, in coordination with Gannett
11. Spring training sessions planned for April and May 2025
12. Notification system for under-certified or non-certified operators – Implemented through Gannett with ongoing monthly/weekly updates

Under new business, David Bruschwein reported ongoing work on updates to the administrative rules. Shawn Heinle is continuing development of the Water Distribution 1A certification booklet for EPA review.

Jacob Schafer moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by LeeAnn Tillotson. The meeting was adjourned by Tressa Cook at 9:48 a.m.

North Dakota Operator Certification Advisory Committee
October 15, 2025

Minutes

The 25th annual meeting of the North Dakota Operator Certification Advisory Committee was held at the North Dakota Water and Pollution Control Conference. The meeting was conducted October 15th, 2025. The meeting was called to order by Daniel Hanson, Committee Chair at 9:00am.

Members in attendance were:

Daniel Hanson, City of Grand Forks, representing large system water distribution and/or wastewater collection operators.

Jake Schafer, Environmental Scientist, representing the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality.

Kollin Syverson, Hawkins, representing technical assistance providers.

Jarrett Hillius, HDR, representing the NDWPCC.

Bruce Hirschert, New Rockford, representing small water distribution and/or wastewater collection operators.

James Kershaw, Water Plant Superintendent, City of Bismarck, representing large system water treatment and/or wastewater treatment operators.

Matt Moltzan, City of Fargo, representing utility managers.

Chuck Mischel, NDRWSA, representing the public.

Also in attendance were the following guests:

Shawn Heinle, NDDEQ

David Bruschwein, NDDEQ

John (Fred) Goetz, City of Grand Forks

Don Tucker, City of Fargo

Tressa Cook, NDDEQ

Greg Wavra, NDDEQ

Daniel Overmoe, NDRWSA

Dean Hayes, NDRWSA

Chair Hanson called for a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the October 15th, 2024 committee meeting. Mr. Hillius motioned to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Mr. Hirschert seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Hanson called for any old business.

Mr. Schafer provided updates on NDDEQ efforts to update and modernize the operator certification program in North Dakota. Mr. Schafer explained the changes to Century Code that were made, as well as the necessary changes to Administrative Code before the changes can be made fully effective.

Mr. Heinle explained changes to the renewal process.

Hearing no further old business, Mr. Hanson moved on to new business. Mr. Schafer discussed the replacement of the Public representative on the board due to the retirement of the previous representative.

Dean Hayes was nominated to represent the public. Mr. Schafer nominated, Mr. Kershaw seconded. Motion carried.

David Ludwig was nominated to represent small water distribution/wastewater collection systems. Mr. Hirchert nominated, Mr. Schafer seconded. Motion carried.

The next item of new business was the election of advisory board officers. Mr. Hayes was nominated as the new Chair-Elect. Mr. Schafer nominated, Mr. Kershaw seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Schafer provided an update on the 2025 Operator Certification Annual Report that was sent to the EPA.

Mr. Schafer also provided an update on the 2025 Operator Certification Internal Review Meeting that was conducted September 15th, 2025 in Bismarck, ND.

Mr. Schafer and Mr. Heinle provided updates on traveling exam locations for 2026 as well as training dates and locations for NDDEQ Spring Operator Training in 2026.

Mr. Heinle provided updates on the move to 3rd party examination services, projected cost of 3rd party examinations, and the new special restricted license booklet program NDDEQ will begin testing with WD1A systems.

Mr. Hanson inquired as to the possibility of an automated email message from the portal notifying operators when new testing dates or trainings become available. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Hayes provided an update from NDRWSA on modernization efforts and changes made to NDRWSA exam prep and training sessions. Mr. Goetz expressed gratitude to NDRWSA for making meaningful changes to prep sessions. Mr. Goetz and Mr. Hanson informed the group that all City of Grand Forks operators are required to attend NDRWSA test prep sessions prior to taking an examination.

Mr. Hanson, hearing no other new business, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kershaw motioned to adjourn. Mr. Schafer seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jake Schafer
Secretary

APPENDIX E

CHAPTER 23.1-07 WATER DISTRIBUTION AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS OPERATORS

23.1-07-01. Statement of policy.

It is the policy of the state of North Dakota to protect the public health and welfare of the people of the state and the state's water resources by classifying all public water supply and wastewater disposal systems in the state and by requiring the examination of operators and the certification of their competency to supervise the operations of such facilities.

23.1-07-02. Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Certificate" means a certificate of competency issued by the department stating that the operator holding the certificate meets the requirements for the specified operator grade in the certification program.
2. "Department" means the department of environmental quality.
3. "Ground water under the direct influence of surface water" means water beneath the surface of the ground with significant occurrence of insects or other macro-organisms, algae, or large-diameter pathogens such as *Giardia lamblia*, or significant and relatively rapid shifts in water characteristics such as turbidity, temperature, conductivity, or pH which closely correlate to climatological or surface water conditions.
4. "Operator" means the person in direct responsible charge of the operation of a water treatment plant, a water distribution system, a wastewater treatment plant, or a wastewater collection system.
5. "Population equivalent" for a wastewater collection system or treatment plant means the calculated population that would normally contribute the same amount of biochemical oxygen demand per day computed on the basis of seventeen hundredths of one pound [77.11 grams] of five-day, sixty-eight-degree Fahrenheit [20-degree Celsius] biochemical oxygen demand per capita per day.
6. "Wastewater collection system" means that portion of the wastewater disposal system in which wastewater is conveyed to a wastewater treatment plant from the premises of a contributor.
7. "Wastewater disposal system" means the system of pipes, structures, and facilities through which wastewater from a public sewer system or industry is collected and treated for final disposal. The system must serve a population equivalent of twenty-five or more persons.
8. "Wastewater treatment plant" means that portion of the wastewater disposal system used for the treatment and disposal of wastewater and the solids removed from wastewater.
9. "Water distribution system" means that portion of the water supply system in which water is conveyed from the water treatment plant or other supply point to the premises of the consumer.
10. "Water supply system" means the system of pipes, structures, and facilities through which a public water supply is obtained, treated, and sold or distributed for human consumption or household use. The system must have at least fifteen service connections or regularly serve an average of twenty-five or more persons for at least sixty days a year.

11. "Water treatment plant" means that portion of the water supply system that in some way alters the physical, chemical, or bacteriological quality of the water.

23.1-07-03. Classification of plants and systems.

The department shall classify all water treatment plants, water distribution systems, wastewater treatment plants, and wastewater collection systems with due regard to the size, type, character of water and wastewater to be treated, and other physical conditions affecting such facilities, and according to the skill, knowledge, and experience that an operator in responsible charge must have to successfully supervise the operation of such facilities, so as to protect the public health and prevent pollution of the waters of the state.

23.1-07-04. Certification.

When the department is satisfied an applicant is qualified by examination or otherwise to supervise the operation of treatment plants and systems, the department shall issue a certificate attesting to the competency of the applicant as an operator. The certificate must indicate the classification of treatment plant or system the operator is qualified to supervise.

1. A certificate issued under this chapter is valid for only one year and expires on the first day of January of the year after which it was issued.
2. The department may revoke or suspend the certificate of an operator issued under this chapter if the operator has practiced fraud or deception in obtaining the certificate or in the performance of the operator's duty as an operator; if reasonable care, judgment, or the application of the operator's knowledge or ability was not used in the performance of the operator's duties; or if the operator is incompetent and unable to perform properly the operator's duties as an operator. A certificate may not be revoked or suspended except after a hearing before the director of the department, or the director's designated representative. If a certificate is suspended or revoked, a new application for certification may be considered by the department only after the conditions causing the suspension or revocation have been corrected, and evidence of this fact has been satisfactorily submitted to the department. A new certificate may then be granted by the department.
3. Certificates in appropriate classification issued to operators before the effective date of this chapter continue in effect.

23.1-07-05. Fees.

The department by rule may prescribe and provide for the payment and collection of reasonable fees for certificates issued under this chapter. The fees must be based on the anticipated cost of filing and processing applications for operator certification, preparing and administering examinations, and the annual renewal of certificates. All receipts from the fees must be deposited in the state treasury to be credited to a special fund to be known as the "operators' certification fund" to be used by the department to administer and enforce this chapter and financially assist the department in conducting operator training programs. Any surplus at the end of the fiscal year must be retained by the department for future expenditures.

23.1-07-06. Duties of the department.

The department shall:

1. Hold at least one examination each year, administered by the department or a thirdparty examination service, at a designated time and place for the purpose of examining candidates for certification.
2. Promote the program of certification of water supply and wastewater disposal system operators.

3. Distribute notices and applications and to receive and evaluate applications.
4. Collect fees for initial certification and annual renewal.
5. Prepare, conduct, and grade examinations. The department may use a third-party examination service to prepare, conduct, and grade examinations.
6. Maintain records of operator qualifications, certification examination results, and a register of certified operators.
7. Promote and schedule regular training schools and programs.
8. Adopt rules necessary to carry out this chapter.
9. Administer the wastewater infrastructure grant program.

23.1-07-06.1. Administrative procedure and judicial review.

1. A proceeding under this chapter to adopt or modify rules relating to the certification and regulation of water distribution and wastewater system operators, or for determining compliance with rules of the department, must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 28-32.
2. An appeal of a decision issued under subsection 1, must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 28-32.

23.1-07-07. Unlawful operation.

Except as provided in this section, it is unlawful for any person to operate a water treatment plant or water distribution system serving twenty-five or more individuals or a wastewater treatment plant or wastewater collection system serving a population equivalent of twenty-five or more individuals unless the competency of the operator to operate such a plant or system is certified by the department in a grade corresponding to the classification of that portion of the system to be supervised. Operators of wastewater collection systems and wastewater stabilization ponds or other nonmechanical wastewater treatment plants that serve a population equivalent of less than five hundred individuals are excluded from this chapter. Operators of water supply systems that serve other than year-round residents are excluded from this chapter if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The water supply is obtained solely from ground water sources not under the direct influence of surface water.
2. Treatment, if provided, consists strictly of disinfection, fluoridation, sequestration, corrosion control, or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and minor operational control.
3. The water supply system is not required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act or its implementing regulations to be operated by qualified personnel.

23.1-07-08. Violations - Penalty.

1. A person that violates this chapter, a rule implementing this chapter, or an order issued by the department under this chapter is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed five thousand dollars per day of violation.
2. A person that willfully violates this chapter or the rules adopted under this chapter, after written notice of the violation by the department, is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.
3. A person that willfully makes a false statement, representation, or certification in an application, record, report, plan, or other document filed or required to be maintained under this chapter or any rule, order, limitation, or other applicable requirement implementing this chapter or that falsifies, tampers with, or willfully renders inaccurate any monitoring device or sample is guilty of a class A misdemeanor, unless the penalty for the violation is otherwise specifically provided for and made exclusive in this chapter.

23.1-07-09. Wastewater infrastructure grant program.

1. The department shall award wastewater infrastructure grants to eligible entities identified in subsection 2 to upgrade, replace, or construct infrastructure for a wastewater collection system, wastewater disposal system, or wastewater treatment plant.
2. Cities, counties, townships, water resource districts, recreation service districts, and water districts operating wastewater systems in the state may receive a grant under this section for an eligible project, subject to the availability of funds.
3. In awarding wastewater infrastructure grants to eligible entities, the department shall prioritize eligible entities that:
 - a. Have experienced a reduction in previously approved federal funds or federal assistance related to wastewater infrastructure projects; and
 - b. Are prepared to begin the wastewater infrastructure project upon receipt of the grants.
4. An eligible wastewater system must be in compliance with current wastewater regulations unless the project will return the system to compliance. Eligible projects may not include operations and maintenance costs.
5. The department may not award a grant in excess of sixty percent of the total cost of a project and shall ensure no community receives a grant for more than one project per biennium.

APPENDIX F

ARTICLE 33.1-17 PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS

Chapter

33.1-17-01 Public Water Supply Systems in North Dakota

CHAPTER 33.1-17-01 PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS IN NORTH DAKOTA

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33.1-17-01-01. Responsibility.

It is the responsibility of any supplier of water to comply within the meaning of this chapter pursuant to North Dakota Century Code chapter 61-28.1.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-02. Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Action level" means the concentration of lead or copper in water specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I, section 141.80(c), that determines, in some cases, the treatment requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I, that a water system is required to complete.
2. "Bag filters" means pressure-driven separation devices that remove particulate matter larger than one micrometer using an engineered porous filtration media. They are typically constructed of a nonrigid, fabric filtration media housed in a pressure vessel in which the direction of flow is from the inside of the bag to the outside.
3. "Bank filtration" means a water treatment process that uses a well to recover surface water that has naturally infiltrated into ground water through a riverbed or riverbanks. Infiltration is typically enhanced by the hydraulic gradient imposed by a nearby pumping water supply or other wells.
4. "Best available technology" or "BAT" means the best technology, treatment techniques, or other means which the department finds, after examination for efficacy under field conditions and not solely under laboratory conditions, are available (taking cost into consideration). For the purposes of setting maximum contaminant levels for synthetic organic chemicals, any best available technology must be at least as effective as granular activated carbon.
5. "Cartridge filters" means pressure-driven separation devices that remove particulate matter larger than one micrometer using an engineered porous filtration media. They are typically constructed as rigid or semirigid, self-supporting filter elements housed in pressure vessels in which flow is from the outside of the cartridge to the inside.
6. "Clean compliance history", for the purposes of subpart Y, means a record of no MCL violations as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.63; no monitoring violations as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.21 or as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y; and no coliform treatment technique trigger exceedances or treatment technique violations as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.
7. "Coagulation" means a process using coagulant chemicals and mixing by which colloidal and suspended materials are destabilized and agglomerated into flocs.
8. "Combined distribution system" means the interconnected distribution system consisting of the distribution systems of wholesale systems and of the consecutive systems that receive finished water.
9. "Community water system" means a public water system which serves at least fifteen service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least twenty-five year-round residents.
10. "Compliance cycle" means the nine-year calendar year cycle during which public water systems must monitor for inorganic and organic chemicals excluding lead, copper, trihalomethanes, and unregulated contaminants. Each compliance cycle consists of three 3-year compliance periods. The first calendar year cycle begins January 1, 1993, and ends December 31, 2001; the second begins

January 1, 2002, and ends December 31, 2010; and the third begins January 1, 2011, and ends December 31, 2019.

11. "Compliance period" means a three-year calendar year period within a compliance cycle during which public water systems must monitor for inorganic and organic chemicals excluding lead, copper, trihalomethanes, and unregulated contaminants. Each compliance cycle has three 3-year compliance periods. Within the first compliance cycle, the first compliance period runs from January 1, 1993, to December 31, 1995; the second from January 1, 1996, to December 31, 1998; and the third from January 1, 1999, to December 31, 2001.

12. "Composite correction program" or "CCP" means a systematic, comprehensive procedure for identifying, prioritizing, and remedying factors that limit water treatment plant performance as set forth in the United States environmental protection agency handbook entitled Optimizing Water Treatment Plant Performance Using The Composite Correction Program, EPA/625/6-91/027, 1998 edition. A composite correction program consists of two phases, a comprehensive performance evaluation and comprehensive technical assistance.

13. "Comprehensive performance evaluation" or "CPE" means a thorough review and analysis of a treatment plant's performance-based capabilities and associated administrative, operation, and maintenance practices. It is conducted to identify factors that may be adversely impacting a plant's capability to achieve compliance and emphasizes approaches that can be implemented without significant capital improvements. For purposes of compliance with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P and subpart T, the comprehensive performance evaluation shall consist of at least the following components:

- a. Assessment of plant performance;
- b. Evaluation of major unit processes;
- c. Identification and prioritization of performance limiting factors;
- d. Assessment of the applicability of comprehensive technical assistance; and
- e. Preparation of a comprehensive performance evaluation report.

14. "Comprehensive technical assistance" or "CTA" means the performance improvement phase of a composite correction program that is implemented if the comprehensive performance evaluation results indicate improved performance potential. During the comprehensive technical assistance phase, identified and prioritized factors that limit water treatment plant performance are systematically addressed and eliminated.

15. "Confluent growth" means a continuous bacterial growth covering the entire filtration area of a membrane filter, or a portion thereof, in which bacterial colonies are not discrete.

16. "Consecutive system" means a public water system that receives some or all of its finished water from one or more wholesale systems. Delivery may be through a direct connection or through the distribution system of one or more consecutive systems.

17. "Contaminant" means any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance or matter in water.

18. "Conventional filtration treatment" means a series of processes, including coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, and filtration resulting in substantial particulate removal.
19. "Corrosion inhibitor" means a substance capable of reducing the corrosivity of water toward metal plumbing materials, especially lead and copper, by forming a protective film on the interior surface of those materials.
20. "Cross connection" means any connection or arrangement between two otherwise separate piping systems, one of which contains potable water and the other either water of unknown or questionable safety or steam, gas, or chemical whereby there may be a flow from one system to the other, the direction of flow depending on the pressure differential between the two systems.
21. "CT" or "CT calc" means the product of residual disinfectant concentration (C) in milligrams per liter determined before or at the first customer and the corresponding disinfectant contact time (T) in minutes. If disinfectants are applied, at more than one point prior to the first customer, the CT of each disinfectant sequence must be determined before or at the first customer to determine the total percent inactivation or total inactivation ratio. In determining the total inactivation ratio, the residual disinfectant concentration of each disinfection sequence and the corresponding contact time must be determined before any subsequent disinfection application points. CT ninety-nine and nine-tenths is the CT value required for ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent (three-logarithm) inactivation of giardia lamblia cysts. CT ninety-nine point nine values for a wide variety of disinfectants and conditions are set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. CT calculated divided by CT ninety-nine and nine-tenths is the inactivation ratio. The total inactivation ratio is determined by adding together the inactivation ratio for each disinfection sequence. A total inactivation ratio equal to or greater than one point zero is assumed to provide a three-logarithm inactivation of giardia lamblia cysts.
22. "Department" means the department of environmental quality.
23. "Diatomaceous earth filtration" means a process resulting in substantial particulate removal in which a precoat cake of diatomaceous earth filter media is deposited on a support membrane or septum, and while the water is filtered by passing through the cake on the septum, additional filter media known as body feed is continuously added to the feed water to maintain the permeability of the filter cake.
24. "Direct filtration" means a series of processes including coagulation and filtration but excluding sedimentation resulting in substantial particulate removal.
25. "Disinfectant" means any oxidant, including chlorine, chlorine dioxide, chloramines, and ozone added to water in any part of the treatment or distribution process, that is intended to kill or inactivate pathogenic microorganisms.
26. "Disinfectant contact time" (T in CT calculations) means the time in minutes that it takes for water to move from the point of disinfectant application or the previous point of disinfectant residual measurement to a point before or at the point where residual disinfectant concentration (C) is measured. Where only one C is measured, T is the time in minutes that it takes for water to move from the point of disinfectant application to a point before or at where C is measured. Where more than one C is measured, T, for the first measurement of C, is the time in minutes that it takes the water to move from the first or only point of disinfectant application to a point before or at the point where the first C is measured. For subsequent measurements of C, T is the time in minutes that it takes for water to

move from the previous C measurement point to the C measurement point for which the particular T is being calculated. Disinfectant contact time in pipelines must be calculated by dividing the internal volume of the pipe by the maximum hourly flow rate through that pipe. T within mixing basins and storage reservoirs must be determined by tracer studies or an equivalent demonstration.

27. "Disinfection" means a process which inactivates pathogenic organisms in water by chemical oxidants or equivalent agents.

28. "Disinfection profile" means a summary of daily giardia lamblia inactivation through the treatment plant. The disinfection profile shall be developed as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P (141.172) and subpart T (141.530-141.536).

29. "Domestic or other nondistribution system plumbing problem" means a coliform contamination problem in a public water system with more than one service connection that is limited to the specific service connection from which the coliform-positive sample was taken.

30. "Dual sample set" means a set of two samples collected at the same time and same location, with one sample analyzed for total trihalomethanes (TTHM) and the other sample analyzed for haloacetic acids five (HAA5). Dual sample sets are collected for the purpose of conducting an initial distribution system evaluation (IDSE) under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations parts 141.600 to 141.605 inclusive, and determining compliance with the TTHM and HAA5 MCLs under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations parts 141.620 to 141.629 inclusive.

31. "Effective corrosion inhibitor residual", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means a concentration sufficient to form a passivating film on the interior walls of pipe.

32. "Enhanced coagulation" means the addition of sufficient coagulant for improved removal of disinfection byproduct precursors by conventional filtration treatment.

33. "Enhanced softening" means the improved removal of disinfection byproduct precursors by precipitative softening.

34. "Filter profile" means a graphical representation of individual filter performance based on continuous turbidity measurements or total particle counts versus time for an entire filter run, from startup to backwash inclusively, that includes an assessment of filter performance while another filter is being backwashed.

35. "Filtration" means a process for removing particulate matter from water by passage through porous media.

36. "Finished water" means water that is introduced into the distribution system of a public water system and is intended for distribution and consumption without further treatment, except treatment necessary to maintain water quality in the distribution system (e.g., booster disinfection or addition of corrosion control chemicals).

37. "First draw sample" means a one-liter sample of tap water, collected in accordance with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, section 141.86(b)(2), that has been standing in plumbing pipes at least six hours and is collected without flushing the tap.

38. "Flocculation" means a process to enhance agglomeration or collection of smaller floc particles into larger, more easily settleable particles through gentle stirring by hydraulic or mechanical means.
39. "Flowing stream" means a course of running water flowing in a definite channel.
40. "Granular activated carbon ten" or "GAC10" means granular activated carbon filter beds with an empty-bed contact time of ten minutes based on average daily flow and a carbon reactivation frequency of every one hundred eighty days, except that the reactivation frequency for GAC10 used as a best available technology for compliance with subpart V MCLs under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.64(b)(2) shall be one hundred twenty days.
41. "Granular activated carbon twenty" or "GAC20" means granular activated carbon filter beds with an empty-bed contact time of twenty minutes based on average daily flow and a carbon reactivation frequency of every two hundred forty days.
42. "Gross alpha particle activity" means the total radioactivity due to alpha particle emission as inferred from measurements on a dry sample.
43. "Ground water under the direct influence of surface water" means any water beneath the surface of the ground with significant occurrence of insects or other macroorganisms, algae, or large-diameter pathogens such as giardia lamblia or cryptosporidium. Ground water under the direct influence of surface water also means significant and relatively rapid shifts in water characteristics such as turbidity, temperature, conductivity, or pH which closely correlate to climatological or surface water conditions.
44. "Haloacetic acids five" or "HAA5" means the sum of the concentrations in milligrams per liter of the haloacetic acid compounds monochloroacetic acid, dichloroacetic acid, trichloroacetic acid, monobromoacetic acid, and dibromoacetic acid, rounded to two significant figures after addition.
45. "Halogen" means one of the chemical elements chlorine, bromine, or iodine.
46. "Initial compliance period" means the first full compliance period that begins January 1, 1993, during which public water systems must monitor for inorganic and organic chemicals excluding lead, copper, trihalomethanes, and unregulated contaminants.
47. "Lake/reservoir" means a natural or manmade basin or hollow on the earth's surface in which water collects or is stored that may or may not have a current or single direction of flow.
48. "Large water system", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means a water system that serves more than fifty thousand persons.
49. "Lead service line" means a service line made of lead that connects the water main to the building inlet and any pigtail, gooseneck, or other fitting that is connected to a lead line.
50. "Legionella" means a genus of bacteria, some species of which have caused a type of pneumonia called legionnaires disease.
51. "Level 1 assessment" means an evaluation to identify the possible presence of sanitary defects, defects in distribution system coliform monitoring practices, and, when possible, the likely reason that the system triggered the assessment. It is conducted by the system operator or owner. Minimum

elements include review and identification of atypical events that could affect distributed water quality or indicate that distributed water quality was impaired; changes in distribution system maintenance and operation that could affect distributed water quality, including water storage; source and treatment considerations that bear on distributed water quality, where appropriate, such as whether a ground water system is disinfected; existing water quality monitoring data; and inadequacies in sample sites, sampling protocol, and sampling processing. The system must conduct the assessment consistent with any state directives that tailor specific assessment elements with respect to the size and type of the system and the size, type, and characteristics of the distribution system.

52. "Level 2 assessment" means an evaluation to identify the possible presence of sanitary defects, defects in distribution system coliform monitoring practices, and, when possible, the likely reason that the system triggered the assessment. A level 2 assessment provides a more detailed examination of the system, including the system's monitoring and operational practices, than does a level 1 assessment through the use of more comprehensive investigation and review of available information, additional internal and external resources, and other relevant practices. It is conducted by an individual approved by the state, which may include the system operator. Minimum elements include review and identification of atypical events that could affect distributed water quality or indicate that distributed water quality was impaired; changes in distribution system maintenance and operation that could affect distributed water quality, including water storage; source and treatment considerations that bear on distributed water quality, where appropriate, such as whether a ground water system is disinfected; existing water quality monitoring data; and inadequacies in sample sites, sampling protocol, and sample processing. The system must conduct the assessment consistent with any state directives that tailor specific assessment elements with respect to the size and type of the system and the size, type, and characteristics of the distribution system. The system must comply with any expedited actions or additional actions required by the state in the case of an E. coli MCL violation.

53. "Locational running annual average" or "LRAA" means the average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters.

54. "Maximum contaminant level" or "MCL" means the maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any user of a public water system.

55. "Maximum residual disinfectant level" or "MRDL" means a level of a disinfectant added for water treatment that must not be exceeded at the consumer's tap without an unacceptable possibility of adverse health effects.

56. "Maximum total trihalomethane potential" means the maximum concentration of total trihalomethanes produced in a given water containing a disinfectant residual after seven days at a temperature of twenty-five degrees Celsius [77 degrees Fahrenheit] or above.

57. "Medium-size water system", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means a water system that serves three thousand three hundred one to fifty thousand persons.

58. "Membrane filtration" means a pressure-driven or vacuum-driven separation process in which particulate matter larger than one micrometer is rejected by an engineered barrier, primarily through a size-exclusion mechanism, and which has a measurable removal efficiency of a target organism that

can be verified through the application of a direct integrity test. This definition includes the common membrane technologies of microfiltration, ultrafiltration, nanofiltration, and reverse osmosis.

59. "Near the first service connection" means at one of the twenty percent of all service connections in the entire system that are nearest the water supply treatment facility as measured by water transport time within the distribution system.

60. "Noncommunity water system" means a public water system that is not a community water system that primarily provides service to other than year-round residents. A noncommunity water system is either a "nontransient noncommunity" or "transient noncommunity" water system.

61. "Nontransient noncommunity water system" means a noncommunity water system that regularly serves at least twenty-five of the same persons over six months per year.

62. "Optimal corrosion-control treatment", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means the corrosion-control treatment that minimizes the lead and copper concentrations at users' taps while ensuring that the treatment does not cause the water system to violate any national primary drinking water regulations.

63. "Person" means an individual, corporation, company, association, partnership, municipality, or any other entity.

64. "Plant intake" means the works or structures at the head of a conduit through which water is diverted from a source (e.g., river or lake) into the treatment plant.

65. "Point of disinfectant application" means the point where the disinfectant is applied and water downstream of that point is not subject to recontamination by surface water runoff.

66. "Point-of-entry treatment device" means a treatment device applied to the drinking water entering a house or building for the purpose of reducing contaminants in the drinking water distributed throughout the house or building.

67. "Point-of-use treatment device" means a treatment device applied to a single tap used for the purpose of reducing contaminants in drinking water at that one tap.

68. "Potable water" means water free from impurities in amounts sufficient to cause disease or harmful physiological effects, with the physical, chemical, biological, or radiological quality conforming to applicable maximum permissible contaminant levels.

69. "Presedimentation" means a preliminary treatment process used to remove gravel, sand, and other particulate material from the source water through settling before the water enters the primary clarification and filtration processes in a treatment plant.

70. "Product" means any chemical or substance added to a public water system, any materials used in the manufacture of public water system components or appurtenances, or any pipe, storage tank, valve, fixture, or other materials that come in contact with water intended for use in a public water system.

71. "Public water system" means a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen service connections or regularly serves at least twenty-five individuals sixty or more days out of the

year. A public water system includes any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of the system and used primarily in connection with the system; and, any collection or pretreatment storage facilities that are not under control of the operator which are used primarily in connection with the system. A public water system does not include systems that provide water through pipes or constructed conveyances other than pipes that qualify for the exclusions set forth under section 1401(4)(B)(i) and (ii) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300f(4)(B)(i) and (ii)]. A public water system is either a "community" or a "noncommunity" water system.

72. "Repeat compliance period" means any subsequent compliance period after the initial compliance period during which public water systems must monitor for inorganic and organic chemicals excluding lead, copper, trihalomethanes, and unregulated contaminants.

73. "Residual disinfectant concentration" (C in CT calculations) means the concentration of disinfectant measured in milligrams per liter in a representative sample of water.

74. "Sampling schedule" means the frequency required for submitting drinking water samples to a certified laboratory for examination.

75. "Sanitary defect" means a defect that could provide a pathway of entry for microbial contamination into the distribution system or that is indicative of a failure or imminent failure in a barrier that is already in place.

76. "Sanitary survey" means an onsite review of the water source, facilities, equipment, operation, and maintenance of a public water system for the purpose of evaluating the adequacy of such source, facilities, equipment, operation, and maintenance for producing and distributing safe drinking water.

77. "Seasonal system" means a noncommunity water system that is not operated as a public water system on a year-round basis and starts up and shuts down at the beginning and end of each operating season.

78. "Sedimentation" means a process for removal of solids before filtration by gravity or separation.

79. "Service line sample" means a one-liter sample of water, collected in accordance with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, section 141.86(b)(3), that has been standing for at least six hours in a service line.

80. "Single-family structure", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means a building constructed as a single-family residence that is currently used either as a residence or a place of business.

81. "Slow sand filtration" means a process involving passage of raw water through a bed of sand at low velocity resulting in substantial particulate removal by physical and biological mechanisms.

82. "Small water system", for the purpose of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I only, means a water system that serves three thousand three hundred or fewer persons.

83. "Specific ultraviolet absorption" or "SUVA" means specific ultraviolet absorption at two hundred fifty-four nanometers, an indicator of the humic content of water. It is a calculated parameter obtained by dividing a sample's ultraviolet absorption at a wavelength of two hundred fifty-four nanometers in meters to the minus one by its concentration of dissolved organic carbon, the fraction of the total

organic carbon that passes through a zero point four five micrometer pore diameter filter, in milligrams per liter.

84. "Subpart H systems" means public water systems using surface water or ground water under the direct influence of surface water as a source that are subject to the requirements of title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H.

85. "Supplier of water" means any person who owns or operates a public water system.

86. "Surface water" means all water which is open to the atmosphere and subject to surface runoff.

87. "System with a single service connection" means a system which supplies drinking water to consumers with a single service line.

88. "Too numerous to count" means that the total number of bacterial colonies exceeds two hundred on a forty-seven millimeter membrane filter used for coliform detection.

89. "Total organic carbon" means total organic carbon in milligrams per liter measured using heat, oxygen, ultraviolet irradiation, chemical oxidants, or combinations of these oxidants that convert organic carbon to carbon dioxide, rounded to two significant figures.

90. "Total trihalomethanes" means the sum of the concentration in milligrams per liter of the trihalomethane compounds (trichloromethane [chloroform], dibromochloromethane, bromodichloromethane, and tribromomethane [bromoform]), rounded to two significant figures.

91. "Transient noncommunity water system" means a noncommunity water system that primarily provides service to transients.

92. "Trihalomethane" means one of the family of organic compounds, named as derivatives of methane, wherein three of the four hydrogen atoms in methane are each substituted by a halogen atom in the molecular structure.

93. "Two-stage lime softening" means a process in which chemical addition and hardness precipitation occur in each of two distinct unit clarification processes in series prior to filtration.

94. "Uncovered finished water storage facility" means a tank, reservoir, or other facility used to store water that will undergo no further treatment except residual disinfection and is open to the atmosphere.

95. "Virus" means a virus of fecal origin which is infectious to humans by waterborne transmission.

96. "Water system" means all sources of water and their surroundings and includes all structures, conducts, and appurtenances by means of which the water is collected, treated, stored, or delivered.

97. "Waterborne disease outbreak" means the significant occurrence of acute infectious illness, epidemiologically associated with the ingestion of water from a public water system which is deficient in treatment, as determined by the appropriate local or state agency.

98. "Wholesale system" means a public water system that treats source water as necessary to produce finished water and then delivers some or all of that finished water to another public water system. Delivery may be through a direct connection or through the distribution system of one or more consecutive systems.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-02, 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, §§ 68, 69

33.1-17-01-03. Coverage.

This chapter applies to all public water systems except those public water systems which meet all of the following conditions:

1. Consists only of distribution and storage facilities and does not have any collection and treatment facilities;
2. Obtains all of its water from, but is not owned or operated by, a public water system to which these regulations apply;
3. Does not sell water to any person; and
4. Is not a carrier which conveys passengers in interstate commerce.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-04. Designated responsible individuals.

The owner or operating entity of each public water system shall designate an individual, or individuals, who shall be responsible for communicating with the department in matters relating to system construction or alteration, monitoring and sampling, maintenance, operation, recordkeeping, and reporting required by these regulations. Any changes in designated individuals or assigned responsibilities shall be promptly reported to the department.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-05. Approved laboratories and analytical procedures.

All samples shall be examined by the department or by any other laboratory certified by the department for drinking water purposes, except that measurements for turbidity and free chlorine may be performed by any person deemed qualified by the department. Turbidity measurements shall be made by a nephelometric method approved by the department. All methods of sample preservation and analyses shall be as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03, 61-28.1-07; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-06. Maximum contaminant levels, action levels, treatment technique requirements, and maximum residual disinfectant levels.

1. **Inorganic chemicals.** The maximum contaminant levels, action levels, and treatment technique requirements for inorganic chemical contaminants excluding disinfection byproducts shall be as

prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations, part 141 subpart G.

MAXIMUM

CONTAMINANT	CONTAMINANT LEVEL	ACTION LEVEL	TREATMENT
	MILLIGRAM(S)	MILLIGRAM(S)	TECHNIQUE
	PER LITER	PER LITER	REQUIREMENTS
Antimony	0.006		
Arsenic	0.010		
Asbestos	7 million fibers per liter (longer than ten micrometers)		
Barium	2		
Beryllium	0.004		
Cadmium	0.005		
Chromium	0.1		
Copper			The 90 th percentile level Source water and corrosion must be less than or control treatment equal to 1.3
Cyanide (as free cyanide)	0.2		
Fluoride	4.0		
Lead			The 90 th percentile level Source water and corrosion must be less than or control treatment, public equal to 0.015 education, and lead service line replacement
Mercury	0.002		
Nickel	0.1		
Nitrate (as N)	10		
Nitrite (as N)	1		
Selenium	0.05		
Thallium	0.002		
Total Nitrate and Nitrite (as N)	10		

At the discretion of the department, nitrate levels not to exceed twenty milligrams per liter may be allowed in a noncommunity water system if the supplier of water demonstrates to the satisfaction of the department that:

- a. Such water will not be available to children under six months of age;
- b. There will be continuous posting of the fact that nitrate levels exceed ten milligrams per liter and the potential health effect of exposure;
- c. Local and state public health authorities will be notified annually of nitrate levels that exceed ten milligrams per liter; and
- d. No adverse health effects shall result.

2. **Organic chemicals.** The maximum contaminant levels and treatment technique requirements for organic chemical contaminants excluding disinfection byproducts and disinfection byproduct precursors shall be as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart G.

CONTAMINANT	MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL MILLIGRAM(S) PER LITER	TREATMENT TECHNIQUE REQUIREMENTS
Nonvolatile Synthetic Organic Chemicals:		
Acrylamide		The combination (or product) of dose and monomer level may not exceed 0.05 percent dosed at 1 part per million (or equivalent)
Alachlor	0.002	
Atrazine	0.003	
Benzo (a) pyrene	0.0002	
Carbofuran	0.04	
Chlordane	0.002	
Dalapon	0.2	
Dibromochloropropane (DBCP)	0.0002	
Di (2-ethylhexyl) adipate	0.4	
Di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate	0.006	
Dinoseb	0.007	
Diquat	0.02	
Endothall	0.1	
Endrin	0.002	
Epichlorohydrin		The combination (or product) of dose and monomer level may not exceed 0.01 percent dosed at 20 parts per million (or equivalent)
Ethylene dibromide (EDB)	0.00005	

Glyphosate	0.7
Heptachlor	0.0004
Heptachlor epoxide	0.0002
Hexachlorobenzene	0.001
Hexachlorocyclopentadiene	0.05
Lindane	0.0002
Methoxychlor	0.04
Oxamyl (Vydate)	0.2
Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)	0.0005
Pentachlorophenol	0.001
Picloram	0.5
Simazine	0.004
Toxaphene	0.003
2,3,7,8-TCDD (Dioxin)	0.00000003
2,4-D	0.07
2,4,5-TP Silvex	0.05
Volatile Synthetic Organic Chemicals:	
Benzene	0.005
Carbon tetrachloride	0.005
p-Dichlorobenzene	0.075
o-Dichlorobenzene	0.6
1,2-Dichloroethane	0.005
1,1-Dichloroethylene	0.007
cis-1,2-Dichloroethylene	0.07
trans-1,2-Dichloroethylene	0.1
Dichloromethane	0.005
1,2-Dichloropropane	0.005
Ethylbenzene	0.7
Monochlorobenzene	0.1
Styrene	0.1
Tetrachloroethylene	0.005
Toluene	1
1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene	0.07
1,1,1-Trichloroethane	0.2
1,1,2-Trichloroethane	0.005
Trichloroethylene	0.005
Vinyl chloride	0.002

3. **Filtration and disinfection treatment.**

a. General requirements. All subpart H systems that utilize surface water sources shall provide filtration and disinfection treatment. All subpart H systems that utilize ground water sources deemed by the department to be under the direct influence of surface water shall provide disinfection treatment and shall either comply with filtration avoidance criteria or provide filtration treatment.

b. Treatment technique requirements. The department hereby identifies filtration and disinfection as treatment techniques to protect against the potential adverse health effects of exposure to giardia lamblia, cryptosporidium, legionella, viruses, heterotrophic plate count bacteria, and turbidity. The treatment techniques apply only to subpart H systems. Subpart H systems that serve ten thousand or more persons shall be deemed to be in compliance with the treatment techniques if the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts H and P, are met. Subpart H systems that serve fewer than ten thousand persons shall be deemed to be in compliance with the treatment techniques if the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H, are met.

4. **Radioactivity.** The maximum contaminant levels for radioactivity are as follows:

CONTAMINANT	MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL (MCL)
Combined radium-226 and radium-228	5 picocuries per liter (pCi/L)
Gross alpha particle activity (including radon and uranium)	15 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) radium-226, but excluding
Uranium	30 micrograms per liter (ug/L)

5. **Microbiological.** The treatment technique triggers, treatment technique violations, E. coli maximum contaminant level violations, and monitoring violations are as follows:

a. Treatment technique triggers. A system must conduct assessments, in accordance with the requirements under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y after exceeding the following treatment technique triggers:

(1) Level 1 treatment technique triggers.

- (a) A system, which collects forty or more samples per month, exceeds 5.0 percent total coliform-positive samples per month.
- (b) A system, which collects less than forty samples per month, has two or more total coliform-positive samples per month.
- (c) A system fails to take all required repeat samples following a total coliform-positive sample.

(2) Level 2 treatment technique triggers.

- (a) A system incurs an E. coli maximum contaminant level violation, as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.
 - (b) A system has a second level 1 trigger, as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, within a rolling twelve-month period unless the department has determined why the samples that caused the first level 1 treatment technique trigger were total coliform positive and has determined that the system has corrected the problem.
- b. Treatment technique violations. A system has a treatment technique violation when any of the following conditions occur:
 - (1) A system exceeds a treatment technique trigger and then fails to conduct the required assessment or corrective actions within the required timeframe as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.
 - (2) A seasonal system fails to complete a state-approved start-up procedure before serving water to the public.
- c. E. coli maximum contaminant level violations. A system is in violation of the maximum contaminant level for E. coli when any of the following conditions occur:
 - (1) A system has an E. coli-positive repeat sample following a total coliform-positive routine sample.
 - (2) A system has a total coliform-positive repeat sample following an E. coli-positive routine sample.
 - (3) A system fails to take all required repeat samples following an E. coli-positive routine sample.
 - (4) A system fails to analyze for E. coli bacteria when any repeat sample tests positive for total coliform bacteria.
- d. Monitoring violations. A system incurs a monitoring violation if any of the following conditions occur:
 - (1) A system fails to take every required routine sample in a compliance period.
 - (2) A system fails to analyze for E. coli following a total coliform-positive routine sample.
- e. The department hereby identifies the following as the best technology, treatment techniques, or other means generally available for achieving compliance with the treatment technique triggers and E. coli maximum contaminant level: protection of wells from contamination by appropriate placement and construction; maintenance of a disinfection residual throughout the distribution system; proper maintenance of the distribution system including appropriate pipe replacement and repair procedures, cross-connection control programs, main flushing programs, proper operation and maintenance of storage tanks and reservoirs, and continual maintenance of a positive water pressure in all parts of the distribution system; filtration and disinfection of surface water and disinfection of ground

water using strong oxidants such as chlorine, chlorine dioxide, or ozone; and the development and implementation of a department-approved wellhead protection program.

6. **Disinfectants.** The maximum residual disinfectant levels for disinfectants are as follows:

DISINFECTANT	MAXIMUM RESIDUAL DISINFECTANT LEVEL IN MILLIGRAMS PER LITER
Chlorine	4.0 as free chlorine
Chloramines	4.0 as combined chlorine
Chlorine dioxide	0.8 as chlorine dioxide

The department identifies the following as the best technology, treatment techniques, or other means available for achieving compliance with the maximum residual disinfectant levels: control of treatment processes to reduce disinfectant demand and control of disinfection treatment processes to reduce disinfectant levels.

7. **Disinfection byproducts.** The maximum contaminant levels for total trihalomethanes, haloacetic acids five, bromate, and chlorite are as follows:

DISINFECTION BYPRODUCT	MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL IN MILLIGRAMS PER LITER
Total trihalomethanes	0.080
Haloacetic acids five	0.060
Bromate	0.010
Chlorite	1.0

The department identifies the following as the best technology, treatment techniques, or other means available for achieving compliance with the maximum contaminant level for total trihalomethanes and the maximum contaminant levels for haloacetic acids five, bromate, and chlorite: for total trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids five, enhanced coagulation, enhanced softening, or granular activated carbon ten with chlorine as the primary and residual disinfectant; for bromate, control of the ozone treatment process to reduce production of bromate; and for chlorite, control of treatment processes to reduce disinfectant demand and control of disinfection treatment processes to reduce disinfectant levels. All best available technology and compliance shall be prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.64.

8. **Disinfection byproduct precursors.** The department hereby identifies enhanced coagulation and enhanced softening as treatment techniques to control the level of disinfection byproduct precursors in drinking water treatment and distribution systems. The treatment techniques apply only to subpart H community and nontransient noncommunity water systems that use conventional treatment. Such systems shall be deemed to be in compliance with the treatment techniques if the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart L, are met.

9. **Confirmation sampling.** The department may require confirmation samples and average confirmation sample results with initial sample results to determine compliance. At the discretion of the department, sample results due to obvious monitoring errors may be deleted prior to determining compliance.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-07. Inorganic chemical sampling and monitoring requirements.

1. Sampling frequency for community and nontransient noncommunity water systems.
 - a. Inorganics excluding lead and copper. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall conduct monitoring to determine compliance with the maximum contaminant levels for the inorganic chemicals, excluding lead and copper, as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart C.
 - b. Lead and copper. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall comply with the monitoring and treatment technique requirements for lead and copper set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I.
 - c. Unregulated contaminants. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall monitor for sulfate as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart E.
 - d. Monitoring waivers. With the exception of arsenic, copper, lead, nitrate, and nitrite, the department may grant community and nontransient noncommunity water systems waivers from the monitoring requirements for the inorganic chemicals as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts C and E. The department may issue monitoring waivers only if the conditions set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142, subpart B, are fully met.
2. Sampling frequency for transient noncommunity water systems. Transient noncommunity water systems shall conduct monitoring to determine compliance with the maximum contaminant levels for nitrate and nitrite as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart C.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-08. Organic chemical sampling and monitoring requirements.

1. **Volatile and nonvolatile synthetic organic chemicals.**
 - a. Coverage. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall conduct monitoring to determine compliance with the maximum contaminant levels for the volatile and nonvolatile synthetic organic chemicals.
 - b. Sampling frequency. The number and frequency of samples shall be as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart C.
 - c. Compliance. Compliance for each point that is sampled shall be prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart C.
2. **Unregulated contaminants.**

- a. Coverage. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall monitor for unregulated organic contaminants.
- b. Monitoring requirements. Systems shall monitor for unregulated organic contaminants as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart E.

3. **Monitoring waivers.** With the exception of acrylamide and epichlorohydrin, the department may grant community and nontransient noncommunity water systems waivers from the monitoring requirements for the organic chemicals as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart C. The department may issue waivers only if the conditions set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142, subpart B, are fully met.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-08.1. Disinfectants, disinfectant residuals, disinfection byproducts, and disinfection byproduct precursors.

Public water systems shall conduct monitoring to determine compliance with maximum contaminant levels, maximum residual disinfectant levels, and treatment technique requirements for disinfectants, disinfectant residuals, disinfection byproducts, and disinfection byproduct precursors as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts L and V. Public water systems shall also comply with the requirements for conducting an initial distribution system evaluation as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart U.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-09. Filtration and disinfection treatment sampling and monitoring requirements.

1. Coverage. All subpart H systems shall conduct monitoring to determine compliance with the treatment technique requirements for filtration and disinfection.
2. Systems utilizing surface water sources. All subpart H systems that utilize surface water sources shall comply with the turbidity and residual disinfectant concentration sampling and monitoring requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. Those systems serving ten thousand or more persons shall also comply with the disinfection profiling and benchmarking requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P. Those systems that serve ten thousand or more persons and provide conventional filtration treatment or direct filtration shall also comply with the individual filter sampling and monitoring requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P. Those systems serving fewer than ten thousand persons shall also comply with the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart T and the Federal Register volume 69, number 124, Tuesday, June 29, 2004, pages 38850-38857.
3. Systems utilizing ground water sources under the direct influence of surface water. The following sampling and monitoring requirements apply to subpart H systems that utilize ground water sources deemed by the department to be under the direct influence of surface water:

a. All systems that provide filtration treatment shall comply with the turbidity and residual disinfectant concentration sampling and monitoring requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. Those systems serving ten thousand or more persons shall also comply with the disinfection profiling and benchmarking requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P. Those systems that serve ten thousand or more persons and provide conventional filtration treatment or direct filtration shall also comply with the individual filter sampling and monitoring requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P. Those systems serving fewer than ten thousand persons shall also comply with the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart T and the Federal Register volume 69, number 124, Tuesday, June 29, 2004, pages 38850-38857.

b. All systems that do not provide filtration treatment shall comply with the filtration avoidance criteria and applicable disinfection sampling and monitoring requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. Those systems serving ten thousand or more persons shall also comply with the disinfection profiling and benchmarking requirements and the filtration avoidance criteria set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart P. Those systems serving fewer than ten thousand persons shall also comply with the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart T and the Federal Register volume 69, number 124, Tuesday, June 29, 2004, pages 38850-38857.

4. Recycle provisions. All subpart H systems that utilize conventional filtration or direct filtration treatment and that recycle spent filter backwash water, thickener supernatant, or liquids from dewatering processes must meet the requirements as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.76, subpart H.

5. Enhanced treatment for cryptosporidium. All public water systems that utilize a surface water source or a ground water source under the direct influence of surface water shall meet the treatment technique requirements for cryptosporidium set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart W. These requirements are in addition to requirements found in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts H, P, and T.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-10. Radioactivity monitoring and compliance.

Community water systems shall sample for gross alpha particle activity, radium-226, radium-228, and uranium. Monitoring frequency and compliance shall be as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations parts 141.26 and 141.66.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-11. Microbiological sampling and monitoring requirements.

1. Monitoring requirements.

a. General. The provisions set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, include both the maximum contaminant level and treatment technique requirements for all public water systems.

b. Sample siting plans. All total coliform samples must be collected according to a written sample siting plan. Systems must develop a written sample siting plan that identifies the sample collection schedule and sampling sites that are representative of the water throughout the distribution system. This plan must be submitted to the department. The plan is subject to department review and revisions. Routine, repeat, and any sampling sites necessary to meet the requirements specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts S and Y must be shown on the plan.

(1) The routine samples must be collected at regular time intervals throughout the month except that systems using ground water and serving four thousand nine hundred people or less may collect all of the required samples on a single day if the samples are collected from different sites.

(2) Systems must take at least the minimum number of required samples even if the system has had an E. coli maximum contaminant level violation or has exceeded the coliform treatment technique triggers as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.

(3) Systems may take more than the minimum number of required routine samples and these results must be used to determine whether a coliform treatment technique trigger has been exceeded as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. All routine and repeat total coliform samples must be taken in accordance with the existing sample siting plan.

(4) Repeat monitoring locations must be identified in the sample siting plan. The repeat samples must be collected at the following locations, unless the provisions of paragraphs (b)(5)(a) or (b)(5)(b) are met:

(a) At least one repeat sample must be collected from the original sampling site that was total coliform-positive.

(b) At least one repeat sample must be collected from a site within five service connections upstream of the original total coliform-positive sampling site.

(c) At least one repeat sample must be collected from a site within five service connections downstream of the original total coliform-positive sampling site.

(5) If the original total coliform-positive sampling site is at or one away from the end of the distribution system the department may waive the requirement to collect at least

one repeat sample upstream or downstream of the original total coliform-positive sampling site. The system must still take all required repeat samples. However, the department may allow alternate sampling locations other than the upstream or downstream sites. Systems required to conduct triggered source water monitoring as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart S, must take ground water source samples in addition to the required repeat sampling.

(a) Systems may elect to identify alternative fixed repeat locations or criteria for selecting repeat sampling sites on a case-by-case basis in a standard operating procedure. These repeat monitoring locations should be indicative of a pathway for contamination of the distribution system. The department shall review the alternative repeat monitoring locations to verify and determine the extent of potential contamination of the distribution system at the specific alternative repeat monitoring location. The department shall review the alternative repeat monitoring locations as needed.

(b) Ground water systems which serve one thousand or fewer persons may propose repeat sampling locations that differentiate potential source water and distribution system contamination, such as by sampling at entry points to the distribution system. A ground water system with a single well required to conduct triggered source water monitoring may, with the approval of the department, take one of its repeat samples at the triggered source water monitoring location as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a), subpart S. The system must demonstrate, to the department's satisfaction, the sample siting plan remains representative of water quality in the distribution system. If approved by the department, the system may use that sample result to meet the monitoring requirements as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a), subpart S and under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.853(a)(5)(ii), subpart Y.

[1] If a repeat sample is taken at a triggered source water monitoring location and is positive for E. coli bacteria, the system has violated the E. coli maximum contaminant level and must also comply with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a)(3), subpart S. If a system takes more than one repeat sample at the triggered source water monitoring location, the system may reduce the number of additional source water samples required under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a)(3), subpart S by the number of repeat samples taken at that location that were not positive for E. coli bacteria.

[2] If more than one repeat sample is taken at a triggered source water monitoring location under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a), subpart S and more than one repeat sample is positive for E. coli bacteria, the system has violated the E. coli maximum contaminant level and must also comply with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.403(a)(1), subpart S.

[3] If all repeat samples taken at a triggered source water monitoring location are E. coli-negative and a repeat sample that is taken at a monitoring location other than the triggered source water monitoring location is E. coli-positive, the system has violated the E. coli maximum contaminant level, but is not required to comply with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.402(a)(3), subpart S.

(6) Any alternative repeat monitoring locations or triggered source water monitoring locations as specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y and under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart S, will be reviewed and approved by the department. When using these sites, the system must demonstrate that the sample siting plan remains representative of the water quality in the distribution system. It may be

determined that monitoring at the entry point to the distribution system, such as for undisinfected ground water systems, is an effective way to differentiate between potential source water and distribution system problems.

c. Special purpose samples. Special purpose samples, such as those taken to determine whether disinfection practices following pipe placement, replacement, or repair are sufficient, and samples invalidated by the department or laboratory, must not be used to determine whether the coliform treatment technique trigger has been exceeded as specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. Repeat samples taken in accordance with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y are not considered special purpose samples and must be used to determine whether the coliform treatment technique trigger has been exceeded.

d. Invalidation of total coliform samples. Any total coliform-positive samples invalidated under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, do not count towards meeting the minimum monitoring requirements.

The department may invalidate a total coliform-positive sample only if one of the following conditions is met:

(1)The laboratory establishes the total coliform-positive result was caused by improper sample analysis.

(2)The department determines, based upon the results of the repeat samples as required under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, that the total coliform-positive sample resulted from a domestic or other nondistribution system problem. This provision applies only to systems that have more than one service connection and only if:

(a) All repeat samples collected at the same site as the original total coliform-positive sample are also total coliform-positive; and

(b) All repeat samples collected at a location other than the original total coliform-positive sample site are total coliform-negative.

(3)The department may determine that substantial grounds exist to indicate that the total coliform-positive result was due to a circumstance or condition not reflective of the water quality in the distribution system. The system must still collect all repeat samples and use them to determine whether a coliform treatment technique trigger has been exceeded as specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. To invalidate a total coliform-positive sample under this provision, the decision and supporting paperwork must be documented in writing and approved and signed by the supervisor of the state official who recommended the decision. The department shall make this document available to the environmental protection agency and to the public. The written documentation must state the specific cause of the total coliform-positive sample and what action the system has or will take to correct the problem. Invalidation may not be based solely on the grounds that all repeat samples are total coliform-negative.

A laboratory must invalidate a total coliform sample, unless total coliforms are detected, only if one of the following conditions is met:

- (1)The sample produces a turbid culture in the absence of gas production using an analytical technique where gas formation is examined, such as the multiple-tube fermentation technique;
- (2)The sample produces a turbid culture in the absence of an acid reaction in the presence-absence coliform test; or
- (3)The sample exhibits confluent growth or produces colonies too numerous to count with an analytical technique using a membrane filter, such as membrane filter technique.

Systems must collect a replacement sample for total coliform bacteria analysis from the same location as the original sample if the original sample is invalidated by the department or laboratory. Replacement samples must be collected within twenty-four hours of notification by the department or laboratory and submitted for total coliform analysis. The system must continue to resample within twenty-four hours and have the sample analyzed for total coliforms until a valid result is obtained. The department may waive the twenty-four hour time limit on a case-by-case basis.

Criteria the department may implement for waiving the twenty-four hour sampling time frame includes the following:

- (1)Laboratory closures; or
- (2)Mail delivery issues.

2. **Monitoring frequency.**

a. General. All public water systems shall sample for total coliform bacteria in each calendar month that the system provides water to the public. The number of samples required must be determined by the population served by the system. The population range of twenty-five to one thousand includes public water systems which have at least fifteen service connections, but that serve less than twenty-five persons.

POPULATION SERVED	MINIMUM NUMBER OF SAMPLES PER MONTH
25 to 1,000	1
1,001 to 2,500	2
2,501 to 3,300	3
3,301 to 4,100	4
4,101 to 4,900	5
4,901 to 5,800	6
5,801 to 6,700	7
6,701 to 7,600	8
7,601 to 8,500	9
8,501 to 12,900	10

12,901 to 17,200	15
17,201 to 21,500	20
21,501 to 25,000	25
25,001 to 33,000	30
33,001 to 41,000	40
41,001 to 50,000	50
50,001 to 59,000	60
59,001 to 70,000	70
70,001 to 83,000	80
83,001 to 96,000	90
96,001 to 130,000	100
130,001 to 220,000	120
220,001 to 320,000	150
320,001 to 450,000	180
450,001 to 600,000	210
600,001 to 780,000	240
780,001 to 970,000	270
970,001 to 1,230,000	300
1,230,001 to 1,520,000	330
1,520,001 to 1,850,000	360
1,850,001 to 2,270,000	390
2,270,001 to 3,020,000	420
3,020,001 to 3,960,000	450
3,960,001 or more	480

Following any total coliform-positive sample taken, systems must comply with the repeat monitoring requirements and E. coli analytical requirements as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.

As set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, once all routine and repeat monitoring for a calendar month has been completed, either the system or the department must determine whether any coliform treatment technique triggers have been exceeded. The system must complete any assessments associated to the triggers.

b. Seasonal noncommunity water systems. All seasonal noncommunity water systems, including systems that keep the distribution system pressurized year-round must complete a state-approved start-up procedure. Start-up procedures may include source and distribution system disinfection and collection and analysis of water samples for total coliform bacteria. The system must certify back to the department, within fourteen days of opening, the start-up procedure was completed.

c. Unfiltered subpart H systems. At the discretion of the department, systems that use surface water or ground water under the direct influence of surface water that do not filter in compliance with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts H, P, T, and W must collect at least one sample for total coliform bacteria analysis near the first service connection each day that the turbidity level of the source water exceeds one nephelometric turbidity unit as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. The sample must be collected within twenty-four hours of the first exceedance unless the department determines that the system, due to logistical or other problems beyond its control, cannot have the sample analyzed within thirty hours of collection. The system must identify an alternative sample collection schedule. The sample result must be included in determining whether the coliform treatment technique trigger has been exceeded as specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.

3. Repeat monitoring and E. coli requirements.

- a. Repeat monitoring. If a routine sample collected under the requirements specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y is total coliform-positive, a system must collect no fewer than a set of three repeat samples for total coliform bacteria analysis for each total coliform-positive routine sample. The system must collect the set of repeat samples within twenty-four hours of being notified by the department or the laboratory of the positive total coliform sample. The department may extend the twenty-four hour time limit on a case-by-case basis if the system has a logistical problem or other problems beyond the system's control. The department may choose criteria for the system to use in lieu of the case-by-case decisions. The department shall specify to the system the time frame for collecting the repeat samples. The department may not waive the requirement to collect repeat samples under these provisions.

All repeat samples must be collected on the same day except that the department may allow systems with a single service connection to:

- (1) Collect the required set of repeat samples over a three-day period; or
- (2) Collect a larger volume repeat sample in one or more sample containers of any size as long as the total volume collected is at least three hundred milliliters.

If one or more repeat samples in the set of required repeat samples is total coliform-positive, an additional set of repeat samples must be collected, within twenty-four hours unless the department extends the twenty-four hour time frame, meeting the requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. Additional sets of repeat samples must be collected until no total coliform bacteria are detected in one complete set or the department determines a coliform treatment technique trigger as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, has been exceeded as a result of a repeat sample being total coliform-positive. If a coliform treatment technique trigger, as identified in this provision, has been exceeded as a result of a routine sample being total coliform-positive, the system only needs to conduct one round of repeat monitoring for each total coliform-positive routine sample. The system shall report to the department and notify the public when an E. coli maximum contaminant level is exceeded.

After a system collects a routine sample and before it learns the results of that sample, if the system collects another routine sample from within five adjacent service connections of the

first sample, and the first sample, after analysis, is found to contain total coliform bacteria, the system may count the subsequent sample as a repeat sample instead of a routine sample.

All routine and repeat results taken under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y, and not invalidated by the department or laboratory, must be used to determine whether a coliform treatment technique trigger, under the provision stated above, has been exceeded.

- b. E. coli testing. A system must analyze each total coliform-positive routine or repeat sample for E. coli bacteria. The system must notify the department by the end of the business day or by the end of the next business day if the department offices are closed of a positive E. coli bacteria result. The department or laboratory will not forgo E. coli testing on any total coliform-positive bacteria sample.

4. Assessment requirements.

- a. Level 1 assessment. A level 1 assessment must be performed as soon as possible when a system exceeds a level 1 treatment technique trigger as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.

A level 1 assessment must be conducted by the water system operator or by a consultation, such as a phone interview or onsite visit, with the department.

When completing the level 1 assessment, the system must describe sanitary defects found, what corrective actions were completed, the proposed time frame for any remaining corrective actions that need to be addressed, and any other department directives that may be required. The system may note on the assessment form that no sanitary defects were identified.

Within thirty days after learning of a treatment technique trigger exceedance, the system must submit a completed level 1 assessment form to the department. The department may extend the thirty-day time frame on a case-by-case basis.

The department shall review the completed level 1 assessment and determine if the assessment is sufficient. The assessment form must include proposed time frames for any corrective actions not completed. If the department determines the level 1 assessment not to be sufficient, the department shall consult with the system. If the department requires any revisions to the level 1 assessment, the system must submit, to the department, a revised level 1 assessment form on an agreed-upon schedule that will not exceed thirty days from the date of the consultation.

The department shall review the completed assessment form and determine if the cause of the level 1 assessment was found. If the cause of the level 1 assessment was found, the system must describe how the problem was corrected. The department shall determine on a case-by-case basis the schedule for any corrective actions that need to be addressed.

- b. Level 2 assessment. A level 2 assessment must be performed as soon as possible when a system exceeds a level 2 treatment technique trigger as specified in title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. The system must comply with any expedited actions or additional actions required by the department in the case of an E. coli maximum contaminant level violation. The department shall require a level 2 assessment be completed before a boil

water order is lifted. Only the department may perform a level 2 assessment as a result of an E. coli maximum contaminant level violation.

A level 2 assessment will be conducted by the department or department-approved assessors. A system may conduct a level 2 assessment if the system has personnel with the certification or qualifications as specified by the department. A system must have personnel with an operator certification level one level higher than the water system being evaluated.

When completing the level 2 assessment, the system must describe sanitary defects found, what corrective actions were completed, the proposed time frame for any remaining corrective actions that need to be addressed, and any other department directives that may be required. The system may note on the assessment form that no sanitary defects were identified.

Within thirty days after learning of a treatment technique trigger exceedance, the system must submit a completed level 2 assessment form to the department. The department may extend the thirty-day time frame on a case-by-case basis.

The department shall review the completed level 2 assessment and determine if the assessment is sufficient. The assessment form must include proposed time frames for any corrective actions not completed. If the department determines the level 2 assessment not to be sufficient, the department shall consult with the system. If the department requires any revisions to the level 2 assessment, the system must submit, to the department, a revised level 2 assessment form on an agreed-upon schedule that does not exceed thirty days from the date of the consultation.

The department shall review the completed assessment form and determine if the cause of the level 2 assessment was found. If the cause of the level 2 assessment was found, the system must describe how the problem was corrected. The department shall determine on a case-by-case basis the schedule for any corrective actions that need to be addressed.

c. Corrective actions. A system must correct any sanitary defects identified in either the level 1 or the level 2 assessment as specified under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. If any corrective actions cannot be corrected by the time the level 1 or the level 2 assessment form is required to be submitted to the department, the system must complete the corrective action(s) in accordance with an approved time frame decided upon during the consultation between the system and the department. The system must notify the department when each corrective action is completed.

d. Consultation. The department or the system may at any time during the assessment or corrective action phase request a consultation with the other entity to determine the appropriate actions that need to be taken. The system may consult with the department on all relevant information that may affect its ability to complete the corrective action, a proposed time frame scheduled for a corrective action, or any other department directives.

5. Sanitary surveys.

a. Frequency. All surface water and ground water under the direct influence of surface water systems shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequently than once every year. All systems purchasing surface water or ground water under the direct influence of surface water shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequently than once every three years.

Community ground water systems, including systems purchasing ground water, that are not providing at least four-log treatment of viruses and have not been determined by the department to exhibit outstanding performance shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequently than once every three years. Community ground water systems, including systems purchasing ground water, which are providing at least four-log treatment of viruses or which have been determined by the department to exhibit outstanding performance shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequently than once every five years.

Noncommunity ground water systems, including systems purchasing ground water, which are not providing at least four-log treatment of viruses shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequently than once every three years. Noncommunity ground water systems, including systems purchasing ground water, that are providing at least four-log treatment of viruses shall undergo a sanitary survey no less frequent than once every five years.

The department will allow sanitary surveys to be phased. The components of the phased sanitary survey must be completed within the established frequency.

b. Responsibilities. Sanitary surveys must be performed by the department or an agent approved by the department. Information collected on sources of contamination within a delineated wellhead protection area during the development and implementation of an approved wellhead protection program, if available, must be considered when conducting sanitary surveys.

The department shall review the sanitary surveys for systems serving one thousand persons or less to determine if the system is taking the proper number of monthly total coliform bacteria samples.

Public water systems are responsible for ensuring that the required sanitary surveys are conducted.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-12. Monitoring of consecutive public water systems.

When a public water system supplies water to one or more other public water systems, the department may modify the monitoring requirements imposed to the extent that the interconnection of the systems justifies treating them as a single system for monitoring purposes. Any modified monitoring shall be conducted pursuant to a schedule specified by the department.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-13. Public notification.

All public water systems are required to notify the public they serve when they fail to comply with the requirements of the national primary drinking water regulations (NPDWRs), fail to comply with the requirements of any schedule prescribed pursuant to a variance or exemption, or incur other situations posing

a risk to public health. Owners and operators must follow the form, manner, frequency, and content of a public notice as prescribed by the department and set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Q.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-13.1. Consumer confidence reports.

1. **Coverage and general requirements.** Community water systems shall deliver an annual consumer confidence report to all billing units or service connections provided drinking water by the system. The report shall contain information on the quality of the drinking water delivered by the system and characterize risks from exposure to contaminants detected in the drinking water. For the purpose of the report, detected means at or above the levels set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart O.

2. **Effective dates.** Existing community water systems shall deliver annual reports by July first of each year. Annual reports shall contain information collected by December thirty-first of the previous calendar year.

New community water systems shall deliver the first report by July first of the year after its first full calendar year in operation and subsequent reports by July first of each year. Community water systems that sell water to other community water systems shall provide applicable information to the buyer systems as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart O.

3. **Content.** Each report shall contain the information set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart O.

4. **Report delivery.** Community water systems shall comply with the report delivery requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart O.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-14. Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

1. **Reporting requirements for systems.** Except when a shorter reporting period is specified, the system shall report to the department the result of any test, measurement, or analysis required within the first ten days following the month in which the results are received or the first ten days following the end of the required monitoring period as stipulated by the department, whichever of these is shorter.

The system shall notify the department within forty-eight hours of the failure to comply with any primary drinking water regulations including failure to comply with monitoring requirements, except that failure to comply with the maximum contaminant levels for total coliform bacteria must be reported to the department no later than the end of the next business day after the system learns of the violation.

Community water systems required to comply with title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart G shall report the results of all analyses to the department within thirty days of the system's receipt of the results. Subpart H systems shall comply with the reporting requirements for filtration and disinfection treatment set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts H, P, T, and W. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall comply with the reporting requirements for lead and copper set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I. Community, nontransient noncommunity, and transient noncommunity water systems using chlorine dioxide shall comply with the applicable reporting requirements for disinfectants, disinfection byproducts, and disinfection byproduct precursors set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts L, U, and V. Community, nontransient noncommunity, and transient noncommunity water systems shall comply with the applicable reporting requirements for total coliform bacteria set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y.

The system is not required to report analytical results to the department in cases when the department performed the analysis.

Within ten days of completing the public notification requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Q for the initial public notice and any repeat notices, public water systems must submit to the department a certification that the system has fully complied with the public notification regulations. The public water system must include with this certification a representative copy of each type of notice distributed, published, posted, and made available to persons served by the system and to the media.

The system shall submit to the department, within the time stated in the request, copies of any records required to be maintained by the department or copies of any documents then in existence which the department is entitled to inspect under the provisions of state law.

2. Reporting requirements for the department. The department shall comply with the applicable reporting requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142.15.

3. Recordkeeping requirements for systems. Subpart H systems shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements for filtration and disinfection treatment set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts H, P, T, and W. Community and nontransient noncommunity water systems shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements for lead and copper set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart I. Community, nontransient noncommunity, and transient noncommunity water systems using chlorine dioxide shall comply with the applicable recordkeeping requirements for disinfectants, disinfection byproducts, and disinfection byproduct precursors set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subparts L, U, and V. Community, nontransient noncommunity, and transient noncommunity water systems shall comply with the applicable recordkeeping requirements for total coliform bacteria set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Y. Community water systems shall retain copies of consumer confidence reports for no less than three years.

All public water systems shall retain on their premises or at a convenient location near their premises, the following additional records to document compliance with the remaining provisions of this chapter:

- a. Bacteriological and chemical analyses. Records of bacteriological analyses and turbidity analyses shall be kept for not less than five years. Records of chemical analyses shall be kept for not less than ten years. Actual laboratory reports may be kept, or data may be transferred to tabular summaries, provided that the following information is included:
- (1)The date, place, and time of sampling and the name of the person who collected the sample;
 - (2)Identification of the sample as to whether it was a routine distribution system sample, check sample, or raw or other special purpose sample;
 - (3)Date of analysis;
 - (4)Laboratory and person responsible for performing analysis;
 - (5)The analytical technique or method used; and
 - (6)The result of the analysis.
- b. Corrective actions taken. Records of action taken by the system to correct violations shall be kept for a period of not less than three years after the last action taken with respect to the particular violation involved. Assessment forms and documentation showing a corrective action, as a result of an assessment, was completed must be kept for a period of not less than five years after completion of the assessment or corrective action.
- c. Reports and communications. Copies of any written reports, summaries, or communications relating to sanitary surveys of the system conducted by the system itself, by a private consultant, or by any local, state, or federal agency, shall be kept for a period not less than ten years after completion of the sanitary survey involved.
- d. Variances and exemptions. Records concerning a variance or exemption granted to the system shall be kept for a period ending not less than five years following the expiration of such variance or exemption.
- e. Public notices and certifications. Copies of public notices issued pursuant to title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart Q and certifications made to the department pursuant to title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141.31 must be kept for three years after issuance.
- f. Copies of monitoring plans developed pursuant to this part shall be kept for the same period of time as the records of analyses taken under the plan are required to be kept under subdivision a, except as specified elsewhere in this part.

4. **Recordkeeping requirements for the department.** The department shall comply with the applicable recordkeeping requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142.14.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03, 61-28.1-05; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-15. Variances and exemptions.

1. **General authority and limitations.** The department may grant a variance to a public water system from any treatment technique requirement except the treatment technique requirements for filtration and disinfection set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H. The department may grant an exemption to a public water system from any treatment technique requirement except the disinfection treatment requirements set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart H.

The department may grant a variance or an exemption to a public water system from any maximum contaminant level except the maximum contaminant level for E. coli bacteria.

2. **Variances.** Variances for public water systems serving ten thousand or more persons shall comply with section 1415(a) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-4(a)]. Variances for public water systems serving fewer than ten thousand persons shall comply with one of the following: section 1415(a) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-4(a)]; or section 1415(e) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-4(e)] and title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142, subpart K.

In granting variances pursuant to section 1415(a) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-4(a)], the department identifies as best technology, treatment techniques, or other means generally available for achieving compliance with the maximum contaminant levels and treatment technique requirements those set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142, subpart G. In granting variances pursuant to section 1415(e) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-4(e)], the department identifies as acceptable technologies those established under section 1412(b)(15) of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-1(b)(15)].

3. **Exemptions.** Exemptions for public water systems shall comply with section 1416 of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act [42 U.S.C. 300g-5] and title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 142, subpart G.

4. **Procedures.** Actions to consider a variance or exemption may be initiated by the department or by a public water system through a written request to the department. The department shall act on any written variance or exemption request submitted by a public water system within ninety days of receipt of the request. The department shall provide notice and opportunity for a public hearing before granting any variance and before prescribing a compliance schedule for any variance or exemption.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03, 61-28.1-05; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-16. Siting.

All new, altered, or expanded public water systems including wells and treatment and storage facilities necessary for the continuous operation of the system shall be located so as to:

1. Minimize potential breakdown as a result of floods, fires, or other disasters;
2. Except for intake structures, not be within the floodplain of a one hundred-year flood;
3. Prevent contamination of the water supply by existing sources of pollution; and

4. Provide sufficient property for water supply facilities to allow proper operation, maintenance, replacement, and storage of system components.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-04

33.1-17-01-17. Plans and specifications.

1. **Submission of plans.** Plans and specifications shall be prepared for all new public water systems and for alterations or extensions to existing systems. Such plans and specifications, together with other pertinent information, shall be submitted to the department for review and approval prior to awarding of contracts. Such plans and specifications shall:
 - a. Be submitted in triplicate and in sufficient time to permit at least a two-week period for review and comment and with additional time to incorporate changes, if required;
 - b. Be presented in legible form and of sufficient scale to facilitate review;
 - c. Include supplemental information pertaining to basis of design, description of existing facilities, appraisal of future needs and such other information normally included in an engineer's report, as may be requested by the department; and
 - d. Be replaced by "as-built" plans when change orders result in major changes in the facilities.
2. **Submission of revised plans, change orders, and addendums.** Any deviation from the approved plans and specifications, or use of alternate equipment, which would affect capacity, hydraulic conditions, operating units, the functioning of the water treatment process or distribution system, or the quality of water to be delivered will require department approval prior to contract for alternate equipment or any construction which is affected by such change. Revised plans and specifications, change orders, or addendums, along with pertinent supplemental information, are to be submitted to the department for review and approval.
3. **Approval of plans.** Plans and specifications reviewed by the department will be approved only when such plans and specifications fully meet and comply with existing statutes and such standards and guidelines as have been or may be established by the department.
4. **Compliance with plan approval.** Systems shall be constructed in accordance with the plans, specifications, and applicable change orders approved by the department. The department reserves the right to remove from service all or any part of a system found not to be constructed in accordance with approved plans, specifications, or change orders, or for which plans, specifications, or change orders were not approved.
5. **Operation and maintenance manual.** An operation and maintenance manual shall be prepared and supplied by the appropriate party to new or modified water supply facilities or systems. A copy of this manual shall be submitted to the department for review prior to initial operation of the new or modified facility or system.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03, 61-28.1-04; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-18. Operation and maintenance.

Public water systems shall be supervised by competent personnel and modified, operated, and maintained in accordance with guidelines that may be developed or amended by the department. North Dakota Century Code chapter 23.1-07 required certified operators for all public water systems except those that serve other than year-round residents and meet all of the following conditions:

1. The water supply is obtained solely from ground water sources that the department has determined are not under the direct influence of surface water.
2. Treatment, if provided, consists strictly of disinfection, fluoridation, sequestration, corrosion control, or other processes that involve simple chemical addition and minor operational control.
3. The water supply system is not required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act or its implementing regulations to be operated by qualified personnel.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-19. Protection of public water systems.

2. Cross-connection control.

- a. Cross connections are prohibited except when and where, as approved by the authority having jurisdiction, suitable protective devices are installed, tested, and maintained to ensure proper operation on a continuing basis.
- b. A system shall be designed, installed, and maintained in such a manner as to prevent nonpotable liquids, solids, or gases from being introduced into the water through cross connections or any other piping connections to the system.

3. Interconnections.

- a. Interconnection between two or more systems shall be permitted only with the written approval of the department.
- b. Interconnection between a nonpublic and public water system shall not be permitted unless specifically approved in writing by the department.

4. Return of used water prohibited. Water used for cooling, heating, or other purposes shall not be returned to the system. Such water may be discharged into an approved drainage system through an airgap or may be used for nonpotable purposes.

5. Products in contact with water. All products that may come into contact with water intended for use in a public water system must meet American national standards institute/national sanitation foundation international standards 60 and 61. Suppliers of water for public water systems may not willfully introduce or permit the introduction of a product into the public water system which has not first been determined to meet these standards. At the discretion of the department, suppliers of water for public water systems shall compile and maintain on file for inspection by the department a list of

all products used by the system. Prior to using a product not on the list, suppliers of water for public water systems shall either determine that the product meets appropriate American national standards institute/national sanitation foundation international standards or notify the department of the type, name, and manufacturer of the product. A product will be considered as meeting these standards if so certified by an organization accredited by the American national standards institute to test and certify such products.

6. **Used materials.** Containers, piping, or materials which have been used for any purpose other than conveying potable water shall not be used.

7. **Water storage structures.** Finished water storage structures shall have a watertight cover which excludes the entrance of birds, animals, insects, and excessive dust. Public water systems shall not construct uncovered finished water storage facilities.

8. **Turbidity control.** Subpart H systems that provide conventional filtration treatment or direct filtration shall develop individual filter profiles, perform individual filter self-assessments, and arrange for the completion of comprehensive performance evaluations as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations subparts P and T. At the direction of the department, systems that are required to conduct a comprehensive performance evaluation shall arrange for the completion of a full composite correction program and implement followup recommendations that result from the composite correction program. Comprehensive performance evaluations and composite correction programs shall be conducted by a party other than the system which is approved by the department.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1 **Law**

Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69

33.1-17-01-20. Ground water system - Source requirements.

In addition to the remaining provisions of this chapter, public water systems utilizing ground water sources shall comply with the monitoring and treatment technique requirements and undergo sanitary surveys as set forth under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 141, subpart S. This applies to public water systems that are consecutive users but not to subpart H systems and systems that combine all of their ground water with surface water prior to treatment.

History: Effective January 1, 2019.

General Authority: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 1

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-28.1-03; S.L. 2017, ch. 199, § 69