



MAINE CDC DRINKING WATER PROGRAM
 Department of Health & Human Services

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How to Become a Licensed Water Operator: Very Small Water System (VSWS)

Keep Your Drinking Water Safe!

- ✓ Protect the Source
- ✓ Sample Regularly
- ✓ Inspect Pipes & Tanks
- ✓ Maintain Treatment

Non-Transient, Non-Community (NTNC) and Community public water systems are required to have a licensed water operator oversee the operation of their water systems.

Licensed water operators are responsible for all water quality and quantity related actions and decisions for the water system. Generally, water systems that have minimal treatment and serve a population of less than 500 are considered Very Small Water Systems (VSWS). This document provides guidance to those individuals seeking to obtain a water operator’s license specifically for the purpose of operating a VSWS. Before proceeding with the steps necessary to obtain a VSWS water operator license, candidates should check with their system’s Drinking Water Program (DWP) Public Water Inspector to verify the classification of the water system and the level of license required.

Step 1: Study

The VSWS Operator’s Exam can be challenging, so applicants should take time for pre-test study. Training providers host a variety of exam prep and review classes. Check the [Training](#) page of the DWP website for a list of approved providers and a calendar with upcoming trainings.

<https://tinyurl.com/OPTraining-ME>

Step 2: Take the Exam

Examinations for water operator licensure are offered by the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC). Find more information and register on the [Water Operator Exam](#) page of our website.

<https://tinyurl.com/OPExams-ME>

Step 3: Apply for Licensure

After passing the licensure exam, candidates still must apply for water operator licensure with the State of Maine. Applications for licensure can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/OPLicensure-ME>

Step 4: Designated Operators

After licensure, Designated Operator (DO) Forms should be completed and submitted to DWP to verify that the water system has a licensed operator. DO forms should be prepared and submitted by the system’s Primary Operator (PO) or an authorized representative of the PWS.

<https://tinyurl.com/PODO-ME>

Step 5: License Renewal

Licenses have a two-year cycle for renewal. VSWS operators are required to complete 6 hours of training each renewal cycle. For more information or to renew your license, check our website:

<https://tinyurl.com/WOMaint-ME>

For more information...

Courses and providers:

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 Operator Certification Coordinator
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Licensing and renewal:

Tina Lemieux
 Licensing Clerk
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