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Guide to Preparation of Applications for Approval of Onsite Wastewater Professional Development Hours

[Title 124 – Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems](#) requires any continuing education program or course to be used for the purpose of fulfilling the education requirements of a [certified onsite professional](#) be approved by the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE).

The following is intended to assist with the preparation and submittal of an application for approval of continuing education programs and provide a framework to evaluate these programs to ensure they are adequate and improve or enhance a certified professional's knowledge of the onsite wastewater treatment system regulations in Nebraska.

Program and Course Content

Programs and courses must be appropriate; directly associated with the onsite wastewater industry or related workplace safety; cover topics related to the responsibilities carried out by the certified professional; and provide information or training that serves to enhance a certified professional's knowledge of and ability to perform activities that protect the public health and the environment. The following objectives outline the knowledge and skill areas that onsite wastewater professionals need to acquire and/or meet their responsibilities and perform in the areas for which they apply for certification or carry out their duties:

- Title 124 Requirements
- Site Evaluation, Siting, and Layout
- Soil Concepts and Soil Evaluation Methods
- Nebraska Soils and Geology
- System Construction and Installation
- System Troubleshooting, Repair, and Modification
- System Inspection
- System Registration
- Homeowner Septic System Management/Maintenance
- Septic Tank Design, Function, and Operation
- Business and Record Keeping
- Workplace Safety
- Proper Handling and Disposal of Domestic Septage

Restricted Hours

A maximum of two professional development hours (PDH) in each two-year certification cycle may be from pre-approved courses peripheral to the actual activity of the onsite wastewater industry, for such things as business tax law, accounting, insurance, or first aid training. For purposes of professional development hours, workplace safety and protection of work activities shall be considered directly related to the actual activity of the onsite wastewater industry. Programs should include some notation regarding the portions of the program subject to this restriction.

Trade Shows

While certified professionals can obtain useful information at trade shows, please note that trade shows or similar type activities generally cannot meet the specific educational activity, presenter information, and attendance documentation requirements needed to comply with the continuing education criteria in Title 124. There is no separate provision in Title 124 to qualify these types of activities.

Speaker Qualifications

For a classroom style continuing education program or course, the provider must demonstrate the instruction or presentations will be conducted by individuals qualified in the program or course topic. For an independent or self-study program or course, the provider must demonstrate that a qualified individual(s) developed, and is directly responsible for, the program or course content.

It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate to the Department's satisfaction that a qualified individual(s) developed and/or will conduct the instruction of the program or course topic. The following should be provided for each presenter:

- Full name;
- Contact information;
- Experience, training, or professional licenses held; and

Provide specific examples of qualifications. A speaker's professional experience, publications, projects, or educational activities may be beneficial to help demonstrate the speaker's qualifications in a particular area. The Department may request additional information as needed. If a wide variety of topics and programs are submitted, some speaker's qualifications may not be considered adequate for all program areas.

Note: The Department does not qualify or maintain a list of "approved" speakers. Failure to submit speaker information with each application may delay your application.

Detailed Program

For a classroom-style continuing education program or course, submit an outline of the program or course with adequate detail to verify the topics of presentation, including detailed timelines to show the hours of education presentation planned. Identify expected break times (*Note:* Break times are not considered contact time for PDH). PDH is awarded in ¼ hour increments. It is recommended that descriptions for program presentations are broken into ¼ hour increments.

For an independent or self-study program or course, the provider must submit an outline of the program or course with adequate detail to verify the topics of presentation and the hours of education presentation planned. In addition, a description of the training format and delivery should also be provided.

Documentation/Verification of Attendance

The application must include the method to be used to document and maintain records of attendance for each program segment. The provider must provide the Department a list of attendees, along with their certification numbers, who have completed the program or course (along with each attendee's PDH) within 30 days of the program or completion of the course.

Note: An onsite professional will not be allowed to attain PDHs for any identical programs in the same certification renewal cycle.

Submittal Method

A certified professional may submit a proposed program or course for approval, except for independent or self-study programs or courses, which must be submitted by the provider.

Information may be submitted by regular mail, fax, or email. Electronic submittals should be PDF or Microsoft compatible (Word, Excel).

Deadline for Pre-Approval

The proposed program or course must be submitted to the DWEE for approval not less than 60 days prior to the date offered. A continuing education provider cannot advertise or otherwise represent any program or course as approved for meeting the continuing education requirements of Title 124 until such program or course is approved by the DWEE.

Approval

The Department tries to review each application in a timely manner. Submittal of a program does not guarantee approval. Any approval will be documented in writing by the Department and included on a list of [approved continuing education programs](#) maintained on the Department's webpage.

The Department may also request access from the continuing education provider to monitor or audit the program to verify the topics of the presentation meet the performance objectives and is consistent with the detailed timelines showing the hours of education presentation planned.