

**567—115.29(455B) Operator certification.** Sanitary landfill operators and solid waste incinerator operators shall be trained, tested, and certified by a department-approved certification program.

**115.29(1)** A sanitary landfill operator or a solid waste incinerator operator shall be on duty during all hours of operation of a sanitary landfill or solid waste incinerator, consistent with the respective certification.

**115.29(2)** To become a certified operator, an individual shall complete a basic operator training course that has been approved by the department or an alternative, equivalent training approved by the department and shall pass a departmental examination as specified by this rule. An operator certified by another state may have reciprocity subject to approval by the department.

**115.29(3)** A sanitary landfill operator certification or solid waste incinerator operator certification is valid until June 30 of the following even-numbered year.

**115.29(4)** Basic operator training course.

*a.* The required basic operator training course for a certified sanitary landfill operator will have at least 25 contact hours and will address the following areas, at a minimum:

- (1) Description of types of wastes;
- (2) Interpreting and using engineering plans;
- (3) Construction surveying techniques;
- (4) Waste decomposition processes;
- (5) Geology and hydrology;
- (6) Landfill design;
- (7) Landfill operation;
- (8) Environmental monitoring;
- (9) Applicable laws and regulations;
- (10) Permitting processes;
- (11) Leachate control and treatment;

*b.* The required basic operator training course for a certified solid waste incinerator operator will have at least 12 contact hours and will address the following areas, at a minimum:

- (1) Description of types of wastes;
- (2) Incinerator design;
- (3) Interpreting and using engineering plans;
- (4) Incinerator operations;
- (5) Environmental monitoring;
- (6) Applicable laws and regulations;
- (7) Permitting processes;
- (8) Incinerator maintenance;
- (9) Ash and residue disposal.

**115.29(5)** Alternate basic operator training must be approved by the department. It shall be the applicant's responsibility to submit any documentation the department may require to evaluate the equivalency of alternate training.

**115.29(6)** Fees.

*a.* The examination fee for each examination shall be \$20.

*b.* The initial certification fee shall be \$8 for each one-half year of a two-year period from the date of issuance to June 30 of the next even-numbered year.

*c.* The certification renewal shall be \$24.

*d.* The penalty fee shall be \$12.

**115.29(7)** Examinations.

*a.* The operator certification examinations will be based on the basic operator training course curriculum.

*b.* All persons wishing to take the examination required to become a certified operator of a sanitary landfill or a solid waste incinerator shall complete the Operator Certification Examination Application, Form 542-1354. A listing of dates and locations of examinations is available from the department upon request. The application form requires the applicant to indicate the basic operator training course taken.

Evidence of training course completion must be submitted with the application for certification. The completed application and the application fee shall be sent to the director and addressed to the central office in Des Moines. Application for examination must be received by the department at least 30 days prior to the date of examination.

*c.* A properly completed application for examination will be valid for one year from the date the application is approved by the department.

*d.* Upon failure of the first examination, the applicant may be reexamined at the next scheduled examination. Upon failure of the second examination, the applicant shall be required to wait a period of 180 days between each subsequent examination.

*e.* Upon each reexamination when a valid application is on file, the applicant shall submit to the department the examination fee at least ten days prior to the date of examination.

*f.* Failure to successfully complete the examination within one year from the date of approval of the application shall invalidate the application.

*g.* Completed examinations will be retained by the director for a period of one year after which they will be destroyed.

*h.* Oral examinations may be given at the discretion of the department.

**115.29(8) Certification.**

*a.* All operators who passed the operator certification examination by July 1, 1991, are exempt from taking the required operator training course. Beginning July 1, 1991, all operators will be required to take the basic operator training course and pass the examination in order to become certified.

*b.* Application for certification must be received by the department within 30 days of the date the applicant receives notification of successful completion of the examination. All applications for certification shall be made on a form provided by the department and shall be accompanied by the certification fee.

*c.* Applications for certification by examination which are received more than 30 days but less than 60 days after notification of successful completion of the examination shall be accompanied by the certification fee and the penalty fee. Applicants who do not apply for certification within 60 days of notice of successful completion of the examination will not be certified on the basis of that examination.

*d.* For applicants who have been certified under other state mandatory certification programs, the equivalency of which has been previously reviewed and accepted by the department, certification without examination will be recommended.

*e.* For applicants who have been certified under voluntary certification programs in other states, certification will be considered. The applicant must have successfully completed a basic operator training course and an examination generally equivalent to the Iowa examination. The director may require the applicant to successfully complete the Iowa examination.

*f.* Applicants who seek Iowa certification pursuant to 115.29(8)“*d*” or “*e*” shall submit an application for examination accompanied by a letter requesting certification pursuant to those paragraphs. Application for certification pursuant to those paragraphs shall be received by the director in accordance with 115.29(8)“*a*” and “*b*.”

**115.29(9) Renewals.** All certificates shall expire every two years, on even-numbered years, and must be renewed every two years to maintain certification. Application and fee are due prior to expiration of certification.

*a.* Late application for renewal of a certificate may be made provided that such late application shall be received by the director or postmarked within 30 days of the expiration of the certificate. Such late application shall be on forms provided by the department and accompanied by the penalty fee and the certification renewal fee.

*b.* If a certificate holder fails to apply for renewal within 30 days following expiration of the certificate, the right to renew the certificate automatically terminates. Certification may be allowed at any time following such termination, provided that the applicant successfully completes an examination. The applicant must then apply for certification in accordance with subrule 115.29(8).

*c.* An operator may not continue to operate a sanitary landfill or solid waste incinerator after expiration of a certificate without renewal thereof.

*d.* Continuing education must be earned during the two-year certification period. All certified operators must earn ten contact hours per certificate during each two-year period. The two-year period will begin upon issuance of certification.

*e.* Only those operators fulfilling the continuing education requirements before the end of each two-year period will be allowed to renew their certificates. The certificates of operators not fulfilling the continuing education requirements shall be void upon expiration, unless an extension is granted.

*f.* All activities for which continuing education credit will be granted must be related to the subject matter of the particular certificate to which the credit is being applied.

*g.* The director may, in individual cases involving hardship or extenuating circumstances, grant an extension of time of up to three months within which the applicant may fulfill the minimum continuing education requirements. Hardship or extenuating circumstances include documented health-related confinement or other circumstances beyond the control of the certified operator which prevent attendance at the required activities. All requests for extensions must be made 60 days prior to expiration of certification.

*h.* The certified operator is responsible for notifying the department of the continuing education credit earned during the period. The continuing education credits earned during the period shall be shown on the application for renewal.

*i.* A certified operator shall be deemed to have complied with the continuing education requirements of this rule during periods that the operator serves honorably on active duty in the military service; or for periods that the operator is a resident of another state or district having a continuing education requirement for operators and meets all the requirements of that state or district for practice there; or for periods that the person is a government employee working as an operator and is assigned to duty outside of the United States; or for other periods of active practice and absence from the state approved by the department.

**115.29(10)** Discipline of certified operators.

*a.* Disciplinary action may be taken on any of the following grounds:

(1) Failure to use reasonable care or judgment or to apply knowledge or ability in performing the duties of a certified operator. Duties of certified operators include compliance with rules and permit conditions applicable to landfill or incinerator operation.

(2) Failure to submit required records of operation or other reports required under applicable permits or rules of the department, including failure to submit complete records or reports.

(3) Knowingly making any false statement, representation, or certification on any application, record, report or document required to be maintained or submitted under any applicable permit or rule of the department.

*b.* Disciplinary sanctions allowable are:

(1) Revocation of a certificate.

(2) Probation under specified conditions relevant to the specific grounds for disciplinary action. Additional education or training or reexamination may be required as a condition of probation.

*c.* The procedure for discipline is as follows:

(1) The director shall initiate disciplinary action. The commission may direct that the director investigate any alleged factual situation that may be grounds for disciplinary action under 115.29(10) "a" and report the results of the investigation to the commission.

(2) A disciplinary action may be prosecuted by the director.

(3) Written notice shall be given to an operator against whom disciplinary action is being considered. The notice shall state the informal and formal procedures available for determining the matter. The operator shall be given 20 days to present any relevant facts and indicate the operator's position in the matter and to indicate whether informal resolution of the matter may be reached.

(4) An operator who receives notice shall communicate verbally, in writing, or in person with the director, and efforts shall be made to clarify the respective positions of the operator and director.

(5) The applicant's failure to communicate facts and position relevant to the matter by the required date may be considered when determining appropriate disciplinary action.

(6) If agreement as to appropriate disciplinary sanction, if any, can be reached with the operator and the commission concurs, a written stipulation and settlement between the department and the operator shall be entered. The stipulation and settlement shall recite the basic facts and violations alleged, any facts brought forth by the operator, and the reasons for the particular sanctions imposed.

(7) If an agreement as to appropriate disciplinary action, if any, cannot be reached, the director may initiate formal hearing procedures. Notice and formal hearing shall be in accordance with 567—Chapter 7 related to contested and certain other cases pertaining to license discipline.

**115.29(11)** Revocation of certificates. Upon revocation of a certificate, application for certification may be allowed after two years from the date of revocation. Any such applicant must successfully complete an examination and be certified in the same manner as a new applicant.

**115.29(12)** A temporary operator of a sanitary landfill or solid waste incinerator may be designated for a period of six months when an existing certified operator is no longer available to the facility. The facility must make application to the department, explain why a temporary certification is needed, identify who the temporary operator will be, and identify the efforts which will be made to obtain a certified operator. A temporary operator designation shall not be approved for greater than a six-month period except for extenuating circumstances. In any event, not more than one six-month extension to the temporary operator designation may be granted. Approval of a temporary operator designation may be rescinded for cause as set forth in 115.29(10).