



ARKANSAS DRINKING WATER UPDATE

Water Operator Training Hours Waived

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Due to the effects of the pandemic upon the availability of water operator training, the requirement of obtaining training hours for the renewal of water operator licenses for the current 2-year period has been waived.

The water operator licensing regulations require that during each license renewal period operators obtain 24 hours of training in order to renew their licenses. The current 2-year renewal period ends June 30, 2021. Most water operators obtain their required training hours by attending a waterworks association conference and attending district meetings.

There are four main conferences that water operators in Arkansas typically use to obtain the bulk of their required renewal hours. They are: the Arkansas Water Works and Water Environment Association conference, the Arkansas Rural Water Association conference, the Southwest Section AWWA conference, and the Arkansas Water & Wastewater Managers Association conference. All of these conferences were cancelled during 2020 due to the pandemic. Also, most of the district meetings have been cancelled during the pandemic. This has left most water operators with no practical way to obtain the required training hours during the pandemic.

The Engineering Section asked the Drinking Water Advisory and Operator Licensing Committee to make recommendations to the program as to how to best proceed with renewals this period. On September 17, 2020, the Committee recommended to the program that the training requirement be waived for the current 2-year period which runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021. This recommendation was accepted by the program. Pursuant to Public Health Emergency Regulatory Suspensions under Executive Order 20-06 and 20-16, the 24 hours training requirement is waived for this renewal period.

In order for a licensed water operator to renew during 2021 the renewal process will continue as normal but documentation of training hours will not be required. License renewal invoices (\$10) will be mailed to active water license holders during May 2021. License holders will be required to submit their renewal notices with payment, no training documentation will be required and the license will be renewed. Failure to submit the renewal and fee will result in the loss of the license.

The training requirement of 24 hours remains in effect for the next 2-year period running from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023. Hours earned during this present renewal cycle cannot be carried forward to the upcoming cycle.

The mandatory license examination training requirements remain in place and are unchanged. The mandatory courses are being held, some utilizing virtual classroom concepts. See this webpage for additional information: https://www.ark.org/health/eng/autoupdates/oper/m_andtrngall.htm

Another option is to complete correspondence courses with the California State University of Sacramento. These courses are discussed in information found on the program website found here: <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/drinking-water-MandTrng.pdf>

On the following page is this announcement in the format that it was emailed to most water operators for whom we have an email address.

If you have any questions, please email the licensing program at adh.water.licensing@arkansas.gov

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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Arkansas Water Operator Licensing Program
License Renewal Training Waiver
July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021

Please feel free to share the below information.

The Department of Health and the Arkansas Drinking Water Advisory and Operator Licensing Committee have taken the below action pursuant to Public Health Emergency Regulatory Suspensions under Executive Order 20-06 and 20-16:

Arkansas Department of Health

RULES PERTAINING TO WATER OPERATOR LICENSING under Section XIII. A:

The 24 hours of renewal training instruction, for the two-year renewal period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021, is **waived**. No continuing education (renewal training) will be required to renew Water Treatment Licenses, Water Distribution Licenses or Very Small Water System operator licenses.

To verify this action the above text has also been placed on the bottom of this ADH [webpage](#):

<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/rules-and-regulations> for verification

To renew the above licenses in 2021, license renewal invoices (\$10.00) will be mailed to active water license holders during May 2021. License holders will be required to submit their renewal invoice with payment, no training documentation will be required, and the license will be renewed with a June 30, 2023 expiration date. Failure to submit the renewal will result in the loss of the license. The only change in the renewal process will be no requirement/request to document training hours will be made. Renewal hour requirements will return for the 2021 to 2023 renewal cycle. Hours earned in this present renewal cycle cannot be carried forward and used in the 2021 to 2023 renewal cycle.

License Exam Training Requirements

Mandatory license exam training requirements are unchanged and must be met to sit for an exam. The mandatory courses are being held, some utilizing virtual classroom concepts. See this [webpage](#) for additional information:

<https://www.ark.org/health/eng/autoupdates/oper/mandtrngall.htm>

If you have any questions, please contact the Water Operator Licensing Program.

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www.healthy.arkansas.gov/water-license