



Operator Certification Program Newsletter

January 2024

Hello everyone and welcome to our newsletter! As the year is coming to an end and we are getting ready to jump into the new year, we would like to give you a few updates on things going on in the Montana operator world. First off, let's have a few introductions. Your operator certification team consists of three individuals. Jen VandenBos, Kevin Garman, and Libby Henrikson, operator certification program supervisor. Jen has been with the department for a little over seven years and enjoys meeting and connecting with the operators at the various water schools throughout the year. Kevin joined the program in March and looks forward to working with everyone and is our point person for all CEC questions! Libby has been with the Public Water Bureau for over twelve years and can help will compliance and assistance questions.

Our mission is to champion a healthy environment for a thriving Montana.

UPCOMING WATER SCHOOLS AND CONFERENCES IN SPRING 2024

The MRWS 44th Technical Conference and Exhibition will take place March 20 – 22, 2024 in Great Falls. If you plan on taking your exam at the end of the conference, be sure to submit your application 30 days prior to the exam date and submit the [exam sign up](#) form to OperatorCertification@mt.gov.

The Montana Water and Wastewater Operators Initiative (MW2OI) is offering the **2024 Spring Water School May 14 – 16, 2024 in Billings**. If you plan on taking your exam at the end of the school, be sure to submit your application 30 days prior to the exam date and submit the [exam sign up](#) form to OperatorCertification@mt.gov.

We hope to see you there!

EMERGING CONTAMINANTS

By: Greg Montgomery, Lead in Schools Rule Manager

Congress has allocated funding to address Emerging Contaminants in drinking water. The funding can be used for sampling and treatment of emerging contaminants (ECs). ECs are chemicals or materials characterized by a perceived, potential, or real threat to human health or the environment or by a lack of published health standards. A contaminant also may be "emerging" because of the discovery of a new source or a new pathway to humans. Emerging Contaminants can be found in pharmaceuticals, fragrances, fire retardants, detergents, insecticides, and industrial chemicals. ECs that Montana will be primarily focusing on are PFOA/PFOS and Manganese.

Information about ECS and how to apply for funding can be found at <https://deq.mt.gov/water/Programs/dw-rules> . Questions and comments can be sent to emergingcont@mt.gov



LEAD SERVICE LINE INVENTORIES

By: George Williams, Lead and Copper Rule Manager

Lead Service Line (LSL) inventories are due October 16, 2024. This requirement is for community (C) and non-community, non-transient (NTNC) public water systems. The DEQ has developed an inventory template, online submission portal, and technical assistance programs to assist systems with the LSL inventory requirement. For these resources and additional information please refer to our website: <https://deq.mt.gov/water/programs/dw-leadandcopper>

An inventory of all service line materials, regardless of ownership status or compositional make-up, needs to be documented using the DEQ inventory templates. There is a template for each public water system classification; *MT LSL inventory Template – Community Systems* and *MT LSL inventory Template – NTNC*. These templates are excel files and located on our website.

Completed inventories can be submitted online through the DEQ's services portal. This portal is accessed via our lead and copper website by clicking the blue "submit an inventory" button under the Lead Service Line Inventories heading. You will need to create a username and password. This username and password will also be used for future electronic submissions.

The DEQ has partnered with the Montana Department of Commerce to provide a Technical Assistance Program to assist public water systems complete their service line inventories. This program will supply up to 100 hours of free engineering support based on the needs of the system. All Community and NTNC public water systems with populations of 10,000 people or less are eligible. There are two ways to make a request for Technical Assistance to help with service line inventories: 1) visit our DEQ lead and copper DEQ website and click the blue, LSL Inventory Technical Assistance Program, button and follow the prompts or 2) go directly to the Montana Department of Commerce website at <https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs-and-Boards/Community-Technical-Assistance-Program/Lead-Service-Lines>

**LSL Inventories are
due in

10

MONTHS**

TOOLS AVAILABLE FOR YOU!

Our team has been hard at work putting together tools to assist you. The Public Water Supply Monitoring Schedule and CCR Writer can be found on our Drinking Water Page here: <https://deq.mt.gov/water/Programs/dw>. Public Water Systems can use the DEQ CCR Writer to pull previous years CCR's if needed or requested by the public.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS (CECS)

Just a reminder CECS are due May 31, 2024. It will be here before you know it. Wondering how many CECS you have or how many you need? You can check them on our website! <https://svc.mt.gov/deq/operatorcectotal/>

A list of upcoming training and approved online training providers is available on our website. Just go to deq.mt.gov and navigate to the Operator Certification webpage and click on Upcoming Events and Online Training. Don't see anything you like? Be sure to check back often because this area gets updated regularly.



COMPLIANCE CORNER

As the new year is rolling in, data entry requirements are being updated with regards to Total Coliform sampling in our SDWIS database. Please remember that only a certified operator may take total coliform samples for our Community and Non-Transient-Non-community systems. If you have questions, please contact Libby Henrikson at ehenrikson2@mt.gov.

CONTACT US

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Do you have an idea for the next Operator Certification newsletter? Submit your ideas to OperatorCertification@mt.gov.