

Frequently Asked Questions about the Certified Installer Credential For Candidates

What does the CLOWTS acronym stand for?

CLOWTS stands for “Certified Installer of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems” but will also be known as “Certified Installer.”

How much does the exam cost?

The BASIC exam is \$95 for members and \$110 for non-members. The ADVANCED exam is \$110 for members and \$125 for non-members. Members of NEHA and/or NOWRA qualify for the discounted member price.

Do I have to be a member of NOWRA or NEHA to take the exam?

No, anyone who meets the eligibility requirements may take the credential exam.

Will continuing education be required?

Yes, there will be a continuing education requirement of 12 hours for every two-year renewal period if you are credentialed through NEHA. States will also be able to set their own requirements for state credentialing.

Are there different levels?

There are basic and advanced levels for the credential. These are stand-alone levels, meaning that you don't have to first pass the basic credential examination prior to taking the advanced level.

What is the difference between the basic and advanced level?

The basic level is meant for someone who is relatively new on the job doing installations. The advanced level does not test advanced systems, but rather is meant for someone who has a bit more experience and a minimum of 2 years doing installations.

If you meet the criteria for the advanced level credential we strongly recommend that you apply for that credential to reflect the experience you do have.

Will there be eligibility requirements?

There are eligibility requirements for both exams. For the BASIC level you must be at least 18 years old. For the ADVANCED level, you must also have a minimum of a high school diploma/GED and two years of experience installing onsite wastewater systems.

Can I take the exam and be credentialed even if my state doesn't require it?

Anyone can apply to NEHA to become a credentialed installer- whether your state requires it or not.

How long is the test and what is the required passing score?

The basic exam is 75 multiple-choice questions and the advanced exam is 125 multiple-choice questions. You must score 70% correct or higher to pass either exam.

Are there reference materials for the exam?

Yes, the reference list and more information on the exam can be found at www.neha.org/onsite. Most of the reference materials are available online through EPA.

Does the exam cover state and local codes?

Both the basic and advanced levels of the exam cover the knowledge behind successfully installing an onsite system and ask the test taker to apply that knowledge to different situations. Since the exam is meant to be utilized nation-wide, specific code requirements could not be addressed. NEHA fully supports state and county licensing programs that contain provisions for testing on state and local codes. The CIOWTS is designed to be used in conjunction with state and local regulations that cover code issues.

If my state already has a code exam requirement, why should they require the CIOWTS exam also?

Most state and local code exams are less extensive than the CIOWTS exam generally cover code knowledge only and are often open book or take-home style exams. The CIOWTS exam covers a much broader area and addresses the knowledge installation; i.e. why there should be setback –not merely what the setback requirement is. A professional testing company utilizing the expertise of professional onsite wastewater treatment system installers has developed the exam. The exam questions will be tracked statistically for relevance and wording and then reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Is the credential meant to be used at the local or state level?

The exam can be used at either level. Since the exam tests for the knowledge, skills and abilities to install a system, it can be used by localities that have fragile areas or by the whole state to ensure uniform, professional practices.

How will I take the exam?

The exam will be offered at local and national conferences and also at testing sites throughout the nation. The testing sites offer computer based testing that is straightforward and easy to use even for those without computer experience. To set up a test date in your area, please contact NEHA's credentialing department at 303.756.9090 x337 or x339. For more information visit: www.neha.org/onsite.