

# Continuing Education for Well Drillers

## Focus sheet

### Washington well drillers must complete continuing education to gain or renew a well operator license

Well operators need approved Continuing Education Units (CEUs) when applying for or renewing a well operator's license in Washington State. Taking continuing education classes allows drillers to stay informed of industry changes and technological advances. Combining field experience with classroom work enhances a driller's knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Applicants and licensed well drillers should know how many CEUs are required, and plan to take as many classes as necessary to obtain or renew a well operator license.

*A CEU is one unit, approved by Ecology, for time spent in classroom, workshop, or seminar training. An applicant or licensed driller must gain a minimum number of CEUs to obtain or renew a well operator's license.*

### Locating a training course to fit a driller's needs and schedule

Ecology maintains a [list](#)<sup>1</sup> of training courses that have already received CEU approval. However, a driller is not limited to taking the courses that are on this list. Continuing education providers can get pre-approved by the Well Construction and Licensing Office. We have a list of approved providers on our website, and anyone meeting eligibility requirements may become an approved provider.

A driller can look for training opportunities through professional associations, industry conventions, government agencies (such as Labor and Industries

events), occupational safety programs, and in courses offered at colleges.

Training courses should relate to:

- occupational health and safety;
- business and office skills;
- interpersonal skills;
- technical aspects of the drilling industry; or
- other subjects as approved by us.

We recommend gaining pre-approval of courses prior to the course date. This will ensure an accurate count of units assigned.

### Requesting approval of a training course

Many common safety classes (i.e. Hazwoper, MSHA, and first aid) and seminars are already pre-approved. A well operator may request approval of a specific training course if the instructor is willing to submit an application to become an approved provider. Ecology also has the discretion to assign credit if an instructor is unwilling to submit the form.

Courses may be taken first and then approved by Ecology. Until approved or rejected, you will not know how many CEUs your class is worth. Although the class may have CEU value, it may not be enough to renew your license.

### Becoming an approved provider

To become an approved provider you must fill out an application [form](#)<sup>2</sup> for each specific class. These

<sup>1</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-supply/wells/information-for-drillers/continuing-education>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/ECY070253.html>

forms are available online, or by calling us at the number below.

Event coordinators and instructors may ask for Ecology's approval prior to the course. It would be useful to publicize that information when advertising the course. For that reason, Ecology will add the offering to our CEU calendar online in most cases.

### How CEUs are approved

Ecology assigns values to courses based on criteria in [WAC 173-162-085](#). We maintain a list of future courses, ongoing courses, and past approved courses on our website. The value given to a course depends on several factors including:

- the type of subject;
- the length of the program;
- the qualifications of the instructor; and
- how closely the course outline relates to the drilling profession or professional development.

It is important to know that some trainings (such as driller specific safety classes and forklift and crane safety) are full credit. Most general safety classes, such as Hazwoper, MSHA and first aid, are half credit for CEUs. Since pump installers have their own license through LNI, classes that focus on water pump knowledge are ¼ credit.

### Maintaining your training records

It is the responsibility of the licensed operator to keep track of their CEUs taken. Proof of attendance may include copies of first aid/CPR cards, OSHA hazmat cards, certificates, or agendas with sign off by instructors. Drillers must provide these proof documents at the time of application for a license

or renewal of a license. Remember that Ecology doesn't run the CEU seminars provided for drillers through the [WSGWA](#). We don't have those records on hand.

Ecology has developed a tracking [database](#) for CEUs submitted by drillers. The default password is the last six digits of a driller's social security number. We will credit you CEUs when you submit proof of attendance in an acceptable form. We recommend that drillers submit proof of continuing education at the time that classes are taken. If Ecology has this proof on file, you won't need to submit further documentation when your license is renewed.

**Please note:** *A driller with one license cannot "carry over" credits from one license renewal period to another. If a driller has two licenses, for water well and resource protection operators, then CEUs can carry over to the other license as long as the CEUs are not more than two years old.*

### Summary of key points

- Confirm the number of CEUs you need, and look for courses that enhance drilling knowledge and professional skills.
- Obtain prior approval of course work whenever possible.
- Maintain records of the approved training courses you have taken. Drillers will need to show documentation of course work when applying for a drilling license, or applying for renewal of a drilling license. Examples of documentation include certificates of completion, transcripts, attendance rosters, and diplomas.



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<https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-Supply/Wells>



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