



Wastewater Laboratory Certification

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Laboratory Certification provides formal recognition of managerial and technical competence of a laboratory. In Kentucky, [401 KAR 5:320](#) establishes the wastewater laboratory certification program, which includes standards for the certification of wastewater laboratories.

The certification process helps ensure the laboratory has the technical competence, facilities and equipment to perform the required laboratory analytical procedures. The certification program provides procedures for laboratories who are applying for certification, establishes laboratory certification fees and provides the appropriate methods and references for evaluating laboratory competence.

WHO DOES THIS REGULATION AFFECT?

This regulation affects entities that include:

- Government Agencies (Municipalities, Districts) who regulate
 - Sanitary Wastewater
 - Storm Water
 - Drinking Water
- Industry
 - Manufacturers
 - Coal Companies
- Privately Owned Facilities that provide
 - Drinking water
 - Sanitary Wastewater
- Privately Owned Laboratories
- Consultants

Any discharge that requires analysis and reporting under the KPDES program must be performed by a certified laboratory.

TYPES OF LABS UNDER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM:

Two types of laboratories are listed under the certification process: *General Labs* and *Field Labs*. These differences are important for several purposes, including when the laboratory is required to have obtained their certification.

General Labs - These are the labs which perform at least one additional analysis type other than what is required in a field analysis. A general lab may also perform field analysis.

Field Labs - A field only wastewater laboratory analyzes only the following parameters:

- 1) DO (Dissolved Oxygen)
- 2) Residual Chlorine
- 3) pH
- 4) Temperature
- 5) Conductivity
- 6) Turbidity using the field measurements techniques

The analyses may take place outdoors, in an on-site room used as a laboratory, or in an off-site laboratory.

EFFECTIVE DATES FOR APPLICATION PERIOD:

General wastewater laboratories must be certified by **January 1, 2015** with an effective date of **January 1, 2014**. Field-only wastewater laboratories must be certified by **January 1, 2016** with an effective date of **January 1, 2015**. Kentucky Division of Water (DOW) recommends that general wastewater laboratories apply prior to **October 1, 2014**, and field-only wastewater laboratories apply prior to **October 1, 2015**, in order to prevent a lapse in analysis capability. However, the labs can go ahead and apply as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to identify and

correct deficiencies prior to the respective deadlines for compliance.

KPDES compliance data submitted after the above mentioned dates must be performed by a laboratory certified to be considered valid by DOW.

TIERS OF CERTIFICATION:

- **Interim Certification:** This Certification is based on a paperwork review by the Energy and Environmental Cabinet (the Cabinet) and will be issued for initial certification for the method-analyte pairs for which the lab applied. This certification will allow the laboratory to analyze wastewater compliance samples and submit compliance data for all approved method-analyte pairs. First year certification is an interim certification during which field inspectors would come and check for compliance.
- **Full Certification:** This will be issued to a lab with interim certification that has successfully completed an on-site audit meeting all the requirements. Full certification will allow the laboratory to analyze compliance samples and submit compliance data for all approved method-analyte pairs.

Starting from the second through fifth year after the laboratory gets certified, there will be on-site audits performed by state field inspector at a **minimum of once per 5 years**. This might be more than once, depending on

the compliance and the performance of the laboratory. *(Please see on-site audit section for more details)*

- **Provisionally Certified:** This is issued as a result of a downgrade of certification due to significant compliance issues. A lab with provisional certification has **30 days** to correct significant deficiencies or its certification may be revoked. Labs have to submit data to the State along with the corrective actions and corresponding schedule.

This certification allows laboratories to analyze compliance samples and submit compliance data for all approved method-analyte pairs. However, a lab with provisional certification must document that it has notified its clients of its provisional certification status.

- **Not Certified (Certification Revocation):** Certification may be revoked for specific method-analyte pairs because of a failure of the lab to address significant deficiencies. If the certification has been revoked, the lab may not perform analysis for purposes of KPDES compliance for those method-analyte pairs for which the revocation is effective. However, labs can re-apply after 3 months.

The state has developed a [Wastewater Laboratory Certification Manual](#) which explains general laboratory requirements and critical elements for different types of sampling.

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HOW TO BECOME CERTIFIED?

Laboratories must submit an application form ([KWLCF Form APP](#)) by the specified compliance dates. However, DOW has begun accepting applications starting September 7, 2013. Laboratories must provide a list of requested analytes and specific methods for certification along with the required documentation as instructed in the application form.

In addition, general wastewater laboratories must renew in **even** years while field-only labs renew in **odd** years. Deadline for renewal is **November 15 during the final year of certification.**

As previously mentioned in this article, laboratories can now go ahead and apply for certification with all the required information.

More information and related documents can be found at Division of Water's website for Wastewater Laboratory Certification at <http://water.ky.gov/permitting/Pages/WasteWaterCertification.aspx>

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact Shri Vani Shripada Smith Management Group at shrivani@smithmanage.com (or) 859-231-8936 x117.

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