



NGWA Voluntary Certification Program

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Purpose

To outline policies pertinent to the National Ground Water Association’s Voluntary Certification Programs.

Scope

The National Ground Water Association offers the following designations:

Designation	Target	Abbreviation
Certified Well Driller	Contractor	CWD
Certified Pump Installer		CPI
Certified Well Driller/Pump Installer		CWD/PI
Master Ground Water Contractor		MGWC
Certified Vertical Closed Loop Driller		CVCLD
Certified Groundwater Professional	Scientist or Engineer	CGWP
Certified Sales Professional—I	Manufacturer or Supplier	CSP—I
Certified Sales Professional—II		CSP—II

These endeavors have been formulated to promote professionalism and improve skills and competencies in both the nontechnical and technical areas while protecting public health and protecting the groundwater resource.

Certified Well Driller and Certified Pump Installer (CWD/PI)

Current Certified Drilling or Certified Pump Installation Contractors have met these eligibility requirements:

1. Eligibility
 - a. Applicant must be at least twenty (20) years old and have twenty-four (24) consecutive months of drilling/pump installation experience within the category exam taken.
 - b. Applicant must provide the names of two references who can verify experience.

- c. Applicant must pass a general drilling or water systems general exam and at least one other related category exam within a twelve (12) month period with a seventy (70) percent or better score on each exam.
 - i. Drilling Operations category exams are:
 - 1. GD—General Drilling Exam
 - 2. A/B—Cable Tool Drilling
 - 3. C/D—Air Rotary Drilling
 - 4. E/F—Mud Rotary Drilling
 - 5. G—Reverse Circulation Drilling
 - 6. H—Jetting and Driving Wells
 - 7. O—Geothermal Ground Source Heat Pump (No Longer Available, offered through 4/1/10)
 - ii. Pump Installation category exams are:
 - 1. WS—Water Systems General Exam
 - 2. K—Water Systems less than 100 GPM
 - 3. L—Water Systems more than 100 GPM
 - iii. Specialty Exam Category exams are:
 - 1. M—Augering and Monitoring
 - 2. N—Well Servicing and maintenance
- d. Applicant must personally sign the designated affidavit as a condition of certification for the CWD, CPI, CWD/PI, or MGWC upon entry into the program. The affidavit is a signed document claiming the individual maintains the licenses and/or registrations necessary to qualify for legal operation in the states in which he/she conducts business and attests to the status of any legal action he/she may be the subject of relating to well construction or pump installation. Applicant must complete and return the NGWA Certification Agreement. Forms must be received by NGWA within twelve months of the qualifying exam date.
- e. NGWA membership and participation in the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program are two different entities. Individuals who meet the stated eligibility requirements are not required to be NGWA members.
- f. Certification Program staff determines eligibility based on individual's application and references.
- g. Newly certified individuals, in the first year of certification, will not be required to submit CEPs, affidavits, or renewal fees to NGWA. Upon the first renewal the certified individual must submit all qualifying material (CEPs, affidavit, and fees) to NGWA to maintain certification by December 31st of the renewing year.

Example

Joe Candidate took and passed the NGWA Certification Exam in June, 20x4; NGWA must receive his/her affidavit, CEPs, and renewal fee by December 31, 20x5 for Joe to be renewed for 20x6.

2. Recertification

- a. All certification renewal materials must be received by December 31st of the renewing year
- b. Annual recertification fees are due.
- c. Seven (7) annual continuing education points are required. Points can be accrued by the following methods:
 - i. Groundwater-related conventions/expositions/meetings—one point per day attended (state, regional, or national shows)
 - ii. NGWA Delegates Meeting—one point per year
 - iii. Workshops, conferences, or training schools—one point per hour of instruction
 - iv. ~~Safety meetings—two points maximum per year~~ (effective January 1, 2016)
 - v. High school career day presentation—one point for each hour of presentation
 - vi. NGWA McElhiney Lecture—one-and-a-half points
 - vii. Writing an article for a groundwater-related publication—two points maximum (proof required)
 - viii. Community services—one point for each presentation (talks, films, slide shows, etc., regarding the groundwater, industry)
 - ix. Participation in a groundwater-related Webinar—one credit per hour Webinar.
 - x. Presenting of a groundwater-related Webinar—two credits per hour of presented Webinar
 - xi. Documented attendance at industry safety meetings (OSHA, MSHA, initial or refresher training)—one point per hour, three points maximum per year (effective January 1, 2016)

- xii. Others—acceptance of points will be determined by the coordinator when they are received
- d. Certificants must maintain a high standard of work as agreed to in the “Certification Affidavit.” The affidavit is due annually.

3. Out-of-Compliance

- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification are categorized as Out-of-Compliance for one calendar year. The Out-of-Compliance status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the In-Good-Standing year.
- b. When an individual has been deemed Out-of-Compliance they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way until they have reinstated their certification.
- c. Out-of-Compliance individuals will receive quarterly letters stating their condition and what they must provide to reinstate their certification.
- d. Recertification and reinstatement fees are non refundable once submitted.
- e. Out-of-Compliance individuals who fail to reinstate within one calendar year are categorized as decertified.

4. Reinstatement to In-Good-Standing After Out-of-Compliance

- a. Noncompliant individuals shall be reinstated within the same calendar year after fulfilling and submitting all recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and paying an additional reinstatement fee.

5. Decertification

- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and fail to reinstate their certification from Out-of-Compliance are then categorized as Decertified. The Decertification status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the Out-of-Compliance year.
- b. When an individual has been deemed Decertified they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way.
- c. Decertified individuals will receive a letter within sixty (60) days of decertification stating their status.
- d. A decertified individual may not reenter the program at their previous certification level. To reenter the program they must fulfill the same requirements as a new candidate.
- e. Decertification occurs when an individual who participated in the professional designations program fails to meet the renewal requirements and then fails to meet the reinstatement requirements by the stated deadline, to include:
 - i. Annual affidavit
 - ii. Annual continuing education
 - iii. Annual renewal fees and/or reinstatement fees

Those who have been decertified due to a failure to renew may reenter the program immediately by retesting.

f. Certification shall be revoked under these circumstances:

- i. Any action that threatens to undermine, detract from, or compromise the integrity of the NGWA Certification Program
- ii. Falsification of certification application materials
- iii. Falsification of certification renewal materials
- iv. Misrepresentation of certification status or classification
- v. Revocation or suspension of state license or credential (if applicable) related to groundwater resources
- vi. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of certification examination questions or answers
- vii. The conviction or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor related to actions that compromise the integrity of the certification or otherwise harm the groundwater resource
- viii. Professional malpractice or negligence that reflects adversely on one’s ability to serve the industry or the public in a positive and professional manner
- ix. Any material violation of a consumer protection statute or fraud that reflects adversely upon one’s ability to faithfully serve the public related to the groundwater industry

- g. The revocation process begins when a written complaint pursuant to the grounds for decertification is filed against a specific certificant. Upon receipt of such complaint, staff is responsible for:
 - i. Attesting the complaint form is properly completed
 - ii. Acknowledging receipt of the complaint
 - iii. Placing said complaint on the PDOS agenda while maintaining the confidentiality of the identity of the subjects involved.
 - h. The PDOS shall review the complaint and determine if it has merit and should be investigated further or has no merit. Upon investigation, if the complaint has merit, the PDOS shall determine if the certificant's status should be revoked. This will be done by a scheduled hearing of which the certificant will be notified at least five (5) working days in advance. The certificant may choose to be represented at the hearing. The PDOS will render a decision as to whether the individual's certification should be preserved or revoked, within five (5) working days of the hearing. The individual will be so notified in writing within sixty (60) days of the outcome.
 - i. Upon revocation of certification, the individual may appeal the PDOS decision to the NGWA Board in writing within thirty (30) days of revocation notice.
 - i. Individuals who have had their certification revoked may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation, provided their state license or credential has not been revoked or suspended. In the event their state license has been revoked or suspended, they may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation provided their state credential has been reissued.
6. Short Term Medical Disability Leave
- a. Short-term medical situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be submitted to the Certification Coordinator in writing in the *Short Term Medical Disability Leave* form. Certified individuals in good standing may be placed in an "inactive" status for up to one year. At the end of that calendar year, the individual has twelve (12) months to fulfill the previous year's continuing education requirements, along with all the current year's requirements to retain the certified status.
7. Active Military Duty Leave
- a. Active military duty will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be submitted to the Certification Coordinator in writing in the *Active Military Duty Leave* form. Certified individuals in good standing may be placed in an "inactive" status for up to one year. At the end of that calendar year, the individual has twelve (12) months to fulfill the previous year's continuing education requirements, along with all the current year's requirements to retain the certified status.
8. Retired In Good Standing
- a. Retired, in accordance with the NGWA Code of Regulations, is defined as those who have been active and who, as a result of retirement, disability or other good cause, are no longer active in the groundwater industry. Certified individuals in good standing may maintain their certification designation without submitting annual recertification materials as designated in section 2 Recertification.
 - b. Individuals are required to submit a retirement declaration prior to December 31st of their renewing year.
 - c. Individuals may not move in and out of the "retired" designation.
 - d. Such individuals will be maintained on appropriate NGWA databases as "retired in good standing – (YEAR)."
 - e. Individuals retired in good standing may still use the certified logo, but must indicate "retired – Year."
 - f. Individuals retired in good standing may engage in other careers outside the active construction of wells or installation of pumps.
9. Use of Certified Logo
- a. Only those certified in good standing may use any NGWA Voluntary Certification Program logo.

- b. Those declared inactive — short-term due to medical leave or active military commitments may not use the logo during that time.
- c. Those who retired in good standing must use the retired year when using the logo.
- d. Those who have been decertified or deemed out of compliance for failure to meet the annual recertification deadline December 31 may no longer legally use the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program logo or represent themselves as certified by NGWA.
- e. Noncertified individuals who use the certification logo unlawfully will be subject to appropriate legal action.

10. Proctors

- a. The issue of neutral proctors is taken seriously to ensure the integrity of the testing instruments and a culture of fairness for all test candidates.
- b. Peers may not proctor other peers. (For our purposes a “peer” will be defined as any contractor or pump installer, either active or retired, either certified by NGWA or not, and/or state licensed or not.)
- c. Individuals who are eligible to serve as proctors are:
 - i. National Ground Water Association staff
 - ii. All exams delivered to computer test centers are proctored by pre-qualified individuals
 - iii. Federal, state, and/or local regulatory personnel
 - iv. Academics/teachers
 - v. Prequalified, responsible individuals without any conflict of interest with the test candidates
 - vi. LaserGrade approved neutral proctors
- d. The proctor responsibility may not be delegated by the proctor.

11. Unethical Behavior by a Certified Individual

- a. Certificants who compromise the item pool and/or integrity of the test instruments will be suspended from the Voluntary Certification Program. Those individuals may reenter the program after thirty-six (36) months by retesting.

12. Oversight Body

- a. The purpose of the Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee is to administer and review the contractor certification program for NGWA with respect to ensuring the validity of current tests, evaluating suggestions for new tests, safeguarding confidentiality, providing input on skills and competencies for each exam.
- b. Suggestions for new exams are circulated to subcommittee members for comment. Subcommittee members are to evaluate the need for a new exam topic on the basis of these criteria: public health concerns; protection of groundwater, and requirements for licensing.
 - i. If there is a positive decision to undertake the writing of a new exam, skills and competencies for that exam must be established first.
 - ii. An item bank of at least 200 questions is desired to be written and evaluated for use on the specialty exam.
 - iii. Questions within skills and competencies will be rotated from this item bank.
- c. There will be an ongoing evaluation of the quality of questions based on participant input.
- d. The subcommittee shall be composed of at least seven (7) active individuals from geographically diverse regions of the country with varying degrees of drilling operations and/or pump installation expertise. Additionally there shall be at least one public member as described in the accreditation guidelines of the National Organization for Competency Assurance. Additionally active manufacturers and suppliers with diverse groundwater industry experience may serve on the subcommittee. All subcommittee members are subject to the same appointment procedures and term limits as stated in the National Ground Water Association’s Code of Regulations. All subcommittee members have voting rights.
- e. All subcommittee members shall sign a confidentiality statement pertinent to the certification exams, any generated items, and discussions about generated items.
- f. Certificants who participate in item writing and review work groups and conduct groundwater education classes for any entity, whether gratis or for compensation shall attest their instructional content does not reflect specifics pertinent to any NGWA certification exam.
- g. Subcommittee members do not determine the eligibility requirements of individual candidates.

- h. Subcommittee members do not score any exams required to obtain the CWD, CPI, or CWD/PI designations.
 - i. Subcommittee members do not have access to any applicants' individual records.
13. Use by Other Entities
- a. State regulatory agencies may request to review and/or use any NGWA well construction/pump installation exam for licensing. NGWA will honor this request if the requesting state regulatory official attests to maintaining the confidentiality of the exam and refraining from duplicating the exam.
 - b. A standard written agreement between the requesting state and NGWA will be maintained pertinent to the use of the exams.
 - c. Exam results are only issued to individuals who sat for the exam. The exam venue will issue results to candidates as they leave the test center.
 - d. Appropriate licensing exam fees must be paid to NGWA prior to the reporting of scores.
 - e. The designated person within a state agency may request NGWA verify an individual's score.
14. Reporting of Scores
- a. Examination results are treated as confidential and private information.
 - b. Results are only reported to the individual taking the test or the designated state regulatory agency when applicable.
 - c. Scores are not released via telephone.
 - d. Candidates taking exams at computer test center receive the results immediately following the test session.
 - e. Test candidates may appeal a score result within sixty (60) days of the subject test session.
 - f. Test scores may be reprinted for a fee, if the exam score is available.
 - g. Candidates may question a test question using the feedback option available at the computer test site.
15. Exam Offerings
- a. Exams are administered through computer test centers.
16. Recognition and Correction of Exams
- a. Computer delivered tests provide candidates the ability to comment on troublesome questions. Said comments are provided to NGWA via the vendor.
 - b. The coordinator will then contact the appropriate Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee members with the question(s) if relating to areas outside of spelling or grammar.
 - c. If deemed appropriate, a candidate's score may be changed in the NGWA database.
17. Fees
- a. Exam fees, including licensing exam fees, and recertification fees are established by NGWA.
 - b. Nonmembers may be charged significantly higher initial exam and recertification fees.
18. Converting Licensure to Certification
- a. Individuals who take the exams for state licensing purposes and successfully complete them may join the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program within the same calendar year as the qualifying test session.
 - b. Individuals who wish to do this must notify the NGWA in writing of this decision.
 - c. The individual must then provide references, a signed affidavit, the continuing education commitment and the appropriate fees as required of anyone initially entering the program.
19. Confidentiality
- a. Staff working with certification exams and test items shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
 - b. Professional Designation Oversight Subcommittee members and any individuals who participate in item writing and certification work group endeavors shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
 - c. Staff members may only discuss a candidate's testing status or certification status with that individual.

Certified Vertical Closed Loop Driller (CVCLD)

Current Certified Vertical Closed Loop Drillers have met these eligibility requirements:

1. Eligibility
 - a. Applicant must be at least twenty (20) years old and have twenty-four (24) consecutive months of fulltime geothermal drilling or water well drilling experience.
 - b. Applicant must provide the names of two (2) references who can verify experience.
 - c. Applicant must pass the Vertical Closed Loop Exam with a seventy (70) percent or better score.
 - d. Applicant must personally sign the designated affidavit as a condition of certification for the CVCLD upon entry into the program. The affidavit is a signed document claiming the individual maintains the licenses and/or registrations necessary to qualify for legal operation in the states in which they conduct business and attests to the status of any legal action they may be the subject of relating to well construction or pump installation. Applicant must complete and return the NGWA Certification Agreement. Forms must be received by NGWA within twelve months of the qualifying exam date.
 - e. NGWA membership and participation in the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program are two different entities. Individuals who meet the stated eligibility requirements are not required to be NGWA members.
 - f. Certification Program staff determines eligibility based on individual's application and references.
 - g. Newly certified individuals, in the first year of certification, will not be required to submit CEPs, affidavits, or renewal fees to NGWA. Upon the first renewal the certified individual must submit all qualifying material (CEPs, affidavit, and fees) to NGWA to maintain certification so that it is received by NGWA by December 31st of the renewing year.

Example

Joe Candidate took and passed the NGWA Certification Exam in June, 20x4; NGWA must receive his submitted affidavit, CEPs, and renewal fee by December 31, 20x5 for Joe to be renewed for 20x6.

2. Recertification
 - a. All certification renewal materials must be received by December 31st of the renewing year
 - b. Annual recertification fees are due.
 - c. Seven (7) annual continuing education points are required. Points can be accrued by the following methods:
 - i. Groundwater-related conventions/expositions/meetings—one point per day attended (state, regional, or national shows)
 - ii. NGWA Delegates Meeting—one point per year
 - iii. Workshops, conferences, or training schools (including business topics)—one point per hour of instruction
 - iv. ~~Safety meetings—two points maximum per year~~ (effective January 1, 2016)
 - v. High school career day presentation—one point for each hour
 - vi. NGWA McElhiney Lecture—one-and-a-half points
 - vii. Write an article for a groundwater-related publication—two points maximum (proof required)
 - viii. Community services—one point for each presentation (talks, films, slide shows, etc., regarding the groundwater, industry)
 - ix. Participation in a groundwater-related Webinar—one credit per hour Webinar
 - x. Presenting a groundwater-related Webinar—two credits per hour of presented Webinar
 - xi. Documented attendance at industry safety meetings (OSHA, MSHA, initial or refresher training)—one point per hour, three points maximum per year (effective January 1, 2016)
 - xii. Others—acceptance of points will be determined by the coordinator when they are received
 - d. Certificants must maintain a high standard of work as agreed to in the "Certification Affidavit." The affidavit is due annually.
3. Out-of-Compliance

- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification are categorized as Out-of-Compliance for one calendar year. The Out-of-Compliance status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the In-Good-Standing year.
 - b. When an individual has been deemed Out-of-Compliance they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way until they have reinstated their certification.
 - c. Out-of-Compliance individuals will receive quarterly letters stating their condition and what they must provide to reinstate their certification.
 - d. Recertification and reinstatement fees are non refundable once submitted.
 - e. Out-of-Compliance individuals who fail to reinstate within one calendar year are categorized as decertified.
4. Reinstatement to In-Good-Standing After Out-of-Compliance
- a. Noncompliant individuals shall be reinstated within the same calendar year after fulfilling and submitting all recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and paying an additional reinstatement fee.
5. Decertification
- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and fail to reinstate their certification from Out-of-Compliance are then categorized as Decertified. The Decertification status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the Out-of-Compliance year.
 - b. When an individual has been deemed Decertified they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way.
 - c. Decertified individuals will receive a letter within sixty (60) days of decertification stating their status.
 - d. A decertified individual may not reenter the program at their previous certification level. To reenter the program they must fulfill the same requirements as a new candidate.
 - e. Decertification occurs when an individual who participated in the professional designations program fails to meet the renewal requirements and then fails to meet the reinstatement requirements by the stated deadline, to include:
 - i. Annual affidavit
 - ii. Annual continuing education
 - iii. Annual renewal fees and/or reinstatement fees
 Those who have been decertified due to a failure to renew may reenter the program immediately by retesting.
 - f. Certification shall be revoked under these circumstances:
 - i. Any action that threatens to undermine, detract from, or compromise the integrity of the NGWA Certification Program
 - ii. Falsification of certification application materials
 - iii. Falsification of certification renewal materials
 - iv. Misrepresentation of certification status or classification
 - v. Revocation or suspension of state license or credential (if applicable) related to groundwater resources
 - vi. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of certification examination questions or answers
 - vii. The conviction or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor related to actions that compromise the integrity of the certification or otherwise harm the groundwater resource
 - viii. Professional malpractice or negligence that reflects adversely on one's ability to serve the industry or the public in a positive and professional manner
 - ix. Any material violation of a consumer protection statute or fraud that reflects adversely upon one's ability to faithfully serve the public related to the groundwater industry
 - g. The revocation process begins when a written complaint pursuant to the grounds for decertification is filed against a specific certificant. Upon receipt of such complaint, staff is responsible for:
 - i. Attesting the complaint form is properly completed
 - ii. Acknowledging receipt of the complaint

- iii. Placing said complaint on the PDOS agenda while maintaining the confidentiality of the identity of the subjects involved.
 - h. The PDOS shall review the complaint and determine if it has merit and should be investigated further or has no merit. Upon investigation, if the complaint has merit, the PDOS shall determine if the certificant's status should be revoked. This will be done by a scheduled hearing of which the certificant will be notified at least five (5) working days in advance. The certificant may choose to be represented at the hearing. The PDOS will render a decision as to whether the individual's certification should be preserved or revoked, within five (5) working days of the hearing. The individual will be so notified in writing within sixty (60) days of the outcome.
 - i. Upon revocation of certification, the individual may appeal the PDOS decision to the NGWA Board in writing within thirty (30) days of revocation notice.
 - i. Individuals who have had their certification revoked may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation, provided their state license or credential has not been revoked or suspended. In the event their state license has been revoked or suspended, they may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation provided their state credential has been reissued.
- 6. Short Term Medical Disability Leave
 - a. Short-term medical situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be submitted to the Certification Coordinator in writing in the *Short Term Medical Disability Leave* form. Certified individuals in good standing may be placed in an "inactive" status for up to one year. At the end of that calendar year, the individual has twelve (12) months to fulfill the previous year's continuing education requirements, along with all the current year's requirements to retain the certified status.
- 7. Active Military Duty Leave
 - a. Active military duty will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be submitted to the Certification Coordinator in writing in the *Active Military Duty Leave* form. Certified individuals in good standing may be placed in an "inactive" status for up to one year. At the end of that calendar year, the individual has twelve (12) months to fulfill the previous year's continuing education requirements, along with all the current year's requirements to retain the certified status.
- 8. Eligibility for Other Designations
 - a. A CVCLD may earn other designations offered within NGWA's Voluntary Certification Program by fulfilling the stated eligibility requirements for that designation.
- 9. Retired In Good Standing
 - a. Retired, in accordance with the NGWA Code of Regulations, is defined as those who have been active and who, as a result of retirement, disability or other good cause, are no longer active in the groundwater industry. Certified individuals in good standing may maintain their certification designation without submitting annual recertification materials as designated in section 2 Recertification.
 - b. Individuals are required to submit a retirement declaration prior to December 31st of their renewing year.
 - c. Individuals may not move in and out of the "retired" designation.
 - d. Such individuals will be maintained on appropriate NGWA databases as "retired in good standing – (YEAR)."

Master Ground Water Contractor (MGWC)

Current Master Ground Water Contractors have met these eligibility requirements:

- 1. Eligibility
 - a. Candidates must be currently certified in good standing in the following exam categories:

- i. General Drilling Exam
- ii. Exam A/B—Cable Tool Drilling
- iii. Exam C/D—Air Rotary Drilling
- iv. Exam E/F—Mud Rotary Drilling
- v. Exam G—Reverse Circulation Drilling
- vi. Exam H—Jetting and Driving Wells
- vii. Water Systems General Exam
- viii. Exam K—Water Systems less than 100 GPM
- ix. Exam L—Water Systems more than 100 GPM
- b. Candidates must have five (5) years of experience in well construction and/or pump installation in an operational or supervisory capacity.
- c. Individuals who meet the stated eligibility requirements are not required to be NGWA members.
- d. A MGWC Exam Application must be submitted to the NGWA Certification Coordinator a minimum of thirty (30) days in advance to take the MGWC Exam.
- e. The master exam is offered annually at the NGWA Groundwater Expo. If taking the exam at NGWA Headquarters, arrangements must be made thirty (30) days in advance of the scheduled exam.
- f. The Master Ground Water Contractor Exam is proctored by NGWA staff or other individuals who meet the eligibility requirements.
- g. Exam fee must accompany MGWC Exam Application a minimum of thirty (30) days in advance of exam session.
- h. A time period of four (4) consecutive hours is given in which the exam must be completed. The MGWC candidate must complete the exam in this one exam session.
- i. A score of seventy (70) percent or higher must be achieved to earn the designation.
- j. Within three (3) business days of receipt of a completed MGWC's exam, NGWA will mail the exams to five (5) MGWCs. The said MGWCs will have fourteen (14) business days to score the exam and return it to the coordinator. If they are unable to meet the deadline, NGWA must be notified within ten (10) business days of the MGWC's receipt of the exam.
- k. MGWCs must comply with the same annual recertification requirements as Certified Well Drillers as stated in section (2) Recertification.

2. Decertification

- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and fail to reinstate their certification from Out-of-Compliance are then categorized as Decertified. The Decertification status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the Out-of-Compliance year.
- b. When an individual has been deemed Decertified they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way.
- c. Decertified individuals will receive a letter within sixty (60) days of decertification stating their status.
- d. A decertified individual may not reenter the program at their previous certification level. To reenter the program they must fulfill the same requirements as a new candidate.
- e. Decertification occurs when an individual who participated in the professional designations program fails to meet the renewal requirements and then fails to meet the reinstatement requirements by the stated deadline, to include:
 - i. Annual affidavit
 - ii. Annual continuing education
 - iii. Annual renewal fees and/or reinstatement fees
- f. Those who have been decertified due to a failure to renew may reenter the program immediately by retesting.
- g. Certification shall be revoked under these circumstances:
 - i. Any action that threatens to undermine, detract from, or compromise the integrity of the NGWA Certification Program
 - ii. Falsification of certification application materials
 - iii. Falsification of certification renewal materials
 - iv. Misrepresentation of certification status or classification
 - v. Revocation or suspension of state license or credential (if applicable) related to groundwater resources
 - vi. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of certification examination questions or answers

- vii. The conviction or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor related to actions that compromise the integrity of the certification or otherwise harm the groundwater resource
- viii. Professional malpractice or negligence that reflects adversely on one's ability to serve the industry or the public in a positive and professional manner
- ix. Any material violation of a consumer protection statute or fraud that reflects adversely upon one's ability to faithfully serve the public related to the groundwater industry
- h. The revocation process begins when a written complaint pursuant to the grounds for decertification is filed against a specific certificant. Upon receipt of such complaint, staff is responsible for:
 - i. Attesting the complaint form is properly completed
 - ii. Acknowledging receipt of the complaint
 - iii. Placing said complaint on the PDOS agenda while maintaining the confidentiality of the identity of the subjects involved.
- i. The PDOS shall review the complaint and determine if it has merit and should be investigated further or has no merit. Upon investigation, if the complaint has merit, the PDOS shall determine if the certificant's status should be revoked. This will be done by a scheduled hearing of which the certificant will be notified at least five (5) working days in advance. The certificant may choose to be represented at the hearing. The PDOS will render a decision as to whether the individual's certification should be preserved or revoked, within five (5) working days of the hearing. The individual will be so notified in writing within sixty (60) days of the outcome.
 - i. Upon revocation of certification, the individual may appeal the PDOS decision to the NGWA Board in writing within thirty (30) days of revocation notice.
- j. Individuals who have had their certification revoked may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation, provided their state license or credential has not been revoked or suspended. In the event their state license has been revoked or suspended, they may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation provided their state credential has been reissued.

Certified Groundwater Professional (CGWP)

Current Certified Groundwater Professionals have met these eligibility requirements.

1. Eligibility
 - a. Applicants have at least six (6) years of full time employment experience in the groundwater industry, and must have earned a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in a groundwater-related, applied science.
 - i. Early Career Professional:
 1. In the fulfillment of the experience requirement, one (1) year of experience credit shall be allowed for completion of a master's degree or two (2) years of credit shall be allowed for completion of a doctorate degree providing that the graduate training was primarily in some aspect of groundwater. In no case shall the total experience credit for academic work above the baccalaureate degree exceed a total of two (2) years. Degree credit will be given for that which is obtained prior to application for the designation.
 2. Those with at least one (1) year of experience in the groundwater industry may submit evidence of their coursework completed within the previous eight (8) years meeting the core competencies required. Coursework would be offerings from professional associations, accredited institutions (courses not part of the applicant's regular degree curriculum), or other professional continuing education sources.
 - ii. Experienced Professional:
 1. Those with at least eight (8) years of experience in the groundwater industry may submit evidence of their coursework completed within the previous eight (8) years meeting the core competencies required. Coursework would be offerings from professional associations,

accredited institutions (courses not part of the applicant's regular degree curriculum), or other professional continuing education sources.

- b. During the applicable eligibility period, the applicant has demonstrated the application of scientific or engineering principles and methods for the execution of work involving:
Core Competencies
 - i. Groundwater hydrogeology and hydraulics (20 hours of coursework)
 - ii. Groundwater geochemistry (20 hours of coursework)
 - iii. Groundwater modeling (20 hours of coursework)
 - iv. Groundwater remediation (20 hours of coursework)
 - v. Geology and geomorphology (20 hours of coursework)
 - vi. Scientific writing and presentation (7 hours of coursework)
 - vii. Ethics (3 hours of coursework or workshop participation)
- c. Applicants have submitted a 300-word statement indicating why they wish to earn the CGWP designation and what they hope to achieve in doing so.
- d. Applicants have submitted a written report of their professional growth through the Certified Groundwater Professional program.
- e. Applicants have provided three (3) completed reference forms completed by their professional references.
- f. Applicants have provided copies of their official college transcripts as described on the application form.
- g. Applicants have paid the application fee in full.
- h. Applicants have submitted a notarized affidavit agreeing to adhere to the seven Canons of Professional Practice for the Groundwater Professional.
 - i. Canons of Professional Practice for the Groundwater Professional
Persons who hold certification as Groundwater Professionals under the National Ground Water Association, shall:
 - 1. Perform services only in areas of their competence
 - 2. Use their knowledge and skill for the enhancement of human welfare
 - 3. Serve the public, their employers, and their clients honestly, objectively, and impartially
 - 4. Avoid conflicts of interest
 - 5. Act as faithful agents or trustees in professional matters for each employer or client
 - 6. Strive to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, dignity, competence and prestige of the groundwater profession
 - 7. Maintain their competence through continuing professional development.
- i. There is no maximum timeframe for the eligibility period if the applicant maintains renewals during their entry period.

2. Renewal

New Entrants

- a. Those working to obtain the Certified Groundwater Professional designation through completion of their coursework and required years of professional experience are required to review and submit their progress every year. These reports must be received by NGWA by December 31 each year.
- b. A renewal fee will be due each year with the coursework progress report. Both components must be received by NGWA by December 31 of each year.

Current Certified Groundwater Professionals

- a. CGWPs are required to renew their certification every three years commencing December 31 in the year in which he/she earned the designation.
- b. The renewal process includes submittal of a renewal fee and evidence of thirty-six (36) PDCs over each three (3) year renewal period.
 - i. Professional Development Credits consist of the following:
 - 1. Attendance at local, regional, national, and international technical meetings (NGWA, GSA, AGU, etc.)—three (3) credits per day attended, or appropriate fraction thereof; documentation of meeting must be supplied for approval

2. Participation in or teaching of short courses and workshops (NGWA, GSA, universities, government training, etc.)—four (4) credits per day of participation or appropriate fraction thereof
 3. Publication in refereed journals (Groundwater®, GSA Bulletin, Water Resources Research, etc.)—eight (8) credits per published article
 4. Teaching at universities, colleges, junior colleges where not normally employed—two (2) credits per one semester or quarter hour
 5. Oral presentation of papers at technical society meetings—four (4) credits per paper presented
 6. Enrollment and attendance at university or college courses in relevant subjects—seven (7) credits per semester credit unit earned/five (5) credits per quarter credit unit earned.
 7. Participation in, or presenting of, an NGWA Webinar—two(2) credits per Webinar presented or one (1) for participation
- c. Individuals who fail to submit renewal fees and evidence of the required PDCs by the December 31 deadline will be considered as non-renewing and will be notified accordingly and advised to cease using the CGWP designation after their names. (Materials must be received by NGWA by the deadline.) Non-renewing CGWPs names will be removed from the active list at this time.
 - d. Non-renewing CGWPs may be reinstated by submitting the renewal fees, a reinstatement fee, and required PDCs by December 31 of the year following their active CGWP status. After December 31, the non-renewing CGWP shall forfeit the reinstatement option. Those who wish to reapply for the CGWP status in the future shall follow the same application process as those initially applying for the designation.
 - e. Extenuating circumstance situations and/or questions concerning applicable PDCs will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee. These requests must be received in writing by March 31, following the end of the active status of the CGWP. Nonrenewing CGWPs, with such circumstances, that fail to submit written requests by the deadline are subject to the stipulation in 2d.
3. Requalification (After Failure to Renew)
 - a. Those who wish to reapply for the CGWP status shall follow the same application process as those initially applying for the designation.
4. Decertification
 - a. Decertification may result if it is learned that the CGWP misrepresented his/her qualification(s) for certification or failed to follow the first six (6) Canons of Professional Practice for the Groundwater Professional.
 - b. Initially, the PDOS will determine if probable cause exists for the investigation to proceed. If cause exists, the chair of the Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee may appoint an appropriately composed committee of three (3) members in good standing to investigate and report back.
 - c. In the event decertification proceedings must be initiated, the subject CGWP will be notified of any impending action and given an informal opportunity to be heard to address the allegations in writing or in person at the discretion of the appointed committee.
 - d. The appointed committee shall issue its findings to the Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee and NGWA shall provide appropriate notice to the subject CGWP.
 - e. Hearings, reconsideration, or any other proceedings concerning decertification, recertification, or denial of certification shall be conducted at the sole discretion of the Association. (Any expenses incurred for an in person hearing shall be the responsibility of the subject CGWP).
 - f. A decertified individual may not represent themselves as certified by NGWA nor use the CGWP designation or logo.
5. Fees
 - a. Application and renewal fees are established by NGWA. Renewal fees must be received by NGWA by the December 31 deadline.
6. Oversight
 - a. The Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee oversees the CGWP program including:

- i. Evaluates professional credit criteria.
 - ii. Develops professional credit criteria.
 - iii. Considers questions arising concerning applicability of activities proposed for credit by CGWPs seeking certification renewal.
 - iv. Evaluates circumstances leading to a request for decertification.
 - v. Appoints task forces/review committees as needed.
7. Public Information
- a. As a public service names of Certified Groundwater Professionals are provided upon request.

Certified Sales Professional (CSP)

1. Eligibility
 - a. Candidates must be groundwater industry manufacturers or suppliers.
 - b. Candidates must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
 - c. Candidates must have twenty-four (24) consecutive months of employment specific to water systems and/or drilling operations.
 - d. Applicant must complete and return the NGWA Certification Agreement. The agreement form must be received by NGWA within twelve months of the qualifying exam date.
2. Examinations
 - a. Two (2) exams are available for those desiring to become Certified Sales Professionals.
 - b. One exam addresses drilling operations.
 - c. A second exam addresses water systems.
 - d. Exam items will be reviewed periodically and updated accordingly to reflect best industry practice.
3. Designations
 - a. The designation of Certified Sales Professional I (CSP–I) shall be accorded to any eligible individual who passes one exam, regardless of topic area with a seventy (70) percent or better score.
 - b. The designation of Certified Sales Professional II (CSP–II) shall be accorded to any eligible individual who passes both exams, in any order, with a seventy (70) percent or better score.
4. Recertification
 - a. All certification renewal materials must be received by December 31st of the renewing year
 - b. Annual recertification fees are due.
 - c. Seven (7) annual continuing education points are required. Points can be accrued by the following methods:
 - i. Groundwater-related conventions/expositions/meetings—one point per day attended (state, regional, or national shows)
 - ii. NGWA Delegates Meeting—one point per year
 - iii. Workshops, conferences, or training schools—one point per hour of instruction
 - iv. ~~Safety meetings—two points maximum per year~~ (effective January 1, 2016)
 - v. High school career day presentation—one point for each hour of presentation
 - vi. NGWA McElhiney Lecture—one-and-a-half points
 - vii. Writing an article for a groundwater-related publication—two points maximum (proof required)
 - viii. Community services—one point for each presentation (talks, films, slide shows, etc., regarding the groundwater, industry)
 - ix. Participation in a groundwater-related Webinar—one credit per hour Webinar.
 - x. Presenting of a groundwater-related Webinar—two credits per hour of presented Webinar
 - xi. Documented attendance at industry safety meetings (OSHA, MSHA, initial or refresher training — one point per hour, three points maximum per year (effective January 1, 2016)
 - xii. Others—acceptance of points will be determined by the coordinator when they are received
5. Out-of-Compliance

- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 4 Recertification are categorized as Out-of-Compliance for one calendar year. The Out-of-Compliance status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the In-Good-Standing year.
 - b. When an individual has been deemed Out-of-Compliance they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the National Ground Water Association Voluntary Certification Program in any way until they have reinstated their certification.
 - c. Out-of-Compliance individuals will receive quarterly letters stating their condition and what they must provide to reinstate their certification.
 - d. Recertification and reinstatement fees are non-refundable once submitted.
 - e. Out-of-Compliance individuals who fail to reinstate within one calendar year are categorized as decertified.
6. Reinstatement to In-Good-Standing After Out-of-Compliance
- a. Noncompliant individuals shall be reinstated within the same calendar year after fulfilling and submitting all recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and paying an additional reinstatement fee.
7. Decertification
- a. Individuals who fail to meet the recertification requirements as stated in section 2 Recertification and fail to reinstate their certification from Out-of-Compliance are then categorized as Decertified. The Decertification status commences on January 1 following a December 31 cutoff from the Out-of-Compliance year.
 - b. When an individual has been deemed Decertified they are no longer able to affiliate themselves with the NGWA Voluntary Certification Program in any way.
 - c. Decertified individuals will receive a letter within sixty (60) days of decertification stating their status.
 - d. A decertified individual may not reenter the program at their previous certification level. To reenter the program they must fulfill the same requirements as a new candidate.
 - e. Decertification occurs when an individual who participated in the professional designations program fails to meet the renewal requirements and then fails to meet the reinstatement requirements by the stated deadline, to include:
 - i. Annual affidavit
 - ii. Annual continuing education
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 Those who have been decertified due to a failure to renew may reenter the program immediately by retesting.
 - f. Certification shall be revoked under these circumstances:
 - i. Any action that threatens to undermine, detract from, or compromise the integrity of the NGWA Certification Program
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 - iv. Misrepresentation of certification status or classification
 - v. Revocation or suspension of state license or credential (if applicable) related to groundwater resources
 - vi. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of certification examination questions or answers
 - vii. The conviction or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere to a felony or misdemeanor related to actions that compromise the integrity of the certification or otherwise harm the groundwater resource
 - viii. Professional malpractice or negligence that reflects adversely on one's ability to serve the industry or the public in a positive and professional manner
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 - g. The revocation process begins when a written complaint pursuant to the grounds for decertification is filed against a specific certificant. Upon receipt of such complaint, staff is responsible for:
 - i. Attesting the complaint form is properly completed
 - ii. Acknowledging receipt of the complaint

- iii. Placing said complaint on the PDOS agenda while maintaining the confidentiality of the identity of the subjects involved.
 - h. The PDOS shall review complaint and determine if it has merit and should be investigated further or has no merit. Upon investigation, if the complaint has merit, the PDOS shall determine if the certificant's status should be revoked. This will be done by a scheduled hearing of which the certificant will be notified at least five (5) working days in advance. The certificant may choose to be represented at the hearing. The PDOS will render a decision as to whether the individual's certification should be preserved or revoked, within five (5) working days of the hearing. The individual will be so notified in writing within sixty (60) days of the outcome.
 - i. Upon revocation of certification, the individual may appeal the PDOS decision to the NGWA Board in writing within thirty (30) days of revocation notice.
 - i. Individuals who have had their certification revoked may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation, provided their state license or credential has not been revoked or suspended. In the event their state license has been revoked or suspended, they may reenter the program by retesting after thirty-six (36) months from the date of revocation provided their state credential has been reissued.
8. Retired Certified Sales Professionals
- a. Retired, in accordance with the NGWA Code of Regulations, is defined as those who have been active and who, as a result of retirement, disability or other good cause, are no longer active in the groundwater industry.
 - b. Eligible individuals must submit a retired declaration at the time of retirement.
 - c. Retired Certified Sales Professionals may continue to use the designation in this format: CSP—I Retired or CSP—II Retired.
9. Oversight Body
- a. The Professional Designations Oversight Subcommittee to the NGWA Professional Development Committee oversees the program. The purpose of this subcommittee is to administer and review the activities of all NGWA professional designation programs.