



Guidance for Resiliency Training Requirements for Water Operators

History of the Training Requirement

During the week of February 14, 2021, a severe winter storm, referred to as Winter Storm Uri, brought record low temperatures, ice, and snow across Texas. The storm impacted many of the state's public water systems causing widespread water outages or shortages, burst pipes, and equipment failures that disrupted water treatment processes. On June 8, 2021, the 87th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 3 to address preparing for, preventing, and responding to weather emergencies and power outages. As a result of this bill, TCEQ has developed a resiliency training requirement for water operators.

Resiliency Training for a New Water Operator License

The new resiliency training requirement for obtaining a new water operator license of any level can be achieved by two methods. The applicant can either take a TCEQ-approved Basic Waterworks Operation core course that has incorporated an overview of all resiliency topics, as part of the training, or take a separate TCEQ-approved Resiliency Overview core course, in addition to the Basic Waterworks Operation core course. If taken as a standalone course, it must be successfully completed prior to applying for any water license.

The resiliency training component required for a new license, whether as part of the Basic Waterworks Operation core course or as a separate Resiliency Overview core course, must, at a minimum, provide an overview of all the TCEQ-approved Resiliency Curriculum Guidance Topics included in **Appendix A**.

Option One: Revised Basic Waterworks Operation Core Course

Resiliency training topics may be added to any TCEQ approved 20-hour Basic Waterworks Operation core course, extending the duration for the resiliency-approved version by two hours. TCEQ would need to review and approve revisions to the Basic Waterwork Operation core course, as well as issue a new course code.

Option Two: Resiliency Overview Standalone Core Course

The 2-hour training can be delivered as a separate Resiliency Overview core course

based on the TCEQ-approved Resiliency Curriculum Guidance. This course can be delivered by TCEQ or by independent training providers. TCEQ would need to review and approve Resiliency Overview core courses and issue a unique course code to identify them as core courses.

Resiliency Training for Renewing a Water License

A minimum of two hours of resiliency training will be required to renew all Water Operator licenses of any level. Currently, 30 hours of continuing education (CE) is required to renew a water license. Of the 30 CE hours required, at least two CEs must be approved as resiliency training to be eligible to renew a license.

This CE training must provide a more in-depth coverage of one or more of the TCEQ-approved Resiliency Curriculum Guidance topics (Appendix A).

Training Providers' Responsibilities

Training providers who wish to participate in providing resiliency training opportunities may do any or all of the following:

- Revise their Basic Waterworks Operations core course to include a 2-hour resiliency overview module;
- Develop a standalone 2-hour Resiliency Overview core course for new licenses; and/or
- Develop standalone resiliency training courses for any of the topics in Appendix A to meet the CE requirements for renewal.

Training providers who choose NOT to incorporate two hours of training into their Basic Waterworks Operations course do not require any action. The training may continue to be conducted, as approved.

All training providers who: 1) incorporate the resiliency overview into their Basic Water Operation core course; 2) develop standalone Resiliency Overview core courses; or 3) develop standalone Resiliency CE courses must provide the qualifications for the subject matter expert (SME) who developed the training and submit qualifications for the instructor who will deliver the training.

Subject Matter experts and instructors must have at least three years of relevant industry experience performing water operator job tasks including some of the topics as listed in Appendix A. Refer to [RG-373](#) for more details on SME and instructor qualifications.

Timeline

Once resiliency training is widely available for both new and renewal licenses, TCEQ will provide notification to all licensed individuals to start incorporating this requirement in license applications in fiscal year 2024. TCEQ encourages all interested training providers to begin development of resiliency courses as soon as possible.

Appendix A

Resiliency Training Curriculum Guidance

2-Hour Resiliency Overview Core Course

The Resiliency Overview Core course, whether stand alone or part of the Waterworks Operation Core Course, must cover an overview of all of the following topics:

Incident Command System/National Incident Management System

The course must provide an introductory overview of the Incident Command System (ICS) and/or the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The content must include:

- Basic structure of the ICS while providing a foundation for higher level ICS training.
- Basic understanding of FEMA's NIMS concepts, principles, and explain the relationship between ICS and NIMS.

State Disaster Assistance

The course must provide an overview of the State Assistance Process during emergency incidents. The course content must include:

- The identification and coordination with county and/or local emergency management personnel.
- Overview of the Texas Division of Emergency Management role and responsibilities.
- Instruction on utilization of the State Assistance Request (STAR) Form.
- Information on state disaster funding programs.

Emergency Preparedness Plans

The course must provide an overview of the Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) requirements. Overview must include:

- Senate Bill 3 and Senate Bill 361/House Bill 805 review.
- Instruction on use of TCEQ templates and other tools.
- Review of EPP Waiver request process.

Mutual Aid Agreements

The course must provide introductory information on Mutual Aid, and must include:

- Basic instruction on how to develop a Mutual Aid agreement.
- Review the elements of a mutual aid agreement required by FEMA.
- Discuss the common elements and how to apply them in a mutual aid partnership.

Critical Components

The course must provide an overview of critical water system components. The content must include:

- Process to make the determination of water system critical components.
- Overview of some best management practices for protecting them from all-season weather hazards or other emergency conditions.

Standalone Resiliency Training Courses for License Renewal

Resiliency training courses for CE credit must include in-depth material on one or more of the following topics:

- Incident Command System/National Incident Management System
- State Disaster Assistance
- Emergency Preparedness Plans
- Mutual Aid Agreements
- Critical Components