

OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Certification (valid for a three year period)

1. Determine if you want to be certified

- Access the NRCS national TechReg web site at: <http://techreg.usda.gov>
- Click on “Certification Categories” on the left side of the page. Review the categories that you may want certification in and the criteria that you must meet to receive certification.
- Click on “View Terms and Conditions” also on the left side of the page and review.
- Continue if you meet all the required criteria and wish to apply for certification.

2. Request certification.

- **“Getting the appropriate accounts and passwords needed to request certification”**
 - i. Access the NRCS national TechReg web site at: <http://techreg.usda.gov>
 - ii. Click on “New User” or the pathway under “How do I Access TechReg” or “Get a Level 2 eAuthentication Account”. Each of these takes you to the E-authentication site. Review the “What is an account” page and apply for a USDA level 2 E-government user ID and password.
 - iii. Respond within 7 days to any confirmation e-mail that may be sent to you from this site.
 - iv. Then visit a local NRCS office with a government picture i.d. to activate your level 2 information and to request a Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) account. The local office official should activate your level 2 information; develop a SCIMS account for you and “link the SCIMS account to your level 2 information”. Local officials sometimes forget this critical linking step. So remind them if necessary. TechReg will not allow you to use your activated i.d. and password if the SCIMS/Level 2 link has not been completed. Once linked your Level 2 user id and password can be used within a few hours to begin the on-line certification process on TechReg.
 - v. **Note: Neither a level 2 Account nor an assigned TSP application number means you are certified.**
- **“Requesting certification”**
 - i. Go back to the main TechReg site; click on “Help”; then the step by step guide. Print and review.
 - ii. Return to the main TechReg site and click on “login” and request certification.

3. Common issues and problems in requesting certification:

- **Profile Part 1 Section A. Contact Information.** This comes from your SCIMS account. If you need to change your contact information you have to return to your local office and request they change your SCIMS information. The information cannot be changed on line by you.
- **Profile Part 1 Section B. Associated Companies/Agencies.** This section is normally left blank and only used when a business or agency wants to appear on TechReg.
- **Profile Part 1 Section C. Accreditations/Licenses.** Certification criteria for some categories require licenses or accreditations. Your application will not be processed if required licenses or accreditations are not shown in this section or if your license has expired.
- **Profile Part 1 Section E1- Professional References.** Always fill this section out and try to provide references from clients. Certification criteria for some categories require references specific to the category or practice you want certification in (indicated by a red box in Section G). In such cases your application will not be processed if Section E1 is not completed. Additionally, NRCS staff will be looking at this section carefully for all categories.
- **Profile Part 1 Section F-Familiarity with NRCS Guidelines, Criteria and Standards.** Always complete this section. This section is often left blank or is lacking in specifics. All State TSP Coordinators will carefully review this section. The Minnesota NRCS will not certify you until you have familiarized yourself with NRCS-Mn. Conservation practice technical guidance and cost-share program policies addressing producer payments for implementing or installing conservation practices.

- **Profile Part 1 Section F1-modules 1-5 conservation planning course.** Not indicating that you have taken this course or have equivalent knowledge leaves your application in an “incomplete” status.
- **Profile Part 1 Section F2- TSP Orientation.** (Does not apply to renewal requests.) Not indicating that you have taken this course leaves your application in an “incomplete” status.
- **Profile Part 2 Section G-Certification Categories.** Select the category (ies) you are requesting certification for. Then select the option under each category whose criteria you must meet to receive certification (toggle it on). Then indicate “how you meet the criteria” (Check the appropriate boxes). “Save” your entries. Each category you want to be certified in should show a “ready to sign” status if you have completed and saved everything correctly. After signing the agreement in section J the section G category statuses will change to “submitted” (as in submitted for review). If you miss something your section G statuses will show as “incomplete” and you won’t be allowed to sign your certification agreement. The only status you ultimately want to see in your section G statuses is “submitted”.

A print screen of a correctly completed Section G is shown at the end of this overview. The selected category was Manure Wastewater Handling and Storage. The applicant had several options (left hand column) available to demonstrate competency. The applicant toggled the “experience” option. The “experience” option had six requirements (criteria) all of which must be met. The applicant toggled all appropriate “how criteria were met” boxes. Actually the applicant toggled on more than was needed because every box was checked.

Many mistakes are made in this section. Some candidates fail to select or toggle an “option”. Others fail to check one or more “how criteria were met” boxes thus leaving the application in an “incomplete” status. Others fail to provide references in Section E1 when references are mandatory.

- **Profile Part 2 Section H-Services.** Many applicants select all the conservation practices (services) available under a category instead of limiting services to those they have experience in.
- **Profile Part 2 Section I-Servicing Area.** You become certified to provide services in the entire state and this section initially defaults to the entire state. However please only indicate those counties you are will service. To do otherwise does a disservice to producers looking for a TSP who will work in their county.
- **Profile Part 2 Section J-Certification Agreement.** Applicants sometimes do not complete this section even though everything else has been correctly completed. In this case the application will show a “Ready” (possibly an “incomplete” status) and will not be “Submitted” to NRCS for review. Anytime you “update” Section G you will have to resign the Part J Certification agreement. However your original certification renewal date remains the same. Successfully completing your application puts it into a “Submitted” status in Section G. If it says “Submitted” you know that state TSP Coordinators have been sent your application for review. Additionally, you will receive an E-mail telling you that you have successfully requested certification.

4. Review of requested certification.

- NRCS TSP coordinators will review and verify your application by:
 - i. Checking required licenses; completion of required courses; and references.
 - ii. Occasionally asking for work examples on certain practices such as “prescribed burning ”
 - iii. Often asking you how you became familiar with NRCS standards and policies
 - iv. Occasionally asking you about your experience with specific conservation practices (services) that you are requesting certification for within a category.

Certification renewal

Your certification is valid for three years. You will be notified by NRCS via e-mail or letter at least 60 days in advance that it is time to request renewal.

Jeff St. Ores
NRCS TSP Coordinator in Minnesota
Updated 03/10/08

Update Criteria - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Select Option	Criteria	How Criteria Was Met				
		License / Certificate	Education	Work Exp.	References	NRCS Fam.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 1 - Experience.	A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Complete modules 1 through 5 of NRCS Conservation Planning course. Anyone can take the first 5 modules of the Conservation Planning Course, self-paced, off of the Internet. The web site for the course is: http://www.nedc.nrcs.usda.gov/catalog/consplan.html	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Complete NRCS training course Animal Waste Management- a primer or an NRCS approved equivalent.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Complete NRCS training course Animal Waste Management- level 2 or an NRCS approved equivalent.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Experience in the planning, design, layout, inspection and certification of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices including any applicable Standards and Specifications.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Provide two locations or customer references where technical service has been provided that can verify your experience and proficiency in planning, designing, installation/layout, and checkout of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="radio"/> Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 2 - Univ TN Certification.	A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Experience in the planning, design, layout, inspection and certification of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices including any applicable Standards and Specifications.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Certification through the University of Tennessee CNMP Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage element certification process.	Specific License/Cert. Required None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide two locations or customer references where technical service has been provided that can verify your experience and proficiency in planning, designing, installation/layout, and checkout of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="radio"/> Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 3	A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	CNMP Plan Development - Total Plan Certification as a	Specific License/Cert. Required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Close

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