

# OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER CERTIFICATION PROCESS

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 and respective required competency criteria.
  - Click on “View Terms and Conditions” also on the left side of the page and review.
  - Continue if you wish to apply for certification.
2. **Get the appropriate accounts and passwords needed to request certification**
  - **E-authentication** <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthCreateAccount.html>
    - i. Access the e-authentication web site and apply for a USDA level 2 E-government user ID and password.
    - ii. Complete and submit requested information. You should receive a confirmation e-mail within 1 hour and must respond to that e-mail within 7 days by clicking on: **ACTIVATE MY ACCOUNT**. At this point your account is considered Level 1.
    - iii. Then visit a local NRCS office with a government picture i.d. to have a local official activate your level 1 to 2.
3. **Request certification.** <http://techreg.usda.gov>
  - Go to the TechReg site and click on “login” in the left hand corner with your level 2 i.d. and password. This begins the request for certification process by taking you to your profile.
  - Completing portions of the certification request:
    - i. **Profile Part 1 Section A. Contact Information.** Click on Add/Update Contact Info and enter the requested information.
    - ii. **Profile Part 1 Section B. Associated Companies/Agencies.** This section should be left blank and only used when a business or agency wants to appear on TechReg.
    - iii. **Profile Part 1 Section C1. Accreditations/Licenses.** Certification criteria for some categories require licenses or accreditations. Your application will not be processed if these are not shown in this section or have expired.
    - iv. **Profile Part 1 Section E1- Professional References.** Your application will not be processed if Section E1 is not completed. NRCS staff will be looking at this section carefully for all categories.
    - v. **Profile Part 1 Section F-Familiarity with NRCS Guidelines, Criteria and Standards.** Candidates often leave this section blank or provide no specifics. NRCS will carefully review this section and not certify you unless you have indicated how you are familiar with NRCS technical and cost-share program guidance.
    - vi. **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.
    - vii. **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.
    - viii. **Profile Part 2 Section G1-Certification Categories.** Click on “Add Criteria”, select the appropriate state and category (ies) you are interested in and “Close”. All selected categories should appear with an “incomplete” status. Click on and complete “Confirm Qualifications” for each selected category. Some categories have several competency options (left hand side). Select (toggle on) only one option. Then indicate “how you meet the competency criteria” associated with the selected option (Choose the appropriate dropdown or check the appropriate box). *A print screen of a correctly completed “Confirm Qualifications” is shown at the end of this overview. The category was Nutrient Management-Organic and Inorganic. The applicant selected option 1-Organization Certification (left hand column) to demonstrate competency. The applicant then selected the appropriate drop down box answer and checked other boxes under “how criteria were met”.* “Save” and close. This takes you back to Section G1. Each correctly completed category should now show a “ready to sign” status instead of an “incomplete” status. The agreement is signed and submitted in section J. Many mistakes are made in Section G1 often leaving all categories in an “incomplete” status. The application cannot be submitted for review.

- ix. **Profile Part 2 Section I-Servicing Area.** Although you become certified for an entire state you should select only those counties you will work in instead of the default entire state. Otherwise your name appears in each county when producers browse for TSPs in a specific county.
- x. **Profile Part 2 Section J-Certification Agreement.** This section must be completed but can only be completed if at least one category in Section G1 or G2 has a “ready to sign” status. Otherwise the application stays in limbo and NRCS cannot certify you. After completing Section J you will receive an E-mail saying that you have successfully submitted your application for review. Anytime you add a category to Section G1 after initial certification you will have to resign the Part J Certification agreement. However your original certification renewal date remains the same.

**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. As a courtesy 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 09/23/2010

Update Criteria - Windows Internet Explorer

**Category: Nutrient Management - Organic and Inorganic**

Services:

**Instructions: In order to be certified for this Category, select ONE group from the group(s) listed below, you must meet ALL of the criteria in the selected group:**

General Requirements	License / Certificate	How Criteria Was Met	Work Exp.	References	NRCS Fam.
<b>Nutrient Mgt Option 1 - Organization Certification.</b> Certification in at least one of the following: 1) CCA- Certified Crop Advisor certification from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), 2) CPAG- Certified Professional Agronomist certification from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), 3) CPCSc: Certified Professional Crop Scientist certification from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), 4) CPSSc: Certified Professional Soil Scientist certification from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), 5) Crop Certification through the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC), 6) Total Plan Certification as a CNMP Planner through the Validus (formerly EMS LLC) certification process. 7) Other NRCS approved training program.	<b>State License/Cert. Required</b> Certified Crop Advisor	<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 Nutrient Management practices.	License from Part 1 Certified Crop Advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Required</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State certification in the state(s) in which service will be provided when required by state regulation or policy.	<b>State License/Cert. Required</b> No License Required for this State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Successfully complete modules 1 - 7 of the Nutrient track of the NRCS course Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning.	License from Part 1 Certified Crop Advisor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Nutrient Mgt Option 2 - State Certification.</b> Knowledge of conservation practices and management activities to reduce the potential for nutrient transport. Proficient in the use of erosion prediction and nutrient transport risk assessment tools (including Leaching Index, Phosphorus Index, RUSLE2, and WEQ).	License from Part 1 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 Nutrient Management practices.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Required</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State certification in the state(s) in which service will be provided when required by state regulation or policy.	<b>State License/Cert. Required</b> Certified Crop Advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Successfully complete modules 1 - 7 of the Nutrient track of the NRCS course Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Close

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