

# Water Operator Licensing Rules To Be Revised

Jeff Stone, P.E., Director

Changes in Arkansas law made during the 2019 legislative session will necessitate revising the Arkansas Department of Health's Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Water Operator Licensing. Once this process is complete these rules will have a new title of "Arkansas Department of Health's Rules Pertaining to Water Operator Licensing". The changes in state law are as follows.

Act 820 concerns the occupational licensing of active duty service members, returning military veterans, and their spouses. The requirements of the law require an expedited process of issuing a license if the active duty service member, returning military veteran, or spouse, holds an equivalent occupational license in another state, territory, or district of the United States.

Act 1011 concerns licensing rules when a license is to be reinstated or issued based upon reciprocity. The law places limits upon the requirements that can be placed upon a person petitioning for a reinstatement of their license or issuance of a license based upon reciprocity.

Act 426 concerns issuing of temporary or provisional licenses and to reduce barriers to entrance of qualified workers to the labor market.

Act 315 requires that modified rules and regulations uniformly utilize the word "rule" rather than "rule" and "regulation" being used interchangeably and perhaps creating confusion.

The actual text of these legislative acts can be searched for and viewed at <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/SearchCenter/Pages/historicalbil.aspx>

The process for changing the water operator licensing rules begins with asking the Board of Health permission to initiate rule change. It is expected that permission will be requested at the August 1<sup>st</sup> Board of Health meeting. If permission is granted, the process of rule change will begin and will follow the legal requirements governing this process. Part of the process will include notice to the regulated community and opportunity for public comment. The Engineering Section at the Arkansas Department of Health will keep the regulated community informed. If you have any questions at this time, you can email me at [jeffery.stone@arkansas.gov](mailto:jeffery.stone@arkansas.gov)

# Annual Compliance Report Available

Jeff Stone, P.E., Director

The Engineering Section has completed the Annual Compliance Report (ACR) pertaining to calendar year 2018. As the primacy agency in Arkansas for the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), the ACR is required to be completed and made available for each calendar year. The deadline for making this report available is July 1 of the following year.

The ACR contains detailed information concerning the violations that public water systems have incurred and overall statistics concerning compliance with SDWA requirements for public water systems in the state. Highlights of the report are as follows:

Population of Arkansas	3,013,825
% of Arkansans Served by Public Water	97.2 %
Community Public Water Systems	690
Transient, Non-Community PWSs	346
Non-Transient, Non-Community PWSs	35
Monitoring Compliance	99.9 %
SDWA Water Quality Compliance	97.1 %
Overall SDWA Compliance	97.0 %

It is important to understand that overall compliance rates rise and fall incrementally as new SDWA requirements become effective and public water systems make adjustments to maintain compliance. The overall compliance rate of 97.0% for 2018 is slightly lower than the 2017 level of 98.0%.

As in recent years, compliance with disinfection-by-product limitations continues to present the biggest challenge to water quality for drinking water systems in Arkansas. This is largely the result of our forested watersheds combined with warm temperatures in our state and the necessary practice of disinfection.

The most recent ACR is available via the Engineering Section website <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/epa-drinking-water-annual-violation-reports> If a paper copy is desired, please send a request to [jeffery.stone@arkansas.gov](mailto:jeffery.stone@arkansas.gov) or via regular mail to Jeff Stone, Engineering Section, Arkansas Department of Health, 4815 West Markham, Slot 37, Little Rock, AR 72205.