

**Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.
WATER & WASTEWATER PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
FOR PERSONNEL OF TRIBAL WATER UTILITIES**



Established to strengthen Tribal governments and promote Tribal sovereignty.

**TRIBAL UTILITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION
LEVEL 1**

APPLICATION BOOKLET

Revised February 2025

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THE ITCA TRIBAL WATER SYSTEMS PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) Tribal Water Systems Professional Certification Program was developed to meet the specific needs of Tribal utility personnel by providing training and certification services; thus, promoting Tribal sovereignty and strengthening Tribal governments. Since 2008, ITCA continues to be a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved provider of operator certification services under the U.S. EPA national *Tribal Drinking Water Operator Certification Program*. ITCA's EPA approval is further recognized in 75 Federal Register 48329 (August, 2010). ITCA is the largest American Indian organization offering EPA-approved operator certification and makes its training and professional certification services available for personnel of Tribal water and wastewater utility systems nationwide. Although a U.S. EPA Tribal wastewater operator certification program currently does not exist at the national level, ITCA provides wastewater training and operator certification services using the same methods and level of rigor as those set forth by the U.S. EPA for drinking water. In addition, using industry standards and best practices for professional credentialing, ITCA offers professional certification services for Tribal water/wastewater utility managers.

Through the administration of the Tribal Water Systems Professional Certification Program, ITCA ensures that personnel of Tribal water and wastewater utilities are provided with training and certification to assist them in meeting the requirements necessary to perform their jobs in a competent and professional manner. This professional certification program provides a system wherein persons responsible for providing safe drinking water and adequate sanitation services, may be examined and rated to demonstrate his/her level of competency in operating, maintaining, and managing Tribal utility systems. The ITCA Program directly builds Tribal capacity in operation, maintenance, and management of Tribal water and wastewater systems, which in turn, promotes and enhances public health and safety. Specifically, the ITCA Program performs a crucial function (for Tribes and by Tribes) to ensure that water and wastewater utility personnel have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide adequate and reliable drinking water and sanitation services to Tribal communities in a sustainable manner that is protective of both human health and the environment. The uniqueness of the ITCA Program is that it most directly meets Tribal needs in a culturally competent (sensitive) manner. Unlike the ITCA Program, other utility certification programs are not congruent with the unique needs of tribes; nor are they held accountable by the tribes themselves.

THE INTER TRIBAL COUNCIL OF ARIZONA

The Inter Tribal Association of Arizona was established in 1952 to provide a united voice for tribal governments located in the State of Arizona to address common issues of concerns. Then, in 1975, a private, non-profit corporation—the **Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA)**—was created to provide services that promote Indian self-determination. The work of ITCA staff and its consultants is carried out under the direction and supervision of the Executive Director and is overseen by the Executive Board. Currently, the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. is comprised of 21 Member Tribes located in Arizona. Some of the programs of ITCA provide services to tribes nationwide; an example of which is the ITCA Tribal Water & Wastewater Operator Certification Program.

TRIBAL UTILITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION-LEVEL 1

The purpose of the **Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 (TUMC-1)** is to create a standardized pathway for professionals of Tribal water utilities to advance into and ascend through the field of water and wastewater utility management. The TUMC-1 is designed specifically for experienced Tribal water/wastewater utility professionals that are newly entering into utility program management. This professional certification was developed by subject matter experts with the following goals.

- To set standards for professionals in the field of Tribal water/wastewater utility management.
- To develop a means for signifying an individual's demonstrated ability to apply a standardized level of knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- To promote sustainability of Tribal water/wastewater utility programs.
- To promote the critical role that Tribal water/wastewater utility managers have in protecting public health and the environment in Indian Country.

The TUMC-1 professional certification serves a similar role and functions in a similar manner as do water and wastewater operator certifications. However, professional certification in Tribal utility management is currently not federally mandated and is currently not an eligibility requirement for federal funding. The TUMC-1 professional certification is a voluntary mechanism that can be used to:

- ✓ Benefit an individual's career, as it significantly strengthens one's marketability for employment;
- ✓ Instill confidence in employers and others that the holder of the credential is competent; and
- ✓ Help bring credibility and integrity to a Tribal community's water/wastewater utility program.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Tribal water utilities personnel that are interested in achieving the TUMC-1 professional certification are encouraged to complete and submit the enclosed application forms. There is currently no application fee for the TUMC-1 professional certification. Once received, the ITCA Program will review applications for completeness and will compare the applicant's information to the eligibility criteria described on the next page. An Application for New Certification that is deemed complete by ITCA shall be valid for a time period of one year (365 calendar days) beginning from the date ITCA deemed the application to be complete. Information provided in the application will be used by the ITCA Program to evaluate the applicant based on the ITCA certification eligibility requirements. Once the evaluation is completed, the ITCA Program will issue the applicant a written **Notice of Eligibility Determination**, documenting how well the applicant met the eligibility requirements and whether the applicant is approved to take the certification exam. If the applicant is approved by ITCA to take the certification exam, the applicant must bring the Notice of Eligibility Determination to the certification exam location as proof of approval to enter into a specific exam session. A successful candidate is then issued the TUMC-1 professional certification, which is valid for a time period of up to three (3) years and can be renewed for subsequent three-year periods. To learn more about the TUMC-1 examination, please refer to the ***ITCA Need to Know Criteria for Tribal Utility Management Certification***, which is a separate document.

CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility requirements for Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 include the three primary components of training, work experience, and a passing score on the certification exam. The full list and description of the eligibility requirements is described below. Manager-In-Training (MIT) status is available for up to one year for applicants with deficiencies in the eligibility requirements. Please contact the Tribal Water Systems Program at (602) 258-4822 if you have any questions.

- 1) **Complete Application:** The candidate must submit a complete application. An application is deemed complete by ITCA after a thorough review of the application is made.
- 2) **Pre-Certification Training:** The candidate must have accrued at least six (6) hours of approved *Pre-Certification* training. ITCA makes determinations on the acceptability of an applicant's *Pre-Certification* training hours, which must be related to topics on utility management.
- 3) **Employed on Tribal Lands:** To be eligible, a candidate must be currently working for at least six (6) weeks on Tribal lands of a federally-recognized tribe.
- 4) **Qualifying Experience:** An eligible candidate must have at least six (6) months of experience in being actively involved in the day-to-day operation, or management, and/or governance of a water utility.
- 5) **Passing Score:** To be eligible, a candidate must take and pass the 100-question certification exam. Because this is a brand new certification and examination, the passing score is currently being statistically evaluated.

Eligibility Requirements Summary Table

		Certification Level
		1
1	Complete Application	Submit a complete application
2	Pre-Certification Training	Have accrued at least six (6) hours of approved training
3	Employed on Tribal Land	Be currently working for at least six (6) weeks on Tribal Lands
4	Qualifying Experience	Have at least six (6) months of experience in being actively involved in the day-to-day operation, or management, and / or governance of a water / wastewater utility.
5	Passing Score	Take and pass the certification exam. Passing score is currently under review.

TRAINING CONTACT HOUR REQUIREMENTS

The ITCA Program defines “**Training Contact Hour**” as a basic unit of measure of training based upon the two fully documented factors of: (1) time spent actively engaged and expanding one’s career-based knowledge (2) in a distinct subject matter. A full sixty minutes of learning on a specific subject matter, as verified and documented by the trainer or a third party, constitutes a single Training Contact Hour. The ITCA Program established training requirements for eligibility of both new professional certification and renewal of expiring professional certification. Applicants for new professional certification must submit proof of having accrued a minimum number of Training Contact Hours to ITCA to evaluate for approval as **Pre-Certification Training Credit**. Likewise, applicants for renewal of expiring professional certification must submit proof of having accrued a minimum number of Training Contact Hours to ITCA to evaluate for approval as **Post-Certification Training Credit** (also known as **Professional Development Hours or PDHs**). In both processes (new certification and renewal), Training Contact Hours must be on topics that are essential and specific to the job tasks.

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

ITCA professional certification is issued for a time period of no greater than three (3) years. Certification may be issued for time periods less than three years to accommodate special circumstances. To apply for certification renewal, a completed **Renewal Application Form** must be submitted to ITCA six (6) months prior to a certification’s expiration date. However, applications for renewal may be submitted to ITCA as early as one (1) year prior to the certification’s expiration date and shall not be submitted less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the certification’s expiration date. A professional certification that lapses beyond its expiration date becomes null and void, and is “retired” by ITCA. In such cases, an operator can become recertified by submitting an **Application for New Certification** and retesting.

To be eligible to renew an ITCA Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1 professional certification, the holder of the professional certification must have accrued a minimum of 30 Training Contact Hours in approved subject matter, which must consist of at least 10 hours in Technical capacity, 10 hours in Managerial capacity, and 10 hours in Financial capacity training (TMF - 10/10/10). Training Contact Hours submitted to ITCA for approval and acceptance as Professional Development Hours (PDHs) for *Post-Certification Training Credit* must have been earned during the effective time period of the certification being renewed. The Training Contact Hours must be listed and described on the Renewal Application Form with attached copies of documents showing proof of attendance. The following are U.S. Environmental Protection Agency definitions of Technical, Managerial, and Financial capacity.

- **Technical capacity** is the physical and operational ability of a water system to meet the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. It refers to the physical, or infrastructure components of the water system, including the characteristics of the source water, the adequacy of treatment, and the condition of the pump treatment, storage, and distribution systems.
- **Managerial capacity** is the ability of the system to conduct its affairs in a manner which allows it to achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. It refers to the overall organizational structure of the system and includes having a clearly identified owner

who is accountable for the system. Managerial capacity includes the staffing organization of the system to allow the efficient use of human resources and assigns clear authorities and responsibilities between the Tribal Council or Chairman, managers, operators and customers. Managerial capacity includes effective linkages to people and organizations that can provide help in case of need.

- **Financial capacity** is the ability of the system to acquire and manage sufficient funds to achieve and maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. It includes having the revenue sufficiency to cover all costs—even if there is no charge for water—and will invest in infrastructure replacement. Financial capacity includes having credit worthiness to allow the system to borrow money, and will use established fiscal management and controls to keep track of payments and receipts.

RECIPROCITY

An applicant that holds a professional certification / license from another jurisdiction may apply for an equivalent professional certification with ITCA through Reciprocity in lieu of taking the certification examination with ITCA. An ITCA professional certification that is issued through reciprocity will honor and cover the same time period as the original certification. To apply for ITCA professional certification through reciprocity, complete and submit to ITCA the **Application for New Certification**. The ITCA Program will evaluate each reciprocity application on a case-by-case basis. ITCA reserves the right to deny reciprocity in instances when ITCA determines the credential issued from another jurisdiction is not sufficiently similar in nature and methodology to the ITCA TUMC-1 certification program. *Please Note: A certification agency can grant reciprocity for a certification issued only from the certification's original testing jurisdiction. In other words, reciprocity cannot be granted for a certification that has already been granted reciprocity (i.e., not more than once-removed from the originating point of origin).*

SYNCHRONIZATION OF MULTIPLE CERTIFICATIONS

Tribal water utilities personnel that hold more than one professional certification with ITCA may apply for the synchronization of the effective time periods of those certifications. The certifications identified on the **Synchronization Application Form** (currently under development) will have their effective dates truncated to a common time period.



TRIBAL UTILITY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION-LEVEL 1

APPLICATION FOR NEW CERTIFICATION

An application must be submitted to ITCA Program staff well enough in advance of a scheduled examination session to ensure sufficient time for review of the application and to determine whether or not the applicant is eligible to take the certification exam.

Please use this checklist to determine if your application is complete and ready to be submitted to ITCA.

Application Checklist for New Certification				
Form Page No.	Attached with submitted application?	Page Count	Sections of Application	Completed
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	A. General Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
			B. Application Type	<input type="checkbox"/>
			C. Type of Certification For Which You Are Applying	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	D. Current Level of Certification	<input type="checkbox"/>
			E. Current Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	F. Qualifying Work Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Additional Space For Reporting Qualifying Work Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	G. Training Contact Hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Additional Space For Reporting Training Contact Hours	
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	H. Code of Conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	I. Acknowledgement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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TRIBAL WATER SYSTEMS PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

APPLICATION for PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION—**TUMC-1**

The ITCA Tribal Water Systems Operator Certification Program is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the National Tribal Drinking Water Operator Certification Program and is made available to all tribes nation-wide.

Return Completed Application to:

ITCA Tribal Water Systems Program
2214 N. Central Avenue, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
Phone: (602) 258-4822
Fax: (602) 258-4825
TWSInfo@itcaonline.com

For Official Use Only - Do not write in this space

Application No. _____

Date Initially Received _____

Date Deemed Complete _____

ITCA Operator ID No. _____

Notes:

TO BE CONSIDERED, THIS APPLICATION MUST BE FULLY AND LEGIBLY COMPLETED

Information provided is used to evaluate the applicant's eligibility for certification. Failure to complete any portion of this form may result in delay or denial of the application. All information provided on this application must be truthful. Failure to provide truthful information may result in denial of certification or revocation.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

<i>First Name of Applicant</i>		<i>M.I.</i>	<i>Last Name of Applicant</i>
<i>Home Mailing Address (number and street)</i>			
<i>City</i>		<i>State</i>	<i>Zip Code</i>
<i>Home or Cell Phone Number</i> ()		<i>E-Mail Address</i>	

B. Application Type:

<input type="checkbox"/> INITIAL ITCA CERTIFICATION Through Examination	<input type="checkbox"/> RECIPROCITY of Current Certification Held with Another Certification Agency
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C. TYPE OF CERTIFICATION FOR WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING:

<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Utility Management Certification-Level 1	
<p><i>Not Applicable to TUMC-1</i> <u>Certification Category</u> <i>(Select Only ONE)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Water Treatment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Water Distribution</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater Collection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater Treatment</p>	<p><i>Not Applicable to TUMC-1</i> <u>Level of Certification</u> <i>(Select Only ONE)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 4</p>

TUMC-1 Applicant: _____

Date: _____

D. CURRENT LEVEL OF CERTIFICATION: *(If you currently hold a certification of a category and level that is a relevant factor or a required precursor to this Application, please provide all information details below.*

TUMC-1 Applications: Complete this Section D only IF you are applying for reciprocity for an existing professional certification / license in utility management issued from another entity. Please leave this Section D blank if you are not applying for reciprocity.

Certification Type or Category		Level, Grade, or Class
Issued by what Certification Agency?		Certification Number
Issuance Date	Expiration Date	You obtained the above certification through which method? <input type="checkbox"/> Exam <input type="checkbox"/> Reciprocity*
<i>*If you obtained the above certification by Reciprocity, where did you originally take a certification exam?</i> Agency Name: _____ Approximate Exam Date: _____ Explanation: _____		

E. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

☐ currently not employed

Are you currently working on Tribal Lands? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If yes, for how long? _____ (number of years, months, or weeks)		
What Tribal Lands are you working on (Name of Tribal Nation/Reservation)?		
Your Current Job Title	Name of Utility/Department/Program/Company	
Hours per Week	How long have you worked in this current position?	Start Date:
Work Mailing Address		
City	State	Zip Code
Work Telephone Number ()	Fax Number ()	
Supervisor's Name	Supervisor's telephone number ()	

TUMC-1 Applicant: _____

Date: _____

F. QUALIFYING WORK EXPERIENCE:

Do you have experience in being actively involved in the day-to-day operations, or management, and/or governance of a water/wastewater utility? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, for how long? _____ (total number of years, months, or weeks)

Description of Qualifying Work Experience

For verification purposes, please complete the following for each job or position you have held, as may be relevant to this application for professional certification.

The following information describes my qualifying work experience in: (check all that applies)

☐ Day-to-Day Utility Operations ☐ Utility Management ☐ Utility Governance

Job Title / Board or Committee Position:

Start Date:

End Date:

Utility / Company Name

State & nearest City

Tribe Name (if applicable)

Name of Contact Person for Verification

Contact Phone Number

()

Type of Utility Program(s): (check all that applies).

Wastewater System

Drinking Water - Public Water Supply

☐ Treatment ☐ Collection System

☐ Treatment ☐ Distribution

Please describe your qualifying work experience that you gained from that Job / Position: Please be specific.

Optional Information

In that position, did you supervise other staff?

☐ No ☐ Yes

In that position, did you work with or manage utility operations budgets?

☐ No ☐ Yes

In that position, did you work with or manage capital improvement projects?

☐ No ☐ Yes

In that position, did you make presentations to oversight boards, committees, and/or governing councils?

☐ No ☐ Yes

COPY THIS PAGE IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED TO REPORT QUALIFYING WORK EXPERIENCE GAINED FOM OTHER JOB POSITIONS PREVIOUSLY HELD

TUMC-1 Applicant: _____

Date: _____

G. TRAINING CONTACT HOURS:				
The ITCA requires applicants to demonstrate completion of a minimum number of hours of approved training in topics specific or relevant to the type of certification. Refer to ITCA certification eligibility requirements for details.				
Instructions				
(1) Please list the specialized training you would like ITCA to consider for approval for use as credit towards the eligibility criteria associated with this application. If more than one significant subject was covered during a single training course, please separate the significant subject matter with corresponding training contact hours.				
(2) <u>Attach photocopies</u> of proof of attendance, training agendas, certificates of completion, or letters from the trainer documenting your training activities for the items listed below so that ITCA can evaluate them for approval. Please note that lack of attachment of such documentation may delay the application process.				
Course Title	Date(s)	Location & Instructor	Topic Covered	Subject-Specific Training Contact Hours
Example: XYZ Conference	2/10/2025 to 2/14/2025	San Diego, CA (a) xyz instructor (b) abc instructor (c) 123 instructor	(a) budgets (b) asset management (c) rate setting	(a) 0.5 hrs. (b) 2.5 hrs. (c) 1.5 hrs.

COPY THIS PAGE IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED TO REPORT TRAINING CONTACT HOURS

TUMC-1 Applicant: _____

Applicant ID No. _____

H. CODE OF CONDUCT:

To be completed by applicant. Read following statement and sign and date.

ITCA Code of Conduct for Tribal Utility Managers

Using my best judgment and utility management skills, I will always work to protect the public health, to ensure good service and to protect public property and the environment. I will, at all times, apply my skills in managing water and wastewater utilities in a manner that will promote and encourage the highest quality of water/wastewater utility service within the industry. I will properly and accurately complete required records, follow and comply with all applicable requirements of federal, Tribal and local laws and regulations, maintain my competence in the field by remaining current with changes in the industry and continuing my education, and work with my Tribal community to establish and adhere to distinct and safe operating policies for the public utilities over which I am entrusted.

I agree to comply with this *ITCA Code of Conduct for Tribal Utility Managers* at all times as a condition of holding and maintaining ITCA professional certification and to notify ITCA immediately should I no longer meet any requirements of this *Code of Conduct* or any other applicable requirement of law. In addition to the foregoing, as a condition of testing and continued professional certification, I covenant and agree to:

- Represent myself truthfully and honestly throughout the entire professional certification process;
- Maintain the certification exam content as confidential and protected;
- Not disclose, publish, reproduce or transmit the exam content in any form, verbal, written, or electronic, under any circumstances;
- Adhere to all test site rules and make no attempt to complete the test dishonestly or to assist any other person in doing so;
- Refrain from activities that may jeopardize the integrity of the ITCA Professional Certification Program;
- Not misrepresent nor permit a misrepresentation of my qualifications or the qualifications of my associates; and
- Not conduct myself in a manner that subverts or attempts to subvert the minimum professional certification requirements, application process, or examination processes.

I understand the ITCA professional certification, logo, and marks for the professional certification designation are the property of the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA). I agree to:

- Use such property only in an approved manner;
- Uphold and follow all Tribal Utility Management Certification Program policies and procedures required by the ITCA to remain in good standing;
- Report to the ITCA Tribal Utility Management Certification Program any pending litigation and resulting resolution related to my work in water/wastewater utility management; and
- Avoid any interest or activity that could influence my judgment or bias my decisions as a manager of water and wastewater utilities in a manner that does not conform to the public health or promote environmental safety.

I have read and understand the *ITCA Code of Conduct for Tribal Utility Managers*. I understand that my professional certification shall be valid only so long as I agree with and adhere to this *Code of Conduct*. No professional certification shall be valid if obtained by misconduct. I recognize that a failure to adhere to this *Code of Conduct* is grounds for the suspension and/or revocation of my professional certification.

Applicant's Original Signature
(Please Sign in Blue Ink)

Date of Signature

TUMC-1 Applicant: _____

Applicant ID No.

I. <u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:</u> <i>To be completed by applicant. Read following statement and sign and date.</i>	
<p>I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I am the named applicant submitting this application for professional certification and that all information provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentations may result in ineligibility for professional certification or revocation of professional certification if granted. I consent to the investigation of the information I have provided in order to verify my qualifications for professional certification. By signing below, I give the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) the right to report test results and certification application information to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the purposes of evaluating professional certification eligibility. I also waive all claims and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the ITCA and U.S. EPA for any action taken pursuant to the rules and standards set by the U.S. EPA with regard to my application, and certification examination, and/or my professional certification except claims based on gross negligence or lack of good faith.</p>	
<p>_____ Applicant's Original Signature (Please Sign in Blue Ink)</p>	<p>_____ Date of Signature</p>