

Below is the Department's response to the following request: *Provide an explanation for why you believe or do not believe that the occupational regulations overseen by your board have been effective.*

The Department believes the statute, Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-15,128 to 81-15,143 and the associated regulation, NAC Title 197, Rules and Regulations for the Certification of Wastewater Treatment Operators in Nebraska have been effective in assuring that wastewater treatment plants in Nebraska are operated by well trained and competent operators. Maintaining a certification program is a required element of the EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program. Proper operation and maintenance can prolong the lifespan and sustainability of treatment facilities, protect the owner's financial investment, help the owner meet permitting requirements including discharge limits, and protect human health and the environment from polluted waters. The continuing education requirements ensure that wastewater operators are current with the latest developments, skills and new technologies in the wastewater industry.