

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will I be able to change my grade after grades are published on May 1st?

The published letter grades and scores are not subject to change after May 1st until the next annual letter grade and score is published.

2. Will preliminary grades be published January 1st of each year?

No. The Revised Statute states, “The department shall publish the first letter grades issued pursuant to this Section no later than January 1, 2023.” The letter grades and scores published January 1, 2023 are preliminary and shall be finalized and republished by May 1, 2023 on the LDH OPH website.

For subsequent years starting in 2024, the final letter grades and scores shall be published on the LDH OPH website by May 1 each year.

3. What is the grading period?

Grades are based on the calendar year, January 1st through December 31st.

4. What method am I required to use to notify my customers of the water system’s letter grade?

The final letter grade and scores must be included with the annual Consumer Confidence Report (a.k.a. Annual Water Quality Report) that is posted on the water systems website.

5. Who do I call to check on open significant deficiencies, violations issued during the calendar year, and compliance with Administrative Orders?

Attached is a map with contact information for the LDH OPH Bureau of Engineering Regions and Districts. Information is also available online at <https://sdw.ldh.la.gov/DWW/>.

6. If I experienced a water outage due to a natural disaster, will that result in a deduction of points from my grade?

Water outages during a natural disaster event such as tornados, hurricanes, winter weather – ice storms, etc. are not included in determining the water system’s grade.

7. I issued 5 boil advisories this year, will that result in a deduction of points from my grade?

No, boil *advisories* issued by the water system are not included in determining the water system’s grade; however, boil *notices* are included in the grade. A boil notice is an official order issued by the state health officer to the owner/users of a specific water supply, directing that water from that supply be boiled according to directions, or otherwise disinfected prior to human consumption.

8. My sanitary survey was conducted during the last quarter of 2022. The 90 day due date will be after December 31, 2022. Will the significant deficiencies be included in the 2022 grade?

No. Sanitary surveys conducted between October 1st and December 31st of the calendar year will not be included in the grade determination for that calendar year. If the 90 day due date is after December 31st, the significant deficiencies will be included in determining the grade for the next calendar year.

9. What documents must be submitted to LDH OPH?

Water systems must submit documentation of the following: 1) a rate study dated April 20, 2017 or after, 2) an annual report, a financial report or an audit report, 3) a complaint log, 4) a flushing program (if required), and 5) extra credit (an asset management plan, a storage assessment and maintenance program, a well assessment and maintenance program, participation in a capacity development program approved by LDH OPH, and/or participation in a management training program approved by LDH OPH.. If the water system has any open significant deficiencies that have been resolved, documentation must be submitted to LDH OPH.

10. How do I submit the required documents?

Documents must be submitted by email to water.grade@la.gov.

11. When are the required documents due?

January 31st each year

12. Where can I find information about management training sessions?

Management training information is available at <https://ldh.la.gov/page/434>. LDH-approved vendors including LRWA, TMB and Communities Unlimited. Contact the vendor to set up a local training or to register for a scheduled training.

13. Who must attend management training in order to receive extra credit points?

All decision makers for a PWS must attend one 4-hour LDH approved management training session. Such personnel would include, but is not limited to: mayors, board presidents, superintendents, public works directors, city clerks, council members, aldermen, board members, designated operator in charge, chief financial officers, owners, etc.

The number required to attend should be based on the organizational structure of the system. For example:

- Private Non-Profit: Designated Operator, Board President and Board Members;
- Private for Profit: Owner/Owner's Designee, Regional Manager, Designated Operator, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operational Officer, etc.;
- Municipality/Parish: Mayor/Parish President, City Council/Aldermen, City Clerk, Designated Operator, Superintendents, Public Works Director, City Manager/Parish Administrator, etc.

14. How many people have to attend management training?

We understand attendance by all or even a quorum is not possible at one training session. For the 2022 grading period, we are not requiring all or a quorum of members to be present. ***However***, we do expect ***more than 1 board member to attend if possible***. The expectation is that all board members eventually attend the management training to maintain the extra points each year for the grade. The training is designed for decision makers, including but not limited to those individuals who make decisions on budget, funding, policies, staffing, etc. We encourage all involved in the decision making process for the public water system to attend to better understand the rules, regulations, and requirements for public water systems.

15. Our board attended management training in 2021, would that count towards extra credit points?

If the decision makers for the PWS have not changed, the management training session is valid for 5 years.

16. Where can I find information about asset management?

Asset management information is available at <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/about-asset-management>.

17. What is Capacity Development and how can I participate in the program?

The Capacity Development program was established to ensure that a PWS has the technical, managerial, and financial capacity to achieve, maintain, and plan for compliance with applicable drinking water standards given available resources and the characteristics of the service population. For more information, contact the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Team at 225-342-7499.

18. My water system is an apartment complex, mobile home park, homeowners' association, etc. that does not charge for water service. What do I submit for the rate assessment?

The business model for some community water systems may include a flat rate for all services provided, such as renting a space in a mobile home park, townhouse, or apartment complex, annual HOA dues. A CPA or financial advisor would be able to assist you with the rate assessment. LDH will accept a financial "plan" from your financial advisor(s) that addresses/presents sustainability criteria for the long-term operations of the water system. The CPA/financial advisor can review the finances to determine water system expenses and how much of the lot rent, annual dues, or other revenue covers operation and maintenance of the water system. The CPA can provide an assessment that includes lot rent or annual dues adjustments to provide for the water system's future sustainability.