

PE Environmental Qualitative Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	9
Explanations	11
Next Steps	17

SAMPLE

Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. Which location is not an allowed site for burning off-specification used oil for energy recovery?**
 - A. Boilers**
 - B. Industrial Furnaces**
 - C. Hazardous Waste Incinerators**
 - D. Coal-Fired Power Plants**

- 2. Which act is the oldest federal environmental law in the United States and prohibits discharging refuse into or disrupting the flow of any port, harbor, or channel without a license or permit?**
 - A. The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899**
 - B. The Clean Water Act**
 - C. The National Environmental Policy Act**
 - D. The Safe Drinking Water Act**

- 3. Bioaerosol sampling methods are applicable to all of the following EXCEPT:**
 - A. Measuring allergens in residential and occupational settings**
 - B. Surveying the types and concentrations of microorganisms**
 - C. Examining microbiological air quality in food processing plants and animal containment buildings**
 - D. Measuring compliance with the TLV for total culturable organisms and particles**

- 4. When does the material name on the safety data sheet (SDS) have to exactly match the name printed on the material container?**
 - A. always**
 - B. only when the material is shipped in containers with capacity greater than 30L or 25kg**
 - C. only when the container is labeled with a NFPA hazard diamond**
 - D. only when the material will be used in a hospital or other health care facility**

5. Which NO_x control technique is commonly used to reduce NO_x formation in internal combustion engines?
- A. Exhaust Gas Recirculation
 - B. Three-way catalytic converter
 - C. Positive crankcase ventilation
 - D. Oxygenated fuels
6. Which of the following statements is true about bottom ash with respect to regulatory status?
- A. It is always considered hazardous waste.
 - B. It is regulated by the MACT standard.
 - C. It is never considered hazardous waste.
 - D. It may be considered hazardous waste depending on the rule.
7. Which GPS term refers to a rover receiving position corrections at the time of survey from a GPS base station?
- A. Real time kinematic differential GPS
 - B. Differential correction
 - C. Dilution of precision
 - D. Post processed kinematic positioning
8. What best describes the primary differences between Subtitle C and Subtitle D?
- A. Subtitle C regulates only haz waste, a subset of solid waste, whereas Subtitle D primarily regulates nonhazardous solid waste.
 - B. Subtitle C regulates nonhazardous waste across all sectors.
 - C. Subtitle D regulates only haz waste, a subset of solid waste, whereas Subtitle C primarily regulates nonhazardous solid waste.
 - D. Subtitle D regulates only nonhazardous waste, while Subtitle C regulates all waste types.
9. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) represents what?
- A. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from all sources
 - B. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from point sources
 - C. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from nonpoint sources
 - D. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from land-based sources

10. Radon exposure is associated with which health effect?

- A. Asthma**
- B. Seizures**
- C. Skin cancer**
- D. Lung cancer**

SAMPLE

Answers

SAMPLE

1. D
2. A
3. D
4. C
5. B
6. D
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. D

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. Which location is not an allowed site for burning off-specification used oil for energy recovery?

- A. Boilers**
- B. Industrial Furnaces**
- C. Hazardous Waste Incinerators**
- D. Coal-Fired Power Plants**

The concept being tested is that burning off-spec used oil for energy recovery is allowed only in facilities that are specifically permitted and equipped to burn used oil as a fuel. Unit types such as boilers, industrial furnaces, and certain hazardous-waste-related incineration setups can be authorized to burn used oil for energy recovery under proper permits and emission controls. A coal-fired power plant, however, is not designated as an approved used-oil energy-recovery unit because it is designed to burn coal and operates under different fuel-handling and permit requirements. Therefore, it is not an allowed site for burning off-specification used oil for energy recovery.

2. Which act is the oldest federal environmental law in the United States and prohibits discharging refuse into or disrupting the flow of any port, harbor, or channel without a license or permit?

- A. The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899**
- B. The Clean Water Act**
- C. The National Environmental Policy Act**
- D. The Safe Drinking Water Act**

This question tests knowledge of the oldest federal law that controls discharges into navigable waters. The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, often called the Refuse Act, made it illegal to dump refuse into any navigable water of the United States or to obstruct the flow of a port, harbor, or channel without proper authorization. It established the federal government's authority to regulate activities that could harm navigation, laying groundwork for how the country handles pollution in waterways long before modern environmental statutes. While later laws like the Clean Water Act, NEPA, and the Safe Drinking Water Act broadened and specialized environmental protections, this act is the earliest one to address discharges into navigable waters.

- 3. Bioaerosol sampling methods are applicable to all of the following EXCEPT:**
- A. Measuring allergens in residential and occupational settings**
 - B. Surveying the types and concentrations of microorganisms**
 - C. Examining microbiological air quality in food processing plants and animal containment buildings**
 - D. Measuring compliance with the TLV for total culturable organisms and particles**

Bioaerosol sampling methods are built to detect and quantify biological particles in the air, helping us understand actual exposure to allergens and microbes, as well as overall microbiological air quality in various environments. It makes sense for measuring allergens in homes and work settings, because you can sample dust or air and identify the presence and amount of allergenic substances. It also fits surveying which microorganisms are present and in what concentrations, using culture-based or molecular techniques. In places like food processing plants and animal housing, bioaerosol sampling helps assess whether microbial air quality meets hygiene and safety expectations. Measuring compliance with a TLV for total culturable organisms and particles, however, isn't a direct fit for routine bioaerosol monitoring. TLVs are exposure guidelines that describe acceptable levels over a period of time, often requiring assessment of a worker's actual exposure in the breathing zone over a shift. That kind of compliance assessment typically involves personal, time-weighted sampling and interpretation against regulatory or advisory limits, which goes beyond standard bioaerosol sampling focused on characterizing environmental concentrations. So the TLV compliance goal stands apart from the core uses of bioaerosol sampling.

- 4. When does the material name on the safety data sheet (SDS) have to exactly match the name printed on the material container?**
- A. always**
 - B. only when the material is shipped in containers with capacity greater than 30L or 25kg**
 - C. only when the container is labeled with a NFPA hazard diamond**
 - D. only when the material will be used in a hospital or other health care facility**

In hazard communication, matching the product identifier on the container label with the name on the safety data sheet is essential to avoid misidentification of the chemical. When a container is labeled with an NFPA hazard diamond, the label often emphasizes hazard information rather than listing the exact chemical name. In that case, the SDS must carry the precise chemical name that corresponds to the product identifier shown on the label, so that the hazards described in the SDS are correctly linked to the substance in use. The other scenarios (always, only for large containers, or only in health-care settings) aren't the specific trigger for this matching requirement.

5. Which NO_x control technique is commonly used to reduce NO_x formation in internal combustion engines?

- A. Exhaust Gas Recirculation**
- B. Three-way catalytic converter**
- C. Positive crankcase ventilation**
- D. Oxygenated fuels**

Controlling NO_x formation in engines hinges on lowering combustion temperatures and reducing the oxygen available during the flame. Exhaust Gas Recirculation achieves this by routing a portion of the exhaust back into the intake. The recirculated gas is inert relative to combustion, diluting the air-fuel mixture and increasing the charge's heat capacity, which lowers peak temperatures and slows the burning process. With lower peak temperatures, the thermal NO_x pathway is suppressed, so NO_x formation drops significantly. In contrast, a three-way catalytic converter treats NO_x after combustion, converting it to nitrogen in the exhaust, but it depends on maintaining a near-stoichiometric air-fuel ratio and does not prevent NO_x formation inside the cylinder. Positive crankcase ventilation mainly handles crankcase emissions and has little direct effect on NO_x formation in the combustion chamber. Oxygenated fuels can modify combustion characteristics, but they are not the primary, reliable method to directly suppress NO_x formation in engines.

6. Which of the following statements is true about bottom ash with respect to regulatory status?

- A. It is always considered hazardous waste.**
- B. It is regulated by the MACT standard.**
- C. It is never considered hazardous waste.**
- D. It may be considered hazardous waste depending on the rule.**

Bottom ash isn't inherently hazardous or nonhazardous—the status depends on the regulatory rule in effect. Under hazardous waste rules, a waste is designated hazardous if it is listed or if it exhibits a characteristic hazard, such as the toxicity characteristic determined by the TCLP. If bottom ash leaches certain metals at levels above regulatory thresholds, it is classified as hazardous waste; if not, it is typically treated as nonhazardous solid waste. Some ashes may also be exempt or subject to different rules when used for beneficial purposes, depending on the specific regulation. Note that MACT standards address emissions controls for the source, not how the resulting ash is classified as waste. That's why the statement that best fits is that bottom ash may be considered hazardous waste depending on the rule.

7. Which GPS term refers to a rover receiving position corrections at the time of survey from a GPS base station?

- A. Real time kinematic differential GPS**
- B. Differential correction**
- C. Dilution of precision**
- D. Post processed kinematic positioning**

Real-time kinematic differential GPS describes getting position corrections from a base station while you're surveying. The base knows its exact position and computes corrections for the rover's measurements, sending them in real time so the rover can apply them immediately and determine a precise position on the spot. This is what gives real-time, centimeter-level accuracy during the survey. Differential corrections without the real-time aspect would be applied after data collection (post-processed), and dilution of precision is about satellite geometry affecting error, not about receiving corrections. Post-processed positioning uses corrections after the fact rather than during the survey.

8. What best describes the primary differences between Subtitle C and Subtitle D?

- A. Subtitle C regulates only haz waste, a subset of solid waste, whereas Subtitle D primarily regulates nonhazard solid waste.**
- B. Subtitle C regulates nonhazardous waste across all sectors.**
- C. Subtitle D regulates only haz waste, a subset of solid waste, whereas Subtitle C primarily regulates nonhazard solid waste.**
- D. Subtitle D regulates only nonhazardous waste, while Subtitle C regulates all waste types.**

The main idea here is how waste is categorized under RCRA: hazardous waste versus nonhazardous solid waste. Subtitle C is the hazardous waste program, applying to wastes that are hazardous and require special controls across generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal. Subtitle D covers nonhazardous solid waste—primarily municipal solid waste and other nonhazardous industrial wastes—handled mainly through state and local programs and without the same strict federal permitting as hazardous waste. So describing Subtitle C as regulating hazardous waste, a subset of solid waste, while Subtitle D focuses on nonhazardous solid waste correctly captures the fundamental difference. The other options misstate the scope—for example, Subtitle C does not regulate nonhazardous wastes across all sectors, and Subtitle D is not limited to hazardous materials or described as regulating all waste types.

9. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) represents what?

- A. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from all sources**
- B. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from point sources**
- C. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from nonpoint sources**
- D. The total daily permissible pollutant loading from land-based sources**

Total Maximum Daily Load is the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive each day and still meet water quality standards. It combines the total loading from all sources—point sources like pipes discharging effluent and nonpoint sources like runoff from land—along with natural background. This overall cap is the reason it represents the total daily permissible pollutant loading from all sources, not just one category. The other options describe loading from only a single source type, which doesn't capture the full scope of a TMDL.

10. Radon exposure is associated with which health effect?

- A. Asthma**
- B. Seizures**
- C. Skin cancer**
- D. Lung cancer**

Radon exposure is linked to lung cancer. Radon is a radioactive gas that can seep into homes from the soil. When people inhale it, radioactive decay products irradiate the lung tissue, causing DNA damage over time. This cumulative exposure increases the risk of developing lung cancer, and radon is considered the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. It's not commonly associated with asthma, seizures, or skin cancer, which are caused by other factors.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://peenviqualitative.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

SAMPLE