

# TCEQ Class C Surface Water License Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# 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

- 1. Which factor is a significant consideration in maintaining water safety?**
  - A. Reducing the cost of water treatment**
  - B. Preventing cross-connections in the water supply**
  - C. Increasing the volume of water use**
  - D. Promoting recreational water use**
- 2. What community health issue can arise from non-compliance in water treatment?**
  - A. Increased recreational opportunities**
  - B. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases and public health crises**
  - C. Higher property values in local areas**
  - D. Decreased water demand**
- 3. What is the required chlorine treatment after installation or repair of a water line?**
  - A. 2 mg/L of chlorine for 48 hrs**
  - B. 5 mg/L of chloramine for 24 hrs**
  - C. 50 mg/L of chlorine for 24 hrs**
  - D. 5 mg/L of chlorine for 24 hrs**
- 4. Why are disinfection by-products (DBPs) of concern for public health?**
  - A. They improve water taste**
  - B. They can be harmful to human health**
  - C. They prevent bacterial growth**
  - D. They are essential nutrients**
- 5. What factors are considered when designing surface water treatment plants?**
  - A. Population served**
  - B. Source water characteristics**
  - C. Regulatory requirements**
  - D. All of the above**

- 6. What is the definition of a public water system according to TCEQ?**
- A. Provides piped water to at least 15 service connections**
  - B. Serves at least 25 individuals daily**
  - C. Provides water year-round to at least 60 individuals**
  - D. Provides piped water to at least 15 service connections or serves 25 individuals daily**
- 7. Which factor is crucial for effective chlorine disinfection in water treatment?**
- A. The color of the water**
  - B. The presence of dissolved oxygen**
  - C. Temperature and pH of the water**
  - D. Water volume in storage tanks**
- 8. What approach is commonly used for nutrient removal in wastewater treatment?**
- A. Physical filtration**
  - B. Chemical precipitation**
  - C. Biological nutrient removal (BNR)**
  - D. Ultraviolet disinfection**
- 9. What is "point source pollution"?**
- A. Pollution from a widespread area**
  - B. Pollution that originates from a single, identifiable source or location**
  - C. Pollution due to urban runoff**
  - D. Pollution that occurs randomly in various locations**
- 10. What does biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) measure?**
- A. The amount of chlorination required for safe drinking water**
  - B. The level of dissolved oxygen available in surface water**
  - C. The amount of oxygen required by microorganisms to decompose organic matter in water**
  - D. The turbidity of water caused by suspended solids**



## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which factor is a significant consideration in maintaining water safety?**

- A. Reducing the cost of water treatment**
- B. Preventing cross-connections in the water supply**
- C. Increasing the volume of water use**
- D. Promoting recreational water use**

Preventing cross-connections in the water supply is crucial for maintaining water safety because cross-connections can create pathways for contaminants to enter the potable water system. A cross-connection occurs when a physical link exists between the clean water supply and a source of contamination, such as wastewater or chemicals. If pressure fluctuations occur in the water system, it can lead to backflow, where these harmful substances flow back into the main water supply, potentially leading to serious public health hazards. Ensuring that cross-connections are properly managed and eliminated helps maintain the integrity of the water supply, ensuring that it remains safe for consumption and use. Various regulations and best practice guidelines exist to prevent such situations, emphasizing the importance of plumbing codes and regular inspection of the water infrastructure to mitigate risks. This focus on preventing cross-connections directly supports the overarching goal of providing clean, safe drinking water to the public, making it a significant consideration in water safety management.

**2. What community health issue can arise from non-compliance in water treatment?**

- A. Increased recreational opportunities**
- B. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases and public health crises**
- C. Higher property values in local areas**
- D. Decreased water demand**

Non-compliance in water treatment can lead to outbreaks of waterborne diseases and significant public health crises. When water treatment protocols are not followed correctly, harmful microorganisms, pathogens, and contaminants may not be effectively removed from the water supply. This can result in the spread of diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and giardiasis, which can have devastating impacts on community health. Access to clean and safe drinking water is crucial for maintaining public health, and any lapse in treatment can lead to serious illness among the population, particularly vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly. Therefore, the link between non-compliance in water treatment and the potential for public health emergencies highlights the importance of adhering to rigorous water quality standards and regulations.

**3. What is the required chlorine treatment after installation or repair of a water line?**

- A. 2 mg/L of chlorine for 48 hrs
- B. 5 mg/L of chloramine for 24 hrs
- C. 50 mg/L of chlorine for 24 hrs**
- D. 5 mg/L of chlorine for 24 hrs

The required chlorine treatment after the installation or repair of a water line is aimed at ensuring the water system is disinfected effectively to eliminate any harmful microorganisms that might have entered during the process. Administering a chlorine concentration of 50 mg/L for a duration of 24 hours is the recommended standard procedure in many guidelines. This higher concentration level is critical because it provides an adequate disinfection process that can mitigate risks associated with pathogens and ensure that the water quality meets safety standards. Furthermore, the duration of 24 hours allows for the chlorine to remain in contact with the walls of the pipe system, thereby ensuring thorough disinfection. While other options present lower concentrations or alternative compounds like chloramine, they do not meet the effectiveness needed for initial disinfection in newly installed or repaired lines, especially considering the potential contamination risks. The standard practice prioritizes a robust disinfection approach to protect public health.

**4. Why are disinfection by-products (DBPs) of concern for public health?**

- A. They improve water taste
- B. They can be harmful to human health**
- C. They prevent bacterial growth
- D. They are essential nutrients

Disinfection by-products (DBPs) are a concern for public health primarily because they can be harmful to human health. DBPs are formed when disinfectants such as chlorine react with natural organic matter in the water during the treatment process. Some of these by-products have been linked to adverse health effects, including an increased risk of certain cancers and potential reproductive issues. For this reason, monitoring and regulating the levels of DBPs in drinking water is critical to ensuring the safety and health of the public. The other options do not accurately represent the nature of DBPs. While some treatments may improve water quality and safety, DBPs themselves do not enhance water taste, prevent bacterial growth, or act as essential nutrients in water. Understanding the potential health risks associated with DBPs is essential for effective water treatment and public safety measures.

**5. What factors are considered when designing surface water treatment plants?**

- A. Population served**
- B. Source water characteristics**
- C. Regulatory requirements**
- D. All of the above**

When designing surface water treatment plants, it's essential to take into account a variety of critical factors to ensure the facility functions effectively and complies with health and safety standards. One important factor is the population served, as it influences the size and capacity of the treatment plant. Understanding the number of people that will rely on the water supply helps engineers determine the appropriate scale of treatment processes, storage capacity, and distribution systems needed to meet this demand. The characteristics of the source water are also vital. This includes factors such as the source's chemical composition, level of contamination, seasonal variations, and the presence of microorganisms. These characteristics directly affect the choice of treatment technologies and processes that will be implemented to ensure safe drinking water. Regulatory requirements are another key consideration. Treatment plants must comply with federal, state, and local regulations that set standards for water quality, environmental protection, and safety. Adhering to these regulations ensures that the plant's design will be legally compliant and capable of producing water that meets public health standards. Considering all these factors—population served, source water characteristics, and regulatory requirements—ensures that the treatment plant will be designed effectively to provide safe, reliable drinking water to the community. Consequently, the comprehensive answer that includes all these factors is

**6. What is the definition of a public water system according to TCEQ?**

- A. Provides piped water to at least 15 service connections**
- B. Serves at least 25 individuals daily**
- C. Provides water year-round to at least 60 individuals**
- D. Provides piped water to at least 15 service connections or serves 25 individuals daily**

The definition of a public water system according to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) incorporates key elements that focus on serving a specific number of connections or individuals. A public water system can be characterized either by providing piped water to a minimum number of service connections or by the number of individuals served daily. Specifically, the criteria state that a public water system must either provide piped water to at least 15 service connections or serve at least 25 individuals daily. This reflects the regulatory focus on ensuring that water supply systems meet certain thresholds to assure safety and reliability for users. By including both criteria, the definition accommodates different types of systems and their respective customer bases. A system might cater to few connections but serve many individuals, or vice versa. This dual approach effectively captures the diversity of public water systems in the state, ensuring that those who depend on such services are covered under applicable regulations for health and safety. Understanding this definition is crucial for anyone involved in the management or regulation of water systems, as it lays the groundwork for meeting standards and maintaining compliance with TCEQ regulations.

**7. Which factor is crucial for effective chlorine disinfection in water treatment?**

- A. The color of the water**
- B. The presence of dissolved oxygen**
- C. Temperature and pH of the water**
- D. Water volume in storage tanks**

The temperature and pH of the water are critical factors in effective chlorine disinfection because they directly influence the effectiveness of chlorine as a disinfectant. Chlorine exists in different forms in water, primarily as hypochlorous acid (HOCl) and hypochlorite ion (OCl<sup>-</sup>), and the balance between these forms is affected by the pH of the water. At lower pH levels, more chlorine is in the form of hypochlorous acid, which is a much more effective disinfectant than hypochlorite ion. Additionally, temperature can affect the rate of disinfection reactions. Higher temperatures typically increase the reaction rates of chlorine with pathogens, thus enhancing disinfection efficiency. Therefore, managing both the temperature and pH appropriately ensures that chlorine disinfection is optimally effective in the treatment process.

**8. What approach is commonly used for nutrient removal in wastewater treatment?**

- A. Physical filtration**
- B. Chemical precipitation**
- C. Biological nutrient removal (BNR)**
- D. Ultraviolet disinfection**

Biological nutrient removal (BNR) is a widely accepted approach for removing nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, from wastewater in treatment facilities. This process leverages the capabilities of microorganisms to uptake and convert nutrients into biomass, which can then be separated from the treated effluent. During BNR, specifically designed biological processes such as nitrification and denitrification are employed to manage the nitrogen cycle, while phosphorus removal often involves enhanced biological phosphorus removal (EBPR) techniques. The effectiveness of BNR lies in its ability to achieve significant nutrient reductions while utilizing organic matter present in the wastewater as a food source for the microorganisms. This not only ensures nutrient compliance with environmental regulations but also promotes a more sustainable and cost-effective treatment process compared to purely chemical methods. In contrast, physical filtration primarily targets suspended solids and does not effectively address nutrient removal. Chemical precipitation involves adding chemicals to the wastewater to agglomerate and remove nutrients, but this approach can lead to increased operational costs and the generation of additional sludge. Ultraviolet disinfection is designed to deactivate pathogens and does not play a role in nutrient removal. Thus, biological nutrient removal stands out as a suitable and efficient method for nutrient management in wastewater treatment systems.

## 9. What is "point source pollution"?

- A. Pollution from a widespread area
- B. Pollution that originates from a single, identifiable source or location**
- C. Pollution due to urban runoff
- D. Pollution that occurs randomly in various locations

Point source pollution refers to contaminants that are discharged from a specific, identifiable source or location, such as a pipe, ditch, or other outlet. This form of pollution is distinct because it can be traced back to one particular source, making it easier to regulate and manage. For instance, wastewater treatment plants, industrial discharge points, or even agricultural runoff collected through drainage systems are all examples of point sources. Monitoring and controlling these sources are critical for pollution management because they allow for targeted strategies to reduce emissions and improve water quality. In contrast, other types of pollution, such as non-point source pollution, arise from diffuse sources that are often harder to track and regulate. Urban runoff, for example, collects contamination from a wide area rather than a single point, complicating efforts to mitigate its effects. Therefore, the clear definition and identification of point source pollution are essential in environmental protection and regulatory enforcement.

## 10. What does biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) measure?

- A. The amount of chlorination required for safe drinking water
- B. The level of dissolved oxygen available in surface water
- C. The amount of oxygen required by microorganisms to decompose organic matter in water**
- D. The turbidity of water caused by suspended solids

Biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) is a critical parameter in water quality assessment as it measures the amount of oxygen that microorganisms will consume while decomposing organic matter under aerobic conditions over a specific period, typically five days at a controlled temperature. This parameter is important because it provides an estimate of the level of organic pollution in water; higher BOD values indicate a greater amount of organic matter present, which can lead to oxygen depletion in the water body. Monitoring BOD helps in evaluating the efficiency of wastewater treatment processes, assessing the potential impact of effluents on receiving waters, and determining the overall health of aquatic ecosystems. When organic matter is present in high concentrations, microorganisms rapidly consume available oxygen, potentially harming aquatic life that depends on dissolved oxygen for survival. Understanding BOD values is vital for managing water quality and ensuring safe and sustainable use of surface water resources.



## 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

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

**<https://tceqclasscsurfacewater.examzify.com>**

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