



## United States Office of Personnel Management

**Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness**  
*Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*  
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**Standard:** [Sewage Disposal Plant Operator, WG-5408](#) (September 1969)  
**Factor:** N/A  
**Issue:** Impact of State regulation and licensure requirements on the classification of the job

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

This issue arose in a classification appeal to an Office of Personnel Management region. The appellant was a Sewage Disposal Plant Operator, WG-5408. He claimed that the job grading standard for Sewage Disposal Plant Operator, WG-5408, was out of date and that it did not take into account recent changes in laws and regulations pertaining to waste water treatment and sewage disposal plant operation. The appellant also argued that the licensure requirement now imposed by the State warranted additional credit.

### **Resolution**

The Office of Personnel Management did identify changes that had taken place in the occupation since the publication of the Sewage Disposal Plant Operator job grading standard. However, these changes did not significantly affect the skill and knowledge requirements, responsibility, physical effort, and working conditions of the position. The grade level criteria in the standard were still valid.

The licensure requirements did make the appellant responsible for the proper operation of the plant. Failure to comply with State law and regulation could subject him to fines, suspension, or possible loss of license. However, it is presumed in all classification standards that the work will be performed properly in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The existence of a requirement for a license and State sanctions for improperly performed work were not shown to add to the difficulty and responsibility of the job.

If it had been shown, for example, that State regulation was so stringent and that the tolerance for the discharge of certain chemicals was so strict that it required skills and knowledges significantly over and above that described in the standard, then it would have been proper to explore additional grade credit. However, since there was no evidence that this was the case, the appeal decision sustained the agency classification.