

**Community VSWS  
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A  
VERY SMALL WATER SYSTEM (VSWS) CERTIFIED OPERATOR**

The licensed operator of a VSWS is responsible for the day-to-day operation, maintenance and effectiveness of the public water system. Below are those duties deemed appropriate for operation of most community VSWS, as required by regulation and/or as described in the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) Need-to-Know Criteria for VSWS operators (available at [www.abccert.org/needtoknow](http://www.abccert.org/needtoknow) ).

The operator must be available on a regular and emergency basis, but may supervise the system without being present on a daily basis provided that (1) between scheduled visits the operator has a person who is regularly on-site for a significant portion of time acting under his direction and (2) this person can properly operate the system and detect operational malfunctions in the absence of the primary operator.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inspect the water system on a regular basis including all sources, storage facilities and the distribution system. Inspections should be conducted no less than once per month.</li> <li>▪ Regularly check the status of flows, pressures, levels, and water quality indicators.</li> <li>▪ Observe the operation of equipment to detect unusual noises, vibrations, excessive heat, or other signs of operational malfunction.</li> <li>▪ Coordinate the collection of required water samples. Ensure that all samples are delivered to and analyzed by a New Jersey certified laboratory. Ensure that results are reported to DEP on time and on the appropriate forms. Coordinate the collection of repeat samples if necessary.</li> <li>▪ Develop and maintain a written detailed operations and maintenance (O&amp;M) procedures manual. O&amp;M procedures shall specify adequate response times to water system emergencies.</li> <li>▪ Maintain a logbook documenting all routine and emergency inspections and system repairs.</li> <li>▪ Develop a protocol that ensures each employee is acquainted with his responsibilities pertaining to the operation of the system including those duties to be performed in an emergency situation.</li> <li>▪ Immediately notify the system owner of any deficiencies, breakdowns, problems, complaints, emergencies, or any situations that have the potential to affect public health, safety, welfare, or the environment or to violate any permits, regulations, or laws. Upon request, provide a report summarizing the situation to DEP.</li> <li>▪ Identify potential safety hazards and unsafe work conditions. Develop safety plans and effectively communicate safety precautions to on-site personnel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the characteristics of source water and be able to discriminate between normal and abnormal conditions.</li> <li>▪ Be aware of all potential sources of contamination within the wellhead protection zone.</li> <li>▪ Develop and maintain for accuracy, a site plan showing the water source(s), a map of the water distribution system, sample locations, and all appropriate appurtenances.</li> <li>▪ Accompany regulatory agencies during on-site inspections when requested by that agency.</li> <li>▪ Maintain daily records of water pumpage. Report monthly to DEP.</li> <li>▪ Ensure the accuracy of water meters and other flow measuring devices as necessary. Meters should be calibrated at least once every 5 years.</li> <li>▪ Assist the system owner in responding to water quality complaints in a timely manner.</li> <li>▪ Assist in preparing an annual Consumer Confidence Report. Assist with distribution of the report to consumers.</li> <li>▪ Be present during water system repairs and maintenance and/or oversee repairs performed by staff or contractors.</li> <li>▪ Be present within 24 hours of fecal or E.Coli violation or other water system failures.</li> <li>▪ If a MCL is exceeded or other water quality problem exists, prepare and post/distribute public notices as required.</li> <li>▪ Develop a recordkeeping system. Maintain a filing system for correspondence.</li> <li>▪ Provide system owner with estimates of budget needs for equipment and supplies.</li> </ul>
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The annual estimated time required to perform the duties for a small community water system with no treatment and 100 or fewer service connections is 52 to 104 hours. It is recommended that the system owner and licensed operator develop a written agreement detailing all duties expected to be performed by the licensed operator. Failure to perform required duties, or performance of any negligent acts by a licensed operator may result in the imposition of penalties against the licensed operator or revocation/suspension of the operator's license.