**Section 1247.100 Continuing Education**

a) Continuing Education Hours Requirements

1) In order to renew a license as an environmental health practitioner, a licensee shall be required to complete 20 hours of continuing education (CE) relevant to the practice of environmental health.

2) A prerenewal period is the 24 months preceding April 30 of each even-numbered year.

3) One CE hour shall equal 60 minutes of attendance. After completion of the initial CE hour, credit may be given in one-half hour increments.

4) A renewal applicant shall not be required to comply with CE requirements for the first renewal of an Illinois license.

5) Environmental health practitioners licensed in Illinois but residing and practicing in other states shall comply with the CE requirements set forth in this Section.

6) Continuing education credit hours used to satisfy the CE requirements of another jurisdiction may be applied to fulfill the CE requirements of the State of Illinois.

b) Approved Continuing Education (CE)

1) CE hours shall be earned by verified attendance (e.g., certificate of attendance or certificate of completion) at or participation in a program or course (program) that is offered or sponsored by an approved continuing education sponsor meeting the requirements set forth in subsection (c), except for those activities provided in subsections (b)(2), (3), (4) and (5).

2) A maximum of 10 CE credits per prerenewal period may be earned for completion of a correspondence course that is offered by an approved sponsor meeting the requirements set forth in subsection (c). Each correspondence course shall include an examination.

3) CE credit may be earned through postgraduate training programs (e.g., extern, residency or fellowship programs) or completion of environmental health related courses that are a part of the curriculum of a college, university or graduate school. Courses that are part of the curriculum of a university, college or other educational institution shall be allotted CE credit at the rate of 15 CE hours for each semester hour or 10 CE hours for each quarter hour of school credit awarded.

4) CE credit may be earned for verified teaching in the field of environmental health in an accredited college, university or graduate school and/or as an instructor of continuing education programs given by approved sponsors. Credit will be applied at the rate of 2 hours for every hour taught and only for the first presentation of the program (i.e., credit shall not be allowed for repetitious presentations of the same program). A maximum of 10 hours of CE credit may be obtained in this category per prerenewal period.

5) CE credit may be earned for authoring papers, publications, dissertations or books and for preparing presentations and exhibits in the field of environmental health. The preparation of each published paper, book chapter or professional presentation dealing with environmental health may be claimed as 5 hours of credit. A presentation must be before an audience of professionals. Five credit hours may be claimed for only the first time the information is published or presented.

c) Approved CE Sponsors and Programs

1) Sponsor, as used in this Section, shall mean:

A) American Public Health Association

B) American Society of Safety Engineers

C) Associated Illinois Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians

D) Association of Food and Drug Officials

E) Conference for Food Protection

F) Illinois Association of Local Environmental Health Administrators

G) Illinois Association of Ground Water Professionals

H) Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators

I) Illinois Environmental Health Association and Affiliates

J) Illinois Public Health Association

K) International Association of Food Protection-IAFP

L) Interstate Shellfish Shippers Conference

M) National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers

N) National Environmental Health Association and Affiliates

O) National Restaurant Association and Educational Foundation

P) NSF International

Q) North Central Association of Food and Drug Officials

R) State and federal agencies

S) Any other accredited school, college or university, or any other person, firm, or association applying pursuant to subsection (c)(2)that has been approved and authorized by the Division to coordinate and present continuing education courses and programs in conjunction with this Section.

2) An entity seeking approval as a CE sponsor shall submit an application, on forms supplied by the Division, along with the application fee specified in Section 1247.75. The application shall include:

A) Certification:

i) That all programs offered by the sponsor for CE credit shall comply with the criteria in subsection (c)(3) and all other criteria in this Section;

ii) That the sponsor shall be responsible for verifying full-time continuous attendance at each program and provide a certificate of attendance as set forth in subsection (c)(8);

iii) That, upon request by the Division, the sponsor shall submit evidence (e.g., certificate of attendance or course material) as is necessary to establish compliance with this Section. Evidence shall be required when the Division has reason to believe that there is not full compliance with the statute and this Part and that this information is necessary to ensure compliance;

B) A copy of a sample program, including course materials, syllabi and a list of faculty.

3) All programs shall:

A) Contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional skills and scientific knowledge of the licensee in practice of environmental health;

B) Foster the enhancement of general or specialized practice and values of environmental health;

C) Be developed and presented by persons with education and/or experience in the subject matter of the program;

D) Specify the course objectives, course content and teaching methods to be used; and

E) Specify the number of CE hours that may be applied to fulfilling the Illinois CE requirements for license renewal.

4) Each CE program shall provide a mechanism for evaluation of the program and instructor to be completed by the participants. The evaluation may be completed on-site immediately following the program presentation or an evaluation questionnaire may be distributed to participants to be completed and returned by mail. The sponsor and the instructor shall review together the evaluation outcome and revise subsequent programs accordingly.

5) An approved sponsor may subcontract with individuals and organizations to provide approved programs. All advertising, promotional materials, and certificates of attendance must identify the licensed sponsor and the sponsor's license number. The presentor of the program may also be identified, but should be identified as a presenter. When a licensed sponsor subcontracts with a presenter, the licensed sponsor retains all responsibility for monitoring attendance, providing certificates of attendance and ensuring the program meets all of the criteria established by the Act and this Part, including the maintenance of records.

6) All programs given by approved sponsors shall be open to all licensed environmental health practitioners and not be limited to members of a single organization or group.

7) To maintain approval as a sponsor, each sponsor shall submit to the Division by April 30 of each even-numbered year a renewal application, and the fee specified in Section 1247.75.

8) Certification of Attendance. It shall be the responsibility of a sponsor to provide each participant in a program with a certificate of attendance or participation. The sponsor's certificate of attendance shall contain:

A) The name, address and license number of the sponsor;

B) The name and address of the participant;

C) A brief statement of the subject matter;

D) The number of hours attended in each program;

E) The date and place of the program; and

F) The signature of the sponsor.

9) The sponsor shall maintain attendance records for not less than 5 years.

10) The sponsor shall be responsible for assuring that no renewal applicant shall receive CE credit for time not actually spent attending the program.

11) Upon the failure of a sponsor to comply with any of the requirements of this Section, the Division, after notice to the sponsor and hearing before the Board and recommendation by the Board (see 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1110), shall thereafter refuse to accept for CE credit attendance at or participation in any of that sponsor's CE programs until such time as the Division receives assurances of compliance with this Section.

12) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, the Division or Board may evaluate any sponsor of any approved CE program at any time to ensure compliance with requirements of this Section.

d) Certification of Compliance with CE Requirements

1) Each renewal applicant shall certify, on the renewal application, full compliance with the CE requirements set forth in subsections (a) and (b).

2) The Division may require additional evidence demonstrating compliance with the CE requirements (e.g., certificate of attendance). This additional evidence shall be required in the context of the Division's random audit. It is the responsibility of each renewal applicant to retain or otherwise produce evidence of compliance.

3) When there appears to be a lack of compliance with CE requirements, an applicant shall be notified in writing and may request an interview with the Board. At that time the Board may recommend that steps be taken to begin formal disciplinary proceedings as required by Section 10-65 of the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act [5 ILCS 100/10-65].

e) Continuing Education Earned in Other Jurisdictions

1) If a licensee has earned or is seeking CE hours offered in another jurisdiction not given by an approved sponsor for which the licensee will be claiming credit toward full compliance in Illinois, the applicant shall submit an individual program approval request form, along with a $25 processing fee, prior to participation in the program or within 90 days prior to expiration of the license. The Board shall review and recommend approval or disapproval of the program using the criteria set forth in subsection (c)(3) of this Section.

2) If a licensee fails to submit an out of state CE approval form within the required time frame, late approval may be obtained by submitting the approval request form with the $25 processing fee plus a $10 per hour late fee not to exceed $150. The Board shall review and recommend approval and disapproval of the program using the criteria set forth in subsection (c)(3) of this Section.

f) Restoration of Nonrenewed License. Upon satisfactory evidence of compliance with CE requirements, the Division shall restore the license upon payment of the required fee as provided in Section 1247.75.

g) Waiver of CE Requirements

1) Any renewal applicant seeking renewal of a license without having fully complied with these CE requirements shall file with the Division a renewal application along with the required fee set forth in Section 1247.75, a statement setting forth the facts concerning non-compliance and a request for waiver of the CE requirements on the basis of these facts. A request for waiver shall be made prior to the renewal date. If the Division, upon the written recommendation of the Board, finds from such affidavit or any other evidence submitted that extreme hardship has been shown for granting a waiver, the Division shall waive enforcement of CE requirements for the renewal period for which the applicant has applied.

2) Extreme hardship shall be determined on an individual basis by the Board and be defined as an inability to devote sufficient hours to fulfilling the CE requirements during the applicable prerenewal period because of:

A) Full-time service in the armed forces of the United States of America during a substantial part of the prerenewal period;

B) An incapacitating illness documented by a statement from a currently licensed physician;

C) A physical inability to travel to the sites of approved programs documented by a currently licensed physician; or

D) Any other similar extenuating circumstances.

3) Any renewal applicant who, prior to the expiration date of the license, submits a request for a waiver, in whole or in part, pursuant to the provisions of this Section shall be deemed to be in good standing until the final decision on the application is made by the Division.

(Source: Amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 14951, effective September 3, 2008)