NEHA
Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS®)

Candidate Information Brochure

Revised July 2021

REHS/RS® Examination

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to sit for the REHS/RS® credential examination, a candidate must meet all of the criteria for Track A or Track B or Track C.

Track A – Environmental Health Degree Track. You must be able to answer YES to all the questions for Track A. If you answer a question with a "No," proceed to Track B.

1. Do you have a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree or PhD from a college or university in the United States? Yes_____ No_____. For foreign degrees and diplomas, see the section below on foreign education.
2. Is your degree in Environmental Health? Yes_____ No_____
3. Is your school and degree program on the appropriate EHAC list below? Yes_____ No_____
    a. Bachelor's in Environmental Health: http://www.nehspac.org/about-ehac/accredited-programs-ehac-undergraduate-programs/
    b. Master's or PhD in Environmental Health: http://www.nehspac.org/about-ehac/accredited-programs-ehac-graduate-programs/

If you answered "Yes" to all three questions above, you can apply on Track A. You will not need to submit proof of work experience.

Track B – Bachelor's Degree Track. You must be able to answer YES to all questions for Track B. If you answer a question with a "No," proceed to Track C.

1. Do you have a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree or PhD from a college or university accredited in the United States? Your degree can be in any subject. Yes_____ No_____. For foreign degrees or diplomas, see the section below on foreign education.
2. Do you have 30 semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) of college credit in basic science coursework? Basic sciences include Life Sciences, Natural Sciences, Physical Sciences or Health Sciences. Yes_____ No_____.
3. Do you have credit for a college level Math or Statistics class? Yes_____ No_____
4. Do you have two years or more experience working in environmental health*? Work experience should be full-time paid work. Yes_____No_____

** Eligible areas of environmental health include general environmental health (including inspections, environmental microbiology, and contamination control), food protection, wastewater, solid and hazardous waste, potable water, inspections of facilities, vectors and pests, institutions and licensed establishments, swimming pool inspections, radiation, occupational safety and health, healthy housing, indoor air quality, disaster and emergency planning, and environmental health issues related to climate change.*

Track C – "In Training" Track. On Track B above, if you said YES to questions 1, 2, and 3 but you do NOT have two years of work experience in environmental health, you

can apply on the "In Training" Track. You would choose REHS/RS®-In Training (I.T.) on the application. You will not be required to submit proof of work experience. If you pass the exam, your certificate will say, "REHS/RS® – In Training." You will then have 3 years to obtain 2 years of work experience. Once you have acquired that experience, you can qualify for the full REHS/RS® certificate by notifying NEHA and submitting proof of work experience. If you do not obtain the 2 years of work experience, your "In Training" status will expire and you risk losing the credential and may have to reapply and retake the exam.

On Track B above, if you said NO to question 1 (and you do not have a foreign degree either) ***OR*** said NO to question 2 (science hours) ***OR*** question 3 (math class), then your education does not meet the requirements for the REHS/RS® credential set by the NEHA Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors has ruled that NEHA cannot accept work experience in lieu of college coursework.

If you are not sure about whether your college courses meet the requirements, you can request a transcript review as noted below.

Transcript Review for United States College Transcripts

Candidates with education from within the United States can request NEHA to review their transcripts for eligibility separate from the application procedure for $50. A transcript review form must be completed and is available at https://www.neha.org/credentialing/transcript-review.
Please see additional instructions on the form.

The $50 fee is non-refundable even if NEHA finds that your education does not meet the REHS/RS® qualification requirements. It can take 2-4 weeks for your transcripts to be reviewed and you will be notified by letter and/or e-mail.

Foreign Education

If you have college or university education from outside the United States or its territories, you must have your foreign education evaluated by a "third party" foreign education evaluation service to determine equivalency to a Bachelor's degree in the United States. You must submit an evaluation report with your NEHA Credential Application or the report can be sent by the evaluation service directly to NEHA.

NEHA cannot evaluate foreign educational documents even if they have been translated into English. All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by foreign education specialists.

NEHA strongly recommends you choose a service that is a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). For information on NACES member companies, go to www.naces.org.

Canadian education is considered foreign education. It must be evaluated by a third party evaluation service.

Completing the Application

Applications must be completed and submitted to NEHA for review at least 6 weeks prior to the exam date. If an application is received less than 6 weeks prior to your planned exam date, you may have to schedule the exam for another date.

A complete application should include:

1. Completed NEHA Application.
2. Official College Transcripts. To be considered an official transcript it should be received at the NEHA office in the sealed envelope from the College Registrar's Office/Transcript Office. It can be sent directly from the school to NEHA or submitted with the application in the sealed school envelope. Electronic transcripts from the school or transcript service are accepted when e-mailed to credentialing@neha.org.
3. Work Experience Verification Form signed by a third party.
4. Appropriate fees.
5. Third party review report (applicable for candidates with foreign education).

Application Expiration Policy

Applications are good for 1 year from the date NEHA approves them. If you have not tested within 1 year of applying, you will need to submit a new application and fees.

Exam Fees

All fees should accompany the NEHA Application.

	Member Rate	Non-Member Rate
Application fees:	$95.00	$130.00
Examination fees:	$185.00	$335.00
Pearson VUE fee:	$110.00	$110.00

Exam Scheduling and Locations

Candidates can take the exam on computer through ***Pearson VUE.*** With this option, candidates can schedule the examination at their convenience at one of ***Pearson VUE's*** testing locations nationwide. To find a ***Pearson VUE*** testing center near you please visit http://www.pearsonvue.com/neha. Taking the exam at ***Pearson VUE*** not only offers the candidate flexibility in scheduling the exam, but also allows the candidate to receive his/her unofficial scores immediately following the conclusion of the exam.

Military base testing is offered at some Pearson VUE testing centers for military personnel. If you are currently in the US Military, it may be possible to make arrangements to take the exam at a Pearson VUE DANTES CENTER.

Special Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities or Impairments

NEHA is committed to ensuring that no individual is deprived of the opportunity to take a credentialing examination solely by reason of a disability or impairment. All test centers are fully accessible and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To make a request for special accommodations you must complete the ADA Accommodation Request Form including the specific diagnosis of your disability, Section 2 filled out and signed by an appropriate licensed professional, and the type of accommodation being requested. All forms and documentation must be returned to NEHA at least 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date. To receive a copy of the form please contact Credentialing@neha.org.

If the forms are not returned to NEHA at least 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date, your request for special accommodations may not be honored or may be delayed.

With respect to all matters related to testing accommodations, NEHA will only communicate with the candidate, professionals knowledgeable about the candidate's disability or impairment, the candidate's authorized representative (if applicable), Professional Testing Inc. (PTI) and the test administrator or proctor.

Computer Testing at Pearson VUE: NEHA will send you an authorization letter via e-mail when your application is processed as approved. Then you will get another e-mail, 1-3 days later, from Pearson VUE c/o PTI. That e-mail will have your PTI ID number and instructions on how to schedule the exam at Pearson VUE. The PTI ID number is good for one year.

On test day you must bring your photo ID as required by Pearson VUE's instructions.

If you need to postpone your scheduled computer test, you must contact Pearson VUE at least 24 hours in advance of your scheduled test time. If you do not show up and did not give at least 24 hours' notice, you will forfeit your Exam Fee and your Computer Test Fee. Contact NEHA to pay your fees again so you can be authorized to reschedule.

Scores

The NEHA REHS/RS® examination will report scores using scaled scores that range from 0 to 900 with a passing score of 650. The raw passing score is mathematically transformed so that the passing scaled score equals 650. This process is similar to the way one adjusts Celsius and Fahrenheit temperature scales. While the values may differ the temperatures are the same. For example, water boils at the same temperature regardless of the scale used.

Candidates who pass the examination will earn scaled scores of 650 and above, and those who fail will earn a scaled score between 0 and 649. A scaled score is NOT a percentage score. In summary, a scaled score is merely a transformation of a raw score. Scaling is done to report comparable results when forms and raw passing scores vary over time. This is similar to the SAT scores for entrance to college.

Your score will be based on the number of questions answered correctly. If you are unsure of the answer it is better to guess. You will not be given credit for any question left blank.

Your exam results will be mailed to you from the NEHA office 4-6 weeks after the administration.

If you pass the exam, NEHA will send you a credentialing packet with a score letter, certificate, wallet card and Continuing Education information.

If you fail the exam, NEHA will send you a score letter and a Retake Application. You must wait at least 90 days from your test date before you can retake the exam. To retake the exam, you need to submit the Retake Application and pay the Exam Fee and Computer Test Fee, if you will retake the exam on computer. You do not need to do the whole application again or resubmit transcripts. There is no limit on the number of times you can retake the exam, but you must wait 90 days between each attempt.

Reciprocity

In some cases, if you hold a state REHS/RS® credential, you may be eligible to receive NEHA's REHS/RS® credential without re-examination (reciprocity). In order to be eligible for reciprocity you must:

1. Have a valid, current state registration; and
2. Have a Bachelor's degree with 30 semester/45 quarter hours in basic sciences; and
3. Have a passing score of:
    a. 650 or higher on the NEHA exam taken on or after July 13, 2014, or
    b. 68% or higher on the NEHA exam taken between January 1, 1998, and July 12, 2014, or
    c. 70% or higher on the PES exam provided it was taken before December 31, 1997. PES exams taken after this date are not eligible to receive national REHS/RS® reciprocity through NEHA.

For more information on qualifying for national REHS/RS® reciprocity please contact the NEHA Credentialing Department at (303) 756-9090 ext. 310, or email credentialing@neha.org.

Credential Maintenance

Once you have obtained the REHS/RS® credential you must maintain it. To keep your credential in good standing you must:

1. Submit a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education every two years; and
2. Submit renewal fees for your credential every two years ($130.00 members; $345.00 non-members).

NEHA's Credentialing Handbook

It is strongly recommended that you read NEHA's Credentialing Handbook: *Guide to Policies and Procedures for NEHA's Credentialing Programs*. This handbook outlines all

the policies you are expected to follow by being a NEHA credential holder. The handbook also outlines in further detail the procedures for applying for a credential, submitting continuing education, and maintaining your credential.

You can access the Credentialing Handbook at https://www.neha.org/sites/default/files/pd/cred-cert/Credentialing-Handbook.pdf. Click on Professional Development, then click on Credentials and look for the link to the Handbook on the left side.

Exam Description and Content Outline

The REHS/RS® examination consists of a total of 225 multiple-choice questions. The exam is split into two parts. Candidates are given a total of three (3) hours and forty (40) minutes to complete the entire exam or one (1) hour and fifty (50) minutes for each part with a short 10-minute break in between. The first part will have 113 questions and the second part will have 112 questions. Of the 225 items, 200 will be scored. The remaining 25 questions will be unscored, pilot questions. Those items will not be called out within the exam.

Below is an outline of the different content areas the examination covers and the percentages allotted to each of those areas. Please use this outline as a guide when preparing for the examination.

Content Areas		Final Weight	Number of Items
A	Conducting Facility Inspections	35.0%	79
	Prioritize Inspections	1.0%	2
	Maintain Inspection Equipment	1.0%	2
	Perform Food Facility Inspections	17.5%	40
	Perform Institution Inspections	2.0%	5
	Perform Recreational Water Inspections	2.5%	6
	Perform Group Gathering Inspections	2.0%	4
	Perform Healthy Homes Inspections	2.0%	4
	Perform Hazardous Waste Inspections	1.0%	2
	Perform Bio-Medical Facility Inspections	1.0%	2
	Perform Confined Feeding Operations Inspections	1.0%	2
	Perform Other Facility Inspections	2.0%	5
	Perform Solid Waste Facility Inspections	2.0%	5
B	Conducting System Inspections	20.0%	45
	Perform Occupational Health and Safety Inspections	2.0%	5
	Perform Onsite Waste Water System Inspections	12.0%	27
	Perform Potable Water Quality Inspections	6.0%	13
C	Conducting Investigations	14.0%	32
	Perform Complaint Investigations	5.0%	11

	Perform Epidemiology Investigations	4.0%	9
	Investigate Illegal Operators	2.0%	4
	Perform Hazardous Waste Investigations	1.5%	3
	Perform Indoor Air Quality Investigations	2.0%	5
D	Ensuring Compliance	13.0%	29
	Develop Regulations	1.0%	2
	Conduct Plan Review	5.0%	11
	Review Establishment's HACCP Plan	2.0%	5
	Provide Technical Assistance to Stakeholders	5.0%	11
E	Promoting Environmental Public Health Awareness	10.0%	22
	Conduct Environmental Public Health Assessment	1.0%	2
	Establish Community Partnerships	1.0%	2
	Conduct Community Outreach	2.0%	4
	Communicate Environmental Public Health Risks to Stakeholders	3.0%	7
	Conduct Environmental Surveillance	3.0%	7
F	Responding To Emergencies	8.0%	18
	Assess Community Risks	1.5%	3
	Create Environmental Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plans	2.0%	5
	Conduct Emergency Preparedness Training	1.0%	2
	Implement Environmental Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plan	2.0%	5
	Conduct Recovery Follow-up	1.5%	3
	Total	**100.0%**	**225**

Recommended Study References

Below is a list of study references that are recommended to assist the candidate in preparing for the REHS/RS® examination. Many study references are available for purchase at the NEHA Bookstore.

- National Environmental Health Association. (2021). *REHS/RS Study Guide* (5th ed.).
- California Association of Environmental Health Administrators. (2012). *Disaster Field Manual for Environmental Health Specialists*.
- Carter, M. (2007). *Soil Sampling and Methods of Analysis*. CRC Press.
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- Knechtges, P.L., Kearney, G.D., & Resnick, B.A. (2018). *Environmental Public Health: The Practitioner's Guide*. APHA Press.
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- Koren, H., & Bisesi, M.S. (2003). *Handbook of Environmental Health, Volume 2: Pollutant Interactions in Air, Water, and Soil* (4th ed.). CRC Press.
- Lundgren, R.E., & McMakin, A.H. (2018). *Risk Communication: A Handbook for Communicating Environmental, Safety, and Health Risks*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Marriott, N.G., Schilling, M.W., & Gravani, R.B. (2018). *Principles of Food Sanitation* (6th ed.). Springer.
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- Moeller, D.W. (2011). *Environmental Health* (4th ed.). Harvard University Press.
- Morgan, M.T. (2003). *Environmental Health* (3rd ed.). Wadsworth, Inc.
- Nadakavukaren, A., & Caravanos, J. (2020). *Our Global Environment: A Health Perspective* (8th ed.). Waveland Press, Inc.
- Nemerow, N.L., Agardy, F.J., Sullivan, P., & Salvato, J.A. (Eds). (2009). *Environmental Engineering: Environmental Health and Safety for*

Municipal Infrastructure, Land Use and Planning, and Industry (6th ed). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Nemerow, N.L., Agardy, F.J., Sullivan, P., & Salvato, J.A. (Eds). (2009). *Environmental Engineering: Prevention and Response to Water-, Food-, Soil-, and Air-borne Disease and Illness* (6th ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Nemerow, N.L., Agardy, F.J., Sullivan, P., & Salvato, J.A. (Eds). (2009). *Environmental Engineering: Water, Wastewater, Soil and Groundwater Treatment and Remediation* (6th ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
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