

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Water Division

QCI Program and Training Provider Recognition Information

The following is intended to provide information regarding the ADEM Qualified Credentialed Inspector Program (QCIP) and Training Provider Recognition (TPR) process for Qualified Credentialed Inspector (QCI) certification training as described in ADEM NPDES rules, ADEM General Permit ALR100000, and ADEM General Permit ALG890000.

Timeframes for ADEM review and recognition of any request to be a QCI Training Provider (TP) for a QCIP is based upon available ADEM staff resources and funding. Currently, an ADEM QCI TP and QCIP review fee is not required. However, an annual fee may be considered and applied in the future, if needed, to support ADEM review and administrative oversight of the QCI program.

The QCIP is *completely voluntary*, and a permittee, operator, and/or owner is not required by ADEM regulations to use a QCI or have employees attend QCI training. The QCIP has been established to provide a flexible alternative to the permittee/operator/owner where the permittee/operator/owner finds use of a QCI advantageous. A permittee, operator, and/or owner can utilize other available options and can fully comply with ADEM rules and regulations without having a QCI employee.

I. Eligibility & Conditions

1. A permittee, operator, and/or owner may develop and conduct their own internal training program as recognized by their ADEM TPR.
2. The permittee, operator, owner, LLC member, LLP partner, QCP, and/or a full-time employee of the permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP, are eligible to be a QCI.
3. A consultant, contractor, or other third party that is not an employee of the permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP is not eligible to be a QCI for that entity at any time but may qualify as a QCP or may perform inspections under the direct supervision of a QCP.
4. Initial TPR must be received in writing from ADEM prior to the training program commencing. Recognition notification, as amended, and any attached considerations will describe the requirements and responsibilities established for the TP to maintain ADEM recognition.
5. The TPR will be valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of recognition. The TP will be required to submit a written renewal request 3 months prior to the expiration of the TPR. The TPR will be considered administratively extended beyond the expiration date upon submittal of the written renewal request.
6. QCI training must be conducted by a Qualified Credentialed Professional (QCP) with detailed knowledge of ADEM NPDES rules, general permits, and program requirements, and be consistent with the ADEM QCIP recognition. The QCP must be approved by ADEM and must conduct the majority of the training/instruction. The QCP must be present throughout the entire course including the exam. Non-QCP trained professionals are allowed to give limited, brief presentations under the direct supervision of a QCP. Only QCPs are allowed to be listed, advertised, and/or described as instructors.

7. The TP must be integrally involved in the QCIP development and in control of the training process. The TP may subcontract instructors as recognized by their ADEM TPR. However, extensive 3rd party sub-contracting to other parties to manage, coordinate, teach, etc. the training is not acceptable and may result in termination of QCIP recognition by ADEM.
8. ADEM will audit (See Section IV.) the TP's materials, procedures, and training effectiveness to ensure quality training is delivered consistently. ADEM recognition is automatically terminated in the event that the TP fails to implement and maintain the QCIP consistent with ADEM's TPR and/or QCIP recognition. ADEM may modify or terminate recognition at any time for cause.
9. QCI training content must be based primarily on ensuring compliance with the ADEM rules, ADEM NPDES General Permit ALR100000, and ADEM NPDES General Permit ALG890000, the Alabama Handbook, comprehensive inspections, implementation, and maintenance of effective best management practices (BMPs), record keeping, coordination with the applicant/permittee and QCP, and other appropriate topics relative to construction and small mining activities and regulations in Alabama.
10. QCI certification is not transferable or interchangeable between TPs, unless TPs have agreed and established in writing, procedures to cooperatively deliver training. TPs can voluntarily enter into written reciprocal training agreements acceptable to ADEM to provide for a backup training partner, provide cost and training delivery efficiencies, etc. A copy of the written reciprocal agreement shall be submitted to the Department for approval prior to the reciprocating agreement taking effect and for ADEM QCIP audits.
11. The TP agrees to develop and implement a database acceptable to ADEM with data management/tracking capabilities that will:
 - a. Manage and track identifying information regarding QCIs and their sponsoring permittee, operator, and/or owner, to include QCIs full name, phone number, email address, mailing address, original certification date and number, most recent 4-hr refresher, and certificate expiration date.
 - b. Maintain original or electronic copies of original paperwork (applications, attendance sheets, tests, answer sheets, test results, etc.) for a period of at least three (3) years.
 - c. Provide real-time training and QCI information access to ADEM.
 - d. Inform QCIs and the applicant, permittee, operator and/or owner how they can easily obtain information regarding scheduling of 8-hr training and 4-hr refreshers.
 - e. Provide at least a forty-five (45) day notification by letter, facsimile, email, phone call, text, etc. of expiration of certification.
 - f. Have a procedure to terminate QCI certification when the QCI leaves the employment of the permittee, operator, and/or owner in which they were certified under.
 - g. Have a procedure to terminate a QCI certification at ADEM's request due to QCI nonperformance or for cause.

12. Notify all QCIs and their permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP, if the TP no longer intends to provide QCIP training and to provide prior trained QCIs and their permittee, operator, and/or owner information regarding other ADEM recognized QCIPs, if the TP decides not to renew the QCIP agreement.
13. Develop and implement a QCIP webpage with a search feature acceptable to ADEM and provide a link to be placed on ADEM's webpage so that ADEM can query a list of previous and current QCIs, the status of their certification, and other QCI information in real-time. The webpage must also list QCI training schedules, training costs, QCIP contact information, etc.

II. QCIP Requirements

The QCIP must be consistent with the ADEM's QCIP recognition that includes, but is not limited to:

1. Provide initial In-Person or Live/Streaming Webinar 8-hr QCI training and 4-hr refresher training. The requirement for In-Person or Live/Streaming Webinar 8-hr class shall begin as soon as possible by the TP, but no later than April 1, 2026, or other agreed upon date between ADEM and the TP. The 4-hr refresher will not be required to be in-person. The refresher may be provided via internet with a pre-recorded class, digital learning module, narrated presentation videos, or in-person.
2. Obtain ADEM prior approval of instructors in order to ensure experience of the instructors. The TP must agree to utilize a limited core staff of instructors to ensure consistent training and effective content delivery. A list of all trainers must be supplied to ADEM annually by January 31. If changes to the supplied list occur at any time, then the list shall be updated in a timely manner with ADEM.
3. Develop an In-Person or Live/Streaming Webinar 8-hr QCI initial training module acceptable to ADEM which provides stormwater management training and will ensure consistent content delivery. The training module must focus on the requirements of ADEM rules and general permits appropriate to the QCI trainee's responsibilities. Each QCI must pass a proctored written test with a minimum score of 75%.
4. Develop a 4-hr refresher training module acceptable to ADEM which provides continuing QCI education and includes any related updates to ADEM rules and general permits, appropriate to the QCI trainee's responsibilities.
5. Develop administrative procedures to ensure trainee punctuality, attendance, and participation/attention, security of the training test/evaluation, and completion of the entire training program by each QCI.
6. Provide training materials to each trainee and provide a completion certificate and at least one of the following: (a) digital QCI identification card, or (b) laminated (wallet-sized) QCI identification card for each successful QCI.
7. Provide to each QCI attendee with a course evaluation on the training material and effectiveness, instructors, etc.
8. Provide for ADEM technical staff attendance at any training free of cost.

9. Provide ADEM full access to and copies upon request of any information regarding the training program, statistics, test scores, customer feedback, training evaluations, other reports, etc.
10. Notify all trainees that granting of QCI certification is not transferable between TPs unless the TP has entered into a reciprocal agreement with other TPs.
11. Classes should be limited in size and an appropriate number of instructors should be provided to ensure that quality training can be provided to all in attendance. For Live/Streaming Webinar classes, the TP may need to limit class size to ensure that appropriate internet capabilities will allow for an uninterrupted class.
12. Significant modifications/updates to the training curricula, procedures, or other aspects of the training program are required to be approved by ADEM prior to implementation in the QCIP.
13. In the event of the TP not renewing the QCIP agreement or no longer intends to provide QCIP training, ADEM shall be notified in writing at least 60 days prior to cancelling the TPR agreement.
 - a. The TP will provide to ADEM complete list of their active QCI roster, to include:
 - i. Full name
 - ii. Sponsoring permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP
 - iii. Phone number, email address, mailing address
 - iv. Original certificate date and number
 - v. Most recent 4-hr refresher and certificate expiration date.
 - b. The TP shall notify all active QCIs on the roster in writing at least 30 days prior to cancelling the TPR agreement, via email and regular mail, of the TPs decision to cease as a QCIP. The TP will provide a list of current TPs and advise the QCI will need to contact a new TP to transfer their registration prior to the certificate expiration.
14. In order to promote QCIP program accessibility and success, the TP agrees to the following:
 - a. Open the 8-hr initial training to federal, State, and local government entities and personnel who are interested in becoming a QCI, considering available space and resources.
 - b. Continuously update training content to incorporate any ADEM updates/guidance, incorporate, to the extent appropriate, local construction issues and requirements, and in response to course evaluations.
 - c. At the request of ADEM, provide information regarding the program and QCIs to other government agencies.
 - d. To conduct training at ADEM's request at any location statewide based on an identified need and an agreed to attendance level.
 - e. Provide the 4-hr refresher course via in person or via the internet upon acceptance by ADEM.

15. In order to maintain training program consistency, quality, integrity, long-term viability and considering TP reciprocal training partnerships:
- a. All QCIs must complete continuing refresher training every year through their current certifying TP or their ADEM recognized reciprocal TP partner in order to maintain QCI status. In order to change TPs voluntarily and maintain QCI status, the QCI will be required to re-attend and complete the 8-hr initial training in order to be recertified with a different TP.
 - b. **Beginning April 2026** - All QCIs must complete continuing refresher training every two years through their current certifying TP or their ADEM recognized reciprocal TP partner in order to maintain QCI status.
 - c. A QCI may conduct inspections for other entities operated by the permittee, operator, and/or owner where the permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP, is the responsible corporate official or managing partner of record for the entity. The QCI certification automatically terminates if the employee is no longer employed by the sponsoring permittee/operator/owner or QCP, in which they were certified under.
 - d. An employee whose QCI certification is terminated because they leave the sponsoring permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP, is required to re-attend and complete the 8-hr initial training in order to be recertified with a different permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP.
 - e. A QCI that is certified by a terminated (voluntary or involuntary) TP and/or QCIP, must register with another TP upon notification that their current TP has been terminated, and prior to their QCI certificate expiration.
 - f. A current QCI can complete either the 4-hr refresher or attend another 8-hr training class (if the 4-hr refresher is not available) prior to their certificate expiration to maintain QCI status. (see #g below)
 - g. A QCI certification shall include an expiration date in a month/year or month/day/year format. The expiration date shall be updated each time the QCI completes their 4-hr refresher. The sponsoring permittee, operator, and/or owner, or QCP, of the QCI may elect for all of their QCIs to have the same certificate expiration date.
 - h. A TP is authorized to allow a maximum grace period of no more than forty-five (45) days after the expiration of a QCI certification for successful completion of refresher training. A QCI is encouraged to arrange for and complete refresher training well before the expiration of their QCI certification.
 - i. Examples of acceptable reasons for granting of an extension are military deployment, serious illness of the student, serious illness of an immediate family member, death in immediate family.
 - ii. Application of the grace period is only on a case-by-case basis and is intended to be used on rare occasions only with sufficient cause, and NOT simply for scheduling convenience.
 - i. If a QCI is notified that their TP intends to and/or ceases operation, the QCI will need to do the following to maintain their QCI certification:

- i. Contact an approved TP (list available at adem.alabama.gov) to do a one-time transfer of their QCI registration prior to the certificate expiration.
- ii. Complete a refresher course with the new TP prior to the certificate expiration.
- iii. If the QCI is unable to register with a new TP and complete refresher training in a timely manner (see #g above) their QCI certification is considered expired, and they must re-attend and complete the 8-hr initial training from an approved TP to regain QCI status.
- j. If a QCI fails to complete refresher training in a timely manner due to personal reasons, scheduling, or other problems/challenges not under the control of the QCIP, their QCI is considered expired, and they must re-attend and complete the 8-hr initial training from that TP or another approved TP to regain QCI status.

III. INSPECTIONS

To assist the QCIP in their training program and to define inspector qualifications, please reference the below chart. Refer to Part III H. of ADEM General Permit ALR100000 and ADEM General Permit ALG890000 for full permit requirements and time frames for conducting project inspections.

	Conduct Daily Observations	Conduct Monthly Inspections	Conduct Rain Event Inspections	Conduct 6-Month CBMPP (3-Month if Priority) Evaluation Inspection	Sign the Self-Reported Inspection Report (SRIR)
Permittee ¹	✓				✓
QCI	✓	✓	✓		✓
QCP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Qualified Person under the direct supervision of a QCP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

1. The Permittee cannot sign the SRIR as having conducted a required inspection unless the Permittee is a QCI or QCP. The signature of the Permittee on the SRIR is a requirement on the form as the Responsible Official.

IV. AUDIT of TP

The ADEM will conduct a full audit of the TP at least every three (3) years. Audits of In-Person classes may be conducted by ADEM at anytime. The following items are required to be submitted at least 90 days prior to the expiration of the TPR:

1. Current list of QCP instructors and any non-QCP instructors.
 - a. For those instructors that do not meet the requirement of being a QCP, please provide the qualifications of the non-QCPs.
 - b. List of guest speakers.
2. Current active QCI roster to include full name, expiration date and QCI certification number.
3. Copy of all training materials (hard copy or digital) provided to attendee.
4. Copy of 8-hr initial and 4-hr refresher presentations.
5. Copy of all quiz/testing materials given to attendees.
6. Copy of reciprocal agreements with other TPs.

V. DEFINITIONS

Qualified Credentialed Inspector or QCI means a permittee, permittee employee, or permittee designated qualified person who has successfully completed initial training and annual refresher Qualified Credentialed Inspector Program (QCIP) training and holds a valid certification from a Department approved cooperating training entity. A QCI is familiar with current industry standards for erosion and sediment controls and able to inspect and assure that BMPs or other pollution control devices (silt fences, erosion control fabric, rock check devices, etc.) and erosion control efforts (grading, mulching, seeding, growth management, etc.) or management strategies have been properly implemented and regularly maintained. Such individual may not certify the CBMPP or modifications to the CBMPP.

Qualified Credentialed Inspector Program or QCIP means a Department approved program conducted by a cooperating training entity. Approved programs provide training in the requirements of the Alabama NPDES rules and regulations to ensure that QCP designed and certified BMPs detailed in a CBMPP are effectively implemented and maintained, and evaluation of conveyance structures, receiving waters and adjacent impacted offsite areas to ensure the protection of water quality and compliance with the requirements of this Permit.

Qualified Credentialed Professional or QCP means a licensed (in the State of Alabama) professional engineer (PE) or a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) as determined by EnviroCert International. Other registered or certified professionals eligible to be classified as a QCP include registered landscape architect, licensed land surveyor, registered geologist, registered forester, Registered Environmental Manager as determined by the National Registry of Environmental Professionals (NREP), or Certified Professional and Soil Scientist (CPSS) as determined by the Soil Science Society of America. The QCP shall be in good standing with the authority granting the registration or designation. The design and implementation of certain structural BMPs may involve the practice of engineering and require the certification of a professional engineer pursuant to Alabama law.

A qualified person under the direct supervision of a QCP refers to an individual who is an employee of the QCP or the QCP's firm and is familiar with current industry standards for erosion and sediment controls. This individual is able to inspect and assure that BMPs or other pollution control devices (silt fences, erosion control fabric, rock check devices, etc.) and erosion control efforts (grading, mulching, seeding, growth management, etc.) or management strategies have been properly implemented and regularly maintained. Such individual may not certify the CBMPP or modifications to the CBMPP.

Document Update: This document is intended to provide helpful information relative to the requirements of ADEM's NPDES stormwater program for construction and small noncoal, nonmetallic mining/processing sites (ADEM Administrative Code Chapter 335-6-12, ADEM General Permit ALR100000, and ADEM General Permit ALG890000). This document is intended as an informal discussion of portions of the rules and general permit and does not modify or affect in any way the provisions of Chapter 335-6-12, ADEM General Permit ALR100000, ADEM General Permit ALG890000, or other ADEM rules and general permits.

The information contained in this document is subject to regular revision/update/correction as needed to effectively communicate information. Periodic review of the information presented in this document will be accomplished and modification of this information will be undertaken as necessary to ensure consistency with any applicable statutory/regulatory requirements. This information document is not a legal document and is not to be construed with and does not replace, modify, or impose restrictions on current applicable statutory authority or ADEM authority. This document is also not designed nor intended to detail every possible procedure, priority, or issue related to the rules and general permits and may not provide the reader with a complete understanding of related/linked supplementary/complementary ADEM requirements/procedures or other details of the program.