

**Q How long have you been a member of AHE, and when did you become CHESP certified?**

I have been a member of AHE since December of 2008 and I became CHESP certified in September of 2010. Not knowing that the result was not immediately revealed, I took the exam during the AHE conference. It was brutal waiting six weeks for the results.

**Q What prompted or interested you in pursuing certification?**

First, it was the best way for me to validate my knowledge after being in the industry for six “long” years. Secondly, and after being with a new organization for nine months, I wanted to assure my employer that they hired the right person for the job. And last but not least, it is a prestigious challenge.

**Q How did you prepare for certification? What was the hardest aspect in preparing to take the exam?**

I took advantage of the tools that AHE has to offer such as the study guide, the online study group, and the self-assessment quizzes and sample tests. The hardest part was the fear of taking a timed exam after not doing so for at least 10 years.

**Q What was your experience like in taking the exam?**

First, I was nervous like a student taking the SAT exam, but after looking around me and seeing that was the norm in the room, I relaxed a little. It almost felt like being afraid to ride a rollercoaster, but then realizing that it was not as scary as you thought it would be.

**Q How did you feel after passing the exam and learning about your newly acquired certification?**

I felt very proud of the accomplishment and was extremely eager to share the news with everyone. I took a few days to bring me back to Earth and to stop talking about it.

**Q How has CHESP certification positively affected you and your role in your organization?**

Being CHESP certified automatically boosted my confidence, and equally as important, the confidence of my organization. It was the green light to expand my role and aggressively pursue more business opportunities.

**Q How has CHESP certification affected your career and long-term career goals and path?**

Being a government contractor, the CHESP certification has increased our chances of winning contracts, and most importantly, it was a solid contributing factor in nearly doubling the revenue of my division in less than five years.

**Q What would you tell others who are considering pursuing certification? How should they best prepare?**

Besides asking why it is taking them so long to get certified, I would strongly urge others to seriously consider getting certified as soon as feasible. It may take some time and effort, but the return on investment is unmatched.

By being in the industry, they are halfway there, so I would advise them to take advantage

of all of the assistance and resources available to them through AHE and not to be afraid of failure. I would strongly recommend taking the Self-Assessment Exam (SAE) and practice completing it within the allotted timeframe. Finally, go with your first instinct.

**Q What do you see in the future regarding certification for environmental services leaders?**

I see being certified as being essential to their success and a key to open many doors—particularly with all of the changes to our industry and the way we do business. I would not be surprised if it becomes a widespread requirement of employment, as it currently is with numerous health care organizations.

**Q What’s the very best thing about being a certified CHESP?**

Besides bragging rights, it is a great feeling to know that you are one of the elite professionals in our industry. We are no longer “housekeepers in a tie” as one of my ex-bosses use to refer to himself, but rather an integral