UPWDA Wastewater Detection Certification

Endurance and Proficiency

Phase 1

It is recognized that increased search time, endurance, and proficiency of wastewater detection canine teams are necessary for deployment and future training requirements. Programs should include this in their training protocols.

Odor Identification

During testing, all necessary precautions should be taken to ensure that the handler has no prior knowledge as to the location of wastewater training aids. Canine teams should search the way they were trained to. No assistance or leading the team by the Master Trainer, or anyone else, shall be permitted. The canine team should be able to locate all wastewater training aids at the source barring extenuating environmental conditions deemed relevant by the Master Trainer. Canine should be able to maintain obedience to the odor for a timeframe of 4 to 6 seconds without breaking, keeping its nose to the source of the trained target odor.

Prior to the beginning of the test, the master trainer shall inform handlers that once they complete a scent line, they will not be permitted to return to that specific line. Dog teams will be given 2 passes with no time limit per scent line. A pass is defined as a productive sniff on each canister.

Mandatory Training Aids (All canine teams must be tested on ALL listed training aids.) *Wastewater used in the test will be sourced within 72 hours of the test and will contain at least 3 separate sources: a highly populated area, a suburban area, and a rural area.*

- Diluted wastewater samples (10:3) (*DI water)*
- Non-diluted wastewater samples
- GEXTENT Tubes impregnated with wastewater

Testing Protocols: Each scent line will contain 0-2 aids, each with a different concentration of wastewater or GETXENT tubes. The handler will not be informed of the actual type of wastewater training aids being used for testing. The term “wastewater aid” will mean any wastewater substance used for certification testing.

Scent Line Testing

A scent line will be used to evaluate the canine's ability to recognize and differentiate wastewater odors in a controlled setting. The test will be structured into 10 separate

scent lines, each containing random amounts and types of odors. Cans containing target odors will be placed between 1 to 2 feet apart.
A minimum of 5 out of 10 scent lines must be blank*

Certification Requirements

- To successfully certify, the canine's final response must be passive, and the canine team must not miss more than one wastewater aid throughout all phases of testing.
- A ‘miss’ includes incorrect responses or failure to detect an aid.
- Testing will be conducted on a pass or fail basis.

Safety and Testing Procedures

- Handlers will brief the Master Trainer on their dog’s alert and response behaviors before testing. The handler will make the final determination whether or not a can is positive.
- The Master Trainer may terminate the test if the canine team is not working effectively.
- The handler will not be allowed to make harsh or inappropriate physical corrections. Any such behavior will result in an automatic failure and will be reported in writing to the handler’s supervisor within 10 days.
- Handlers will not be permitted to observe other canine teams during testing, and conversation between tested and untested handlers will not be allowed while testing is in progress.
- All training aids must have been recently collected (within 2 weeks) and stored appropriately to prevent contamination and viability. They will be handled using gloves to avoid cross-contamination.
- Testing areas will be inspected prior to canine teams entering to ensure no environmental hazards pose a risk to handlers or canines.
- The placement of training aids will be randomized via random number generator and will not be disclosed to handlers. Each aid will be placed at a maximum of 5 minutes before testing to allow for odor dispersal.
- If a wastewater aid needs to be moved to a new can, the previously used can will be sterilized with 70% isopropyl as well as the 2 cans before 2 cans after as a test site to prevent odor contamination.
- Weather conditions will be monitored, and testing will be suspended in the event of inclement weather.

- Testing will include the use of distractors to ensure that canines do not falsely alert to non-wastewater substances. Distractors will be strategically placed to avoid direct contamination with the test substances. 70% isopropyl wipe down after each run
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used when handling wastewater samples to ensure the safety of the handler and canine.
- Handlers must avoid leading their canine or providing unintended cues during testing.
- Strict safety measures will be enforced around high-risk areas such as water bodies, steep stairwells, and industrial facilities.
- If a canine exhibits excessive stress, fear, or other behavioral issues that impact its ability to perform, the test will be halted and reviewed.
- Certification is valid for one year from the date of testing. Regular training and retraining are required to maintain certification.
- Any canine team failing to meet the minimum certification standard must undergo a full retest in all testing phases and odors.
- The Master Trainer will exercise reasonable judgment regarding canine behavioral changes toward wastewater odors and make final determinations regarding team performance.

Use of Distractors

Natural controls, probes, and distractors must be placed in the testing area for all tests. Care must be taken not to create artificial distractions in a manner that contaminates the test substance's odor. Distractors can be the same as those used in the odor recognition assessment.

<u>Authorized Distractors</u>

- Food
- Kong/toy
- Cow Manure
- Dog Feces (Must contain)
- Wildlife feces (beaver, skunk, etc.)
  Skatole can be used in place of animal feces
- Detergent (dish, laundry, etc.)
- Used cooking oil
- Tap water
- Empty Tadd
- Tadd with blank GETXENT
- Tadd with DI water
- Nitrile glove
- Isopropyl alcohol wipe
- Bottled water
- Treated Wastewater

Strict safety measures will be upheld during all testing. Testing will be conducted under conditions that ensure a realistic but controlled environment for the canine teams. Any certification failures will require a full retest in all testing phases.

Obedience

Temperament Test

Before proceeding with obedience certification, all wastewater detector dogs must undergo a temperament test to evaluate their behavior, stability, and suitability for fieldwork. This test ensures that the dog demonstrates confidence and neutrality in various environments, as well as an appropriate response to novel stimuli.

The temperament test will assess the dog's reactions to:

- **Environmental Stimuli:** Exposure to loud noises, moving objects, and sudden distractions (e.g., dropped equipment, unfamiliar surfaces). The dog should remain focused and recover quickly from distractions.
- **Socialization:** Interaction with unfamiliar people in a neutral setting to assess friendliness and non-aggressive behavior. The dog should not display undue fearfulness or aggression.
- **Handling Tolerance:** The dog must allow basic physical handling (e.g., touch on paws, ears, and tail) without undue resistance or aggression.
- **Response to Mild Stressors:** Exposure to controlled scenarios that mimic field conditions, such as working near active equipment or in crowded spaces. The dog should remain composed and responsive to handler commands.

Failure to pass the temperament test will result in disqualification from certification until the issues are addressed and the dog is re-evaluated.

The Obedience Certification Test is used to determine the wastewater detector dog's ability and proficiency in performing off-lead obedience exercises, as well as the handler's total control of the dog. K9 teams must obtain Obedience Certification prior to testing for operational deployment.

Obedience will be conducted off lead.

The K9 team will start in heel/sit position and must complete the following to become certified:

- A minimum of two right and left turns and one about face.

- Each leg must be a minimum of thirty feet in distance.
- The team must walk forward, and at a point designated by the evaluator, the handler, while walking without breaking stride, must down/stay their dog and continue walking. The evaluator will then notify the handler when to call the dog to the heel position.
- The team will stop once the dog is in heel position. The handler will stay their dog and walk away from them. The handler will turn and face the dog at a distance of at least twenty-five feet.
- The evaluator will advise the handler to complete the following commands: sit and down by voice, and/or sit and down by hand signals.
- The evaluator will advise the handler to call the dog to heel and stop/down the dog at the halfway point. Once the dog has stopped, the evaluator will advise the handler to call the dog to heel.

The wastewater detector dog team will be tested in the following three phases:

- **Heeling phase**
- **Walking phase**
- **Distance phase**

There is no specific order to the three phases, and they may be tested in any order. They will be judged on a pass or fail basis.

Cruel or abusive corrections will not be tolerated. Any evaluator who observes such corrections will document and report the violation to the appropriate certification authority.

Heeling Phase

This phase will consist of the following exercises:

- Normal pace
- Fast pace, double-time slow pace, or half step
- A minimum of two right turns, two left turns, and two about turns
- Each leg must be a minimum of thirty feet long
- Different phases may be conducted during any leg. During one leg, the team must heel through a minimum of three stationary people.

Walking Phase

- The handler and dog will start from the ‘finish’ position and walk forward together.

- At a point designated by the evaluator, the handler, without breaking stride, will ‘stay’ their dog (sit or down) and continue walking.
- At a point designated by the evaluator, the handler, while continuing to walk away from the dog, will command the dog to ‘heel.’
- The evaluator will instruct the team to ‘about turn’ and then to walk forward.
- At a point designated by the evaluator, the handler, without breaking stride, will ‘stay’ their dog (sit or down) and continue walking.
- At a point designated by the evaluator, the handler will turn, retrieve their dog, and return to the original starting position.

Distance Phase

- At a point designated by the evaluator, the handler will leave their dog in a ‘stay’ at a distance of no less than twenty-five feet, or more than fifty feet.
- The handler will be directed to turn and face the dog.
- The evaluator will advise the handler to complete the following commands: ‘sit’ and ‘down’ by voice, and/or ‘sit’ and ‘down’ by hand signal.
    - **Note:** Choice and order of commands or signals will be at the evaluator's discretion.
- The evaluator will advise the handler to recall their dog by hand signal or voice command.
- Prior to the dog reaching the handler, the evaluator will advise the handler to ‘stop’ the dog by hand signal or voice command. Stopping the dog may be a ‘down,’ ‘sit,’ or ‘stay’ command.
- After the dog has stopped, the evaluator will advise the handler to recall the dog to the ‘heel’ position by hand signal or voice command.

This test will be conducted on a pass or fail basis.

The evaluator will determine if the team should be certified upon test completion. If certified, the handler and dog are certified as a team. If the dog is reassigned to a new handler, the previous certification will be invalidated, and the new team must undergo certification.