Geologists Licensing in Washington State

http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/geologist/
30 States Require Geologist Licensure
Since 2001, Washington State requires that all practicing geologists have a professional license

18.220 RCW & 308-15 WAC

WAC = Washington Administrative Code (policy interpretations of the law)

RCW = Revised Code of Washington (laws)
Geologists

Requirements
How to get your license | How to renew your license | Stamp requirements

Examinations

Fees

Forms

Resources and publications

Frequently asked questions

What's new
Geologist news | Get email updates

Geologist Licensing Board
Members | Meetings and minutes | Policies

Laws and rules

For consumers
Look up a business or professional license | File a complaint | Disciplinary actions

Contact us

SEE ALSO ➔
Renew your geologist license online
Guidelines for building officials and design professionals
Why is Licensure Necessary in WA?

Establishing and enforcing scientific, engineering, and ethical standards in the profession ensures the protection of the environment and the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Landslide: Kelso, WA

Liquefaction: 2001 Nisqually Earthquake
Why is Licensure Necessary in WA?

To ensure the protection of the environment and the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Oso Landslide, March 22, 2014
Who Needs to be Licensed?

Anybody who

• practices geology

• uses verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, business card

• uses title that implies the person is a geologist

• represents that they are able to perform the work of a geologist
Licensing Exemptions

- Working under a licensed geologist’s supervision (e.g., your first job).
- US Federal Government (e.g., USGS)
- Energy & minerals exploration
- Research and teaching
Why Get a License?

- Because it is the law! 18.220 RCW & 308-15 WAC

- More job opportunities and professional growth potential

- Portable to 30 other states + Puerto Rico (it is the law in most western states, e.g., California, Idaho, Oregon).
A Geologist Licensing Board oversees administration

How are board members appointed?
They’re appointed by the Department of Licensing Director. Members serve 4 years, which are staggered so no more than 2 appointments are made in a calendar year.

Are board members paid?
Yes, $50/day for attending meetings and board business done outside of meetings. Also, reimbursed for certain expenses related to traveling to and from board meetings.

Who’s on the board?
There are 7 members, all are WA residents:
• 5 licensed geologists, 2 must be licensed in a specialty of geology (Engineering Geologist, Hydrogeologist).
• 1 from the general public with no family or business connection with the practice of geology
• Department of Natural Resources’ Supervisor of Geology (ex-officio member).

How are board members appointed?
They’re appointed by the Department of Licensing Director. Members serve 4 years, which are staggered so no more than 2 appointments are made in a calendar year.

Related information
• RCW 18.220.030: Geologist Licensing Board (leg.wa.gov)
How Do I Get a Geologist License?
Meet the educational requirements and pass the ASBOG’s Fundamentals of Geology Exam

Gain 5 years of working experience and pass ASBOG’s Practice of Geology Exam

Pass the Practice Exam and document 5 years of working experience in a specialty and pass the Specialty Exam
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

1. Meet the educational requirements
Educational Requirements

(2) Education. You have graduated from an accredited college or university with:

(a) A degree in the geological sciences, or a related degree approved by the board, and have either:

(i) Twenty-four semester or thirty-six quarter hours of upper division geology courses that includes 14 semester or 21 quarter credits (nonrepeatable) from the following list:

- Earth Materials (combination of mineralogy and petrology)
- Economic Geology
- Engineering Geology
- Field Camp
- Geochemistry
- Geomorphology
- Geophysics
- Hydrogeology
- Mineralogy
- Petrology
- Sedimentology
- Stratigraphy
- Structural Geology
Or

(ii) Successfully completed coursework that is determined by the board to be educationally equivalent in content and rigor to the classes listed above. You must submit documentation that demonstrates your coursework is equivalent to the requirements in (a)(i) of this subsection acceptable to the board. Examples of documentation include course syllabi, copies of study materials, and the tables of contents of books used in the course.
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

1. Meet the educational requirements

You meet the education requirements if you receive a B.S. Degree in Geology from
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WWU’s B.S. Core</th>
<th>credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>306  Mineralogy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310  Geomorphology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>318  Structural Geology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>352  Geophysics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>406  Petrology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409  Field Methods and Theory</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410  Field Mapping</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415  Stratigraphy and Sedimentation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 credits

37
If you choose the **B.S. in Geophysics** degree plan, make sure you take enough upper division geology courses (300 and above) to accumulate 36 credits and 21 of the credits must be from the list.
If you choose the B.A. in Geology degree plan, make sure you take enough upper division geology courses (300 and above) to accumulate 36 credits and 21 of the credits must be from the list.
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

2. Apply to take the ASBOG Fundamentals Exam

The State has adopted the national Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) standardized exam as the Fundamentals Exam
Education Requirements

You can take the ASBOG Fundamentals Exam without a degree if you have accumulated 36 quarter credits of upper division geology courses and 21 of those credits are from this list.

- Earth Materials (combination of mineralogy and petrology)
- Economic Geology
- Engineering Geology
- Field Camp
- Geochemistry
- Geomorphology
- Geophysics
- Hydrogeology
- Mineralogy
- Petrology
- Sedimentology
- Stratigraphy
- Structural Geology
Exam Dates in Washington

http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/geologist/geoexams.html
If you want to take the ASBOG Fundamentals Exam before graduating, you must meet the educational requirements about three months in advance, because there is a 90 day processing period.

For example, the spring ASBOG Fundamentals Exam is March 18, 2016, but the application deadline is December 27, 2015.

Make sure your fall grades are on the transcript before you have it mailed to the DOL.
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

3. Pass the **Fundamentals of Geology Exam**
How does WWU compare to the national average? (~300 institutions)
Since 2008, ASBOG has been collecting institutional information about exam candidates. A total of 82 WWU BS alumni have taken the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology Exam since 2008. WWU has a passing rate well above the national average of about 59%.
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

4. Gain five years of work experience as a geologist.
Experience Requirements

You must accumulate 5 years of professional geological practice after receipt of a geoscience degree and meet the educational requirements.

• at least 3 years of the 5 must be under the supervision of licensed geologist or others who, in the opinion of the board, are qualified to be in responsible charge

• part-time experience will be prorated

• experience earned prior to receiving a degree will not be considered.
Experience Requirements

Alternative experience credit

• Each year of graduate study counts as one year of training up to a maximum of two years

• Geological research or teaching at the university or college level is credited year for year if, in the judgment of the board, it is comparable to experience obtained in the practice of geology
How Do I Get a Geologist License?

5. Pass the ASBOG Professional Geology Exam
Washington State Geologist Licensing Board
How to become a licensed geologist in Washington State

PREREQUISITE
- review 18.220.060 RCW
- WAC 308-15-030 through 308-15-060

Meet the educational requirements and pass the ASBOG’s Fundamentals of Geology Exam

Submit application and verification of requirements
[http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/geologist/]

Pass ASBOG’s Fundamentals of Geology exam

Geologist-in-Training Status

Candidates with a degree only
Candidates with a degree plus appropriate experience

Gain appropriate experience and submit verification to board staff

Pass ASBOG’s Practice of Geology exam

License issued

Submit application and verification of requirements for specialty
[http://www.dol.wa.gov/business/geologist/]

Pass specialty exam(s)

Specialty endorsement(s) issued

Gain 5 years of working experience and pass ASBOG’s Practice of Geology Exam

Pass the Practice Exam and document 5 years of working experience in a specialty and pass the Specialty Exam

ASBOG is the National Association of State Boards of Geology
www.asbog.org

Washington State Geologist Licensing Program: 360-664-1497 or geologist@dol.wa.gov
Specialty Professional License Options

Hydrogeologist

Engineering Geologist

State of Washington
Licensed Geologist

Your Name Here

State of Washington
Licensed Geologist

Your Name Here
Specialty Education Requirements

WAC 308-15-055

Completed advanced study in the specialty

• 18 semister/27 quarter hours of specialty course work, OR

• 270 hours of seminars or workshops, OR

• 540 hours of on-the-job training under the supervision of a licensed specialist or others who in the opinion of the board, are qualified to be in responsible charge of specialty work, OR

• A combination of the above
Specialty Experience Requirements

**WAC 308-15-055**

Complete 5 years of professional specialty practice after completing the advanced education requirements

- 3 years under the supervision of licensed specialist or others who in the opinion of the board are qualified to be in responsible charge

- Part-time experience will be prorated
Specialty Experience Requirements

WAC 308-15-055

Alternative experience credit

- Each year of graduate study counts as one year of training up to a maximum of **two** years

- Geological research or teaching at the university or college level is credited year for year if, in the judgment of the board, it is comparable to experience obtained in the practice of a specialty
For future reference see my web site