

Congratulations on pursuing advanced certification as an RIA® Water Loss Specialist (WLS). The objective of RIA's Water Loss Specialist Certification Program is to raise committed water loss mitigators to a ***master's level of professional ability***. Study addresses buildings and personal property as it relates to water loss damage, dealing with the structure and nature of materials, and the effects of water loss mitigation as it relates to various perils. **Please carefully read through this document as it contains valuable information you will need as you journey through the process.**



Applicant Status: Certification is for the individual, not the company. Only individuals can become Water Loss Specialists, not firms. Vendors who sell goods and services to Restorers, but who do not do restoration work themselves, are not in the practice of restoration and are not eligible for the WLS certification.

RIA WLS CERTIFICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

GETTING CERTIFIED: THE STEPS

Obtaining an advanced certification is a PROCESS – a combination of many steps to complete the required course of study. The following steps are part of that process:

1. Complete the Application & submit for review; Applicants will be advised via email of their acceptance into the Program.
 - a. **Submission of the Application begins the process, do this first.** Applicants can then schedule pre-req courses.
2. Attend pre-requisite courses.
3. Complete self-study reading and research in restoration & related fields, plus ongoing experience in field work.
4. Attend RIA's WLS Prep Course scheduled for the third quarter of 2011. (See RIA website for details.)
5. Take the WLS exam. Passing score of 80% or better is required to complete the program.
6. Submit Formal Project and Research Paper.
7. Upon approval of Formal Report and Research Paper and formal notification, Candidate is officially "certified."

PRE-QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS

- **Education**
 - All Applicants must hold the equivalent of a high school diploma.
 - All Candidates must complete the required pre-requisite courses prior to attending the 2011 Water Loss Specialist Prep Course.
- **Work History & Experience**
 - Applicants must have a minimum of five (5) years of verifiable work experience related to the restoration industry and must have sign-off from company owner/mgr or supervisor attesting to the validity of the experience.
 - Experience and field work can include: restoration worker, project supervisor, estimator, consultant, inspector, restoration company manager, facility manager, water loss instructor
- **Documentation of Experience**
 - Along with the WLS Application, the Applicant must include a copy of any one (1) of the different restoration projects from the list below that they have been personally involved with over the past 12 months.
 - **Please delete any identifying information to protect clients.**
 - These documents can include, but are not limited to:**
 - a. Detailed water loss estimate
 - b. Detailed Invoice of a water loss project
 - c. Consultation report for a water loss related project
 - d. Documentation & report from a water loss hands-on training exercise (only one project from this category can be submitted)
 - e. Evidence of consultation and/or lab analysis of a water loss project

PRE-REQUISITE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to attending RIA's WLS Prep Course, Applicants must successfully complete the current required pre-requisite courses outlined in the WLS Content Domains listed below.

1. If the Applicant has already attended some or all of the pre-requisite courses in the past, attach the Certificate of Course Completion to the WLS Application and submit along with the Documentation of Experience.
2. If the Applicant must attend some or all of the pre-requisite courses, email RIA the Certificate of Course Completion **after** completing the course(s); however, still submit the WLS Application with the Documentation of Experience.
3. Upon completion of the pre-certification course requisites, Applicants are required to attend and successfully complete RIA's WLS 2011 Prep Course.



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WLS CONTENT DOMAINS

1. Candidates are required to complete one (1) course within each Content Domain (from the list provided below) to fulfill their pre-requisite requirements.
2. Candidates must have a total of six (6) pre-requisite courses completed prior to attending the WLS 2011 Prep course.

Domain #1: Basic Skills in Water Damage Restoration (minimum of 12 contact hours)

Candidate must complete basic water loss training from **any one course** listed below.

- a. RIA Certified Restoration Technician Course (CRT)
- b. RIA Certified Restorer (CR) Certification School
- c. IICRC Water Restoration Technician Course (WRT)

Domain #2: Hands-on Water Damage, Restoration & Drying Training (minimum of 18 contact hours)

Candidate must complete hands-on training in water damage from **any one course** listed below.

- a. IICRC Applied Structural Drying (ASD) course
- b. Chuck Dewald Structure Drying School
- c. Hydro Lab Hands-on Water Damage School

Domain #3: Microbial Remediation (minimum of 18 contact hours)

Candidate must complete mold training from **any one course** listed below.

- a. RIA CMP Certification School
- b. RIA MRS mold course
- c. IICRC Applied Microbial Remediation Technician (AMRT) course
- d. IAQA mold training courses of at least 3-days in length
- e. American Council for Accredited Certification (ACAC) mold or higher level IEQ training courses of at least 3-days in length

Domain #4: Health & Safety Training (minimum of 12 contact hours)

Candidate must complete **any one course** listed below of health and safety training.

- a. OSHA 10-hr Haz-Com Course + other
- b. RIA 40-hr. HazWoper Course
- c. IICRC Health and Safety Technician (HST) course
- d. Other OSHA/Red Cross training equivalent (Confined Space, Lock-Out/Tag-Out, etc.)

Domain #5: Building Science (minimum of 7 contact hours)

Candidate must complete **any one course** in building science listed below.

- a. Building Science Corporation 2-day seminar (Joe Lstiburek, Ph.D., P.Eng., & John Straube, Ph.D.)
- b. Equivalent course from community college or university
- c. Equivalent industry-related training course(s) submitted for approval
- d. RIA- sponsored workshop or seminar focused specifically on building science

Domain #6: Project Management & Commercial Loss Training (minimum of 12 contact hours)

Candidate must complete **any one course** listed below

- a. IICRC Commercial Drying Specialist Course
- b. RIA-sponsored Project Management Workshops (2007, 2008, 2009, etc.)
- c. RIA-approved Project Management Workshops
- d. Proof of past attendance at 2-Day Commercial Drying Research Institute (CDRI) Hands-on Course
 - i. (note: this was a 2-day commercial water loss class sponsored by CDT.)
- e. RIA-approved Commercial Hands-On Water Course

WLS EXAM

1. Candidates must **successfully pass the written WLS examination with a score of 80% or better.**
2. A successful passing score will enable the Candidate to proceed with the final stage of the certification process which is the submission of the WLS Formal Report and Research Paper.

EXAM RE-TAKE GUIDELINES

1. Candidates who fail the WLS exam will adhere to the following guidelines.
 - a. Candidates may re-take the WLS exam 1 (one) time after the initial exam has been administered between 7 – 90 days of the original exam date
 - b. Candidates must pay an exam re-take fee each time the exam is administered at the proctored test site.
 - c. Candidates who fail the retake exam will be required to re-attend the WLS Prep Course before taking the exam again.
2. A successful passing score on the re-take exam will enable the Candidate to **then** proceed onto the final stage of the certification process which is the submission of Formal Project and Research Paper.



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FORMAL REPORT AND RESEARCH PAPER

The final stage of the certification process is the submission of the WLS Formal Report & Research Paper.

1. Candidate must prepare a Formal Report & Research Paper on a normal restoration project or a topic.
2. Research topics must be approved by the WLS Course Advisor.
3. Candidate has 6 months to 1 year to complete the Formal Report and Research Paper.
4. The one-year completion date is retroactive from the Candidate's **initial** exam date.
5. Formal Report and Research Paper can be turned in for review at any time during the year, but in order to be eligible to participate in the Induction Ceremony held in March of each year, the Formal Report must be turned in no later than the last standard work-day in December.
6. Candidates will be notified on or before February 1 if their Formal Report has been accepted and approved.

AWARDING OF THE WLS CERTIFICATION

1. Upon successful completion of all WLS requirements, Candidate will be awarded their WLS.
2. Upon notification, Candidate will receive their official WLS number and information on all certification items. They may choose to participate in a formal Induction Ceremony held at the annual RIA convention every year in March.
3. A Water Loss Specialist (WLS) can be stripped of his/her WLS for unethical behavior or unprofessional conduct. (i.e. Violation of Code of Ethics or standard Code of Professional Conduct.)
4. If the WLS retires, he/she may apply for "Retired" WLS status.

MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS (CECs)

Upon certification, the Certificant must maintain certification by adherence to two major criteria:

- Payment of certification renewal fees
- Acquisition of appropriate continuing education credits.

Below is a brief overview of the CEC process:

1. Cycles for newly inducted CRs begins on the January 1 prior to the date of induction.
2. Payment of certification renewal fee every three years.
3. All RIA continuing education is based on a three-year continuous cycle and based on points. To maintain certification, Certified Restorers must accrue 4 points (equivalent to approximately 26 contact hours) of continuing education within a 3-year cycle by participating in education venues selected from approved CEC Categories.
4. CRs are responsible for timely submission of Continuing Education Credits (CECs) using RIA's CEC Submission document.
5. Membership in RIA is not a requirement of certification.

LAPSED or INACTIVE CERTIFICATION STATUS

Certificants whose certification has lapsed will adhere to the following reinstatement requirements:

LAPSED: Certificants who have not paid their certification renewal fee and/or submitted the appropriate 4 (four) CECs by the end of their current three-year cycle will be moved to a "Lapsed" status as of the first of the New Year. They will be given a six-month grace period (January 1st – June 1st) to comply and reinstate their "active" status.

INACTIVE: Lapsed Certificants who have not paid the renewal fee and/or have not submitted the appropriate CECs within the six-month grace period will be moved to "Inactive" status on June 1st and will need to adhere to current reinstatement guidelines by calling the RIA office.

Please keep pages 1- 3 for your files, as these pages contained important reference information. Return pages 4 - 11.

Submit application and payment to: RIA, Attn: Certification Department, 12339 Carroll Avenue, Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: 301-231-6505 • Fax: 301-231-6569 • Email: certification@restorationindustry.org



WATER LOSS SPECIALIST® (WLS)

2011 APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

PRE-QUALIFYING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All Candidates must hold an equivalent of a high school diploma. Please list your educational activity below.

Level	Name	City/State	Years Attended	Degree	Field of Study
High School			to		
Technical Institute			to		
College/University			to		
Post-Graduate			to		

Prior to attending RIA's WLS Certification School, all Applicants must successfully complete the current required pre-requisite courses. Applicants must attach copies of verifiable Certificates of Attendance for all pre-requisite courses attended and submit those with their Application for Candidacy.

	Pre-requisite Course Provider	Course Title	Date/Location of Course
Course from Domain #1			
Course from Domain #2			
Course from Domain #3			
Course from Domain #4			
Course from Domain #5			
Course from Domain #6			

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE & BACKGROUND

Are you or your firm directly associated with any insurance company or adjusting firm? YES NO

If YES, please note name and address:

Are you directly or actively engaged in damage repair/restoration work? YES NO

What is your specialty? Damage repair Environmental Contents Other

Does your firm hold a state or municipal contractor or remodeler license? YES NO

QUALIFIED WORK EXPERIENCE

All Candidates to the WLS Program must have a minimum of five (5) years of verifiable work experience directly related to the water loss industry and must have sign-off from their company owner/manager or supervisor.

Supervisor Signature _____

Date _____

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Please include a Letter of Recommendation from a current Water Loss Specialist (WLS), Educator Supervisor or related Water Restoration Professional attesting to your qualifications to enter the WLS Program.



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BACKGROUND DATA

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes No

If YES, please explain:

Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? Yes No

If YES, please explain:

Do you have any outstanding judgments against you? Yes No

If YES, please explain:

Have you ever had any license suspended or revoked? Yes No

If YES, please explain:

Has your right to do business in any locality ever been suspended or revoked? Yes No

If YES, please explain:

CHECKLIST FOR WLS APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- ✓ Completed WLS Application
- ✓ Non-Refundable Application Fee
- ✓ Copies of Pre-Requisite Course Certificate of Completion
- ✓ Course Transfer Fees (If Applicable)
- ✓ Documentation of Experience (Estimate, Etc.)
- ✓ Letter of Recommendation
- ✓ Signed Credential Check Release Form

1. Please retain a copy of this application for your records.
2. Retain pages 1-3 for your files, as these pages contained important reference information.
3. Return pages 4 –9.
4. All pre-requisite courses must be completed prior to attending the 2011 WLS Prep Course.
5. Reminder about Certificates of Pre-requisite course completion:
 1. If Applicant already has completed both pre-requisite courses in the past, simply attach a COPY of the Course(s) Certification of Completion to the WLS Application and submit with other required documentation.
 2. If Applicant has yet to complete the pre-requisite courses, email copies of the Course(s) Certification of Completion upon completion of the actual course.

Submit application and payment to: RIA, Attn: Certification Department, 9810 Patuxent Woods Dr, Ste K, Columbia, MD 21046
Phone: 443-878-1000 • Fax: 443-878-1010 •Email: chereth@restorationindustry.org



WATER LOSS SPECIALIST® (WLS) 2011 APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

AFFIDAVIT

I attest that I read all elements of the application and understand them and that I have completed this application fully and accurately. I understand that acceptance into the **Water Loss Specialist** is contingent on the information provided herein. By my signature below, I grant the Restoration Industry Association (RIA International) and its agents permission to contact references and previous employers listed herein as well as to obtain credit, civil, and criminal background information.

I further agree to the following terms and conditions which become applicable and enforceable upon my acceptance into candidacy for the **Water Loss Specialist certification** and which shall not expire:

I agree that my name may be published as part of the **Water Loss Specialist Candidate** program.

I understand and agree to abide by the rules of the Water Loss Specialist Program and will conduct myself in a manner that will reflect credit on the program and my fellow restorers.

I understand and agree that the Water Loss Specialist program, its rules and procedures, and any and all elements of the program may be changed at any time by the program sponsor in the sponsor's sole and unfettered discretion.

I understand and acknowledge that a Water Loss Specialist can be stripped of his WLS certification for unethical behavior or for unprofessional conduct that discredits the Water Loss Specialist program.

I understand that written course materials provided are for my personal use only; they remain the property of the **Water Loss Specialist** program and its course providers. I will not, nor will I permit others to, abstract, reproduce, distribute, or otherwise employ these materials for personal use. I will accept and abide by the rulings of the Association or RIA in all matters pertaining to both my candidacy in the **Water Loss Specialist** Program and in the future administration of the program's affairs.

I agree that "**Water Loss Specialist**" is a registered trademark and remains at all times the property of the program sponsor, Restoration Industry Association, and that my use of the terms "**Water Loss Specialist**" and "**WLS**" are subject to all usage terms and conditions as established by the program sponsor which shall include, but are not limited to, the following: i) only individuals who have been approved by RIA may represent themselves as a "**Water Loss Specialist**"; ii) that the "**Water Loss Specialist**" is a mark of individual achievement and may not be used in any manner that creates an implied accomplishment of a company or business; iii) that the appropriate display of the "**WLS**" abbreviation is immediately following the certificant's name; iv) that the certification shall not be ever used without connection to the certificant's name and it may not be used as an adjective or pronoun.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

RIA CODE OF ETHICS

As providers of property damage restoration, remediation and cleaning services to the public, we subscribe to the following principles in our relationships with customers, employees and business associates:

- To treat our customers and their property with care and respect.
- To provide professional service in accordance with high standards of practice that will, where possible, restore the customer's property to its pre-damaged or pre-soiled condition.
- To operate in a manner consistent with ethical principles and sound business practice.
- To be proficient in our work through ongoing participation in education and training.
- To provide our customer with accurate information concerning the scope of work required and its costs, maintaining strict impartiality in our professional opinions.
- To disclose to the customer any connection we may have to their insurer or any other interested third party.

Adopted June 20, 2006 RIA Board of Directors

I have read and understand the requirements as set for by RIA regarding the association's Code of Ethics. By signing this document, I attest to abiding by and adhering to these standards in my daily business and professional practice.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

CREDENTIAL CHECK AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

In connection with my application to RIA for the **WLS Program**, I understand that information may be requested as to my character, credit, criminal history, and other public records. I agree that any false information provided by me in support of my application may cause my application to be denied.

I understand that I will be evaluated for admittance to the program in accordance with the written procedures of the **WLS Program** and that I will be given the opportunity to review and respond to any information which might adversely affect my WLS candidacy.

I hereby authorize and release from all liability without reservation, RIA, Credential Check Corporation and any law enforcement agency, administrator, state/federal agency, institution, prior or present, insurance company or person gathering or furnishing the above information.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____



WATER LOSS SPECIALIST® (WLS) 2011 APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

WLS 19-POINT CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of the Water Loss Specialist (WLS) certification is to establish and then maintain a reputation as a certification of individuals recognized for their technical excellence and indisputable integrity. We undertake to earn this reputation, both with those whose damage we mitigate and whose property we restore and also with the insurance industry that bears the bulk of the financial responsibility for the cost associated with that damage, by establishment of and adherence to the following *Code of Conduct*.

1. We will show respect for the abilities and reputations of competitors who conduct their business in a professional and ethical manner and we will work to promote professional and ethical practices within our industry.
2. We agree to abide by the licensing and other applicable laws of the county, state, province or other political jurisdiction in which we conduct business.
3. We will document charges for services we provide as appropriate and format billings in a manner consistent with the highest industry standards. We are willing to explain or defend those charges at any time.
4. We will enter into no agreement with a property owner, manager or insurance company representative to offer rebates, kickbacks or similar compensation not specified in our estimates or invoicing.
5. We will not allow catastrophic conditions to excuse us for adhering to the professional and ethical standards that guide our personal business practices.
6. We believe technical excellence results in great part, from the free exchange of information, access to the findings of pertinent research and participation in ongoing technical training.
7. We agree to utilize, to the best of our abilities, all available association, industry and government resources to provide and maintain for ourselves and others we work with, state-of-the-art technical training and current information related to our industry.
8. We believe the safety of our clients, other industry professionals we work with, and the public, is of tantamount importance.
9. We will remain diligent in our efforts to provide those under our direct report and other restoration stakeholders with appropriate safety equipment and training and to act in good faith to comply with or exceed currently accepted safety standards with regards to our facilities, equipment and job-site operations.
10. We believe that our responsibilities, when we agree to respond to a property loss, include the promise of quick, competent and appropriate response to each loss as it exists.
11. In our role as emergency responders, we will strive to make decisions involving the application of our skills and utilization of the manpower and equipment at our disposal that reflect a responsible balance between cost and benefit for all parties.
12. We will, when asked, make every effort to provide objective judgments concerning cause, condition and economic feasibility for the successful restoration of damaged property.
13. We will labor to provide the level of expertise, equipment and workmanship appropriate to both the needs of the property owner and the insurer; if applicable, based upon the conditions presented during the course of our professional involvement in each loss-from initial response through final restoration.
14. We understand that our ability to provide service to our customer is a result of the combined strength and cooperation of our company, suppliers, subcontractors and association.
15. We will seek to sustain that strength and cooperation by meeting our financial commitments to our suppliers, subcontractors and association in a timely and responsible manner.
16. We accept that we have an ongoing obligation to act responsible and in a manner consistent with preservation of the environment in which we live.
17. We will endeavor to follow both the letter and the intent of the laws that govern our business conduct and the environment.
18. We understand that we are members of a larger community and that we have responsibilities to serve the community from which we derive our livelihood. We believe we each should seek opportunities to be of service within the community beyond the scope of our for-profit operations.
19. We realize that in the course of any business, disputes may arise. In the event that a dispute results from operations carried out by our company and if that dispute cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all interested parties within the scope of our standard operating procedures, we each are willing to attempt to settle the dispute by mediation under the direction of the American Arbitration Association.

Realizing that the ability of RIA's WLS Certification to fulfill its goal is the result of the combined actions of all its WLS Certificants, I agree, as a Water Loss Specialist (WLS), to conduct the operations that I have direct control of in my company in accordance with, both in spirit and in practice, the articles stated above.

I agree to uphold RIA's Water Loss Specialist *Code of Ethics and Conduct*.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____



WATER LOSS SPECIALIST® (WLS) 2011 APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY



WLS CERTIFICANT INQUIRY RELEASE

In connection with, and for the duration of my certification (or independent contract for services) with The Restoration Industry Association (RIA) (Company), I understand that investigative background inquiries are to be made by RIA® or its third-party designee on myself including consumer, criminal, driving, and other reports. These reports will include information as to my creditworthiness, character, work habits, performance and experience along with reasons for termination of past employment from previous employers. These reports and records will be used for the purposes of making decisions to accept me into the RIA® certification program or investigating certain incidents. Further, I understand that you will be requesting information from various federal, state and other agencies which maintain records concerning my past activities relating to my driving, credit, criminal, civil and other experiences as well as claims involving me in the files of insurance companies. The aforementioned reports, records and information are hereinafter referred to as "Background Information".

To the extent such inquiries and requests of Background Information constitute "Consumer Reports" under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., then such inquiries and requests of information shall be in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. §1681 et seq. (the "FCRA"), to the extent applicable. Pursuant to Section 606(b) of the FCRA, I may make a written request to you within days of the date of this release to make a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigation which may be governed by the FCRA. You will make the disclosure in writing mailed, or otherwise delivered, to me not later than five (5) days after the date you receive my request for such a disclosure. If a decision not to employ, continue employment, or contract for services is contemplated because of the contents of a Consumer Report governed by the FCRA, then pursuant to Section 604(b)(3), I will receive a free copy of such Consumer Report and a summary of my rights as a consumer under the FCRA, a copy of which is attached hereto.

I understand and agree that the Background Information is of material importance to RIA® and that if I have given any false information, or I have omitted any material facts under any circumstances, I may not be accepted into RIA®'s certification program, or if accepted, I may be discharged immediately upon discovery of such false statements or omissions, regardless of how much time has passed between the date of my hire and the discovery of such misrepresentations, in the sole and absolute discretion of RIA®.

I hereby request that all references listed on my application, or the custodians of the Background Information, give all information concerning my previous employment and/or pertinent information they may have, personal or otherwise, to RIA® and I hereby consent to the release of such Background Information and release all such parties from all liability for any damage that may result from the furnishing of same to RIA® or third party designee. I authorize, without reservation, any party or agency contracted by RIA® to furnish the above mentioned information:

PLEASE PRINT

(First)	(Middle)	(Last)	(Maiden Name or Alias)
Current Address:			
City	State	Zip	
Date of Birth	Social Security Number		
Driver's License Number		State Issued	
Applicant's Signature		Date	

California, Minnesota & Oklahoma Applicants Only:

Please check here to have a copy of your consumer report sent directly to you by Credential Check at the address listed above.