Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Pre-Apprentice

CANDIDATE PREPARATION MANUAL

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CANDIDATE PREPARATION MANUAL

Introduction

This manual is designed to assist you in preparing for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California’s Pre-Apprentice written test. Test questions were selected by subject matter experts at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California due to their relevancy in assessing competencies required of a Pre-Apprentice employee upon hire. You will have three hours to answer a total of 152 questions that are divided into the following seven sections:

- **Understanding Oral Information** – 10 questions
- **Understanding Written Information** – 18 questions
- **English Language Skills** – 20 questions
- **Numerical Skills** – 20 questions
- **Indicator Math Items** – 39 questions
- **Mechanical Ability** – 30 questions
- **Interpersonal Skills** – 15 questions

This manual contains information about the content and type of test questions found in each of these sections. It contains a total of 60 sample questions that are designed to mirror the types of questions on the actual test. You should familiarize yourself with this information in order to be better prepared on the day of the examination. If you identify areas in which you may be weak, you are encouraged to concentrate study efforts in those areas. This will help you build your skills and, thereby, improve your test performance.

Using this Candidate Preparation Manual

This is your preparation manual to mark on and use in any way you want. Review the material carefully. The more time you spend studying, the more likely it is that you will improve your score on the test. It is to your advantage to make sure that you thoroughly understand all the concepts presented in this manual before you take the test.

You may not refer to this manual during the exam.
Preparing for the Written Test

Here are some general hints which should help you study for the written test.

1. **Underline or mark areas for further study.** Read through the manual once to get a feel for the material. The next time you read through it, underline or mark the key points which you feel are important. Try to understand the basic principles presented in the material.

2. **Do some work every day in preparation for the examination.** Budget your time by setting aside a definite study period for each day you plan to study.

3. **Try studying with a friend or a group occasionally.** Exchanging ideas and discussing the material will help all of you.

4. **Study while in a comfortable but not too relaxed position, and begin concentrating as soon as you sit down to study.** Try to read and review throughout the planned study period. Try to study in a quiet and distraction-free location.

5. **Make up your own illustrations and examples to check on your understanding of a topic.**

6. **Study harder the last few days before the test and get a good night’s rest the night before the test.**
General Strategies for Taking Written Tests

Here are some general hints for taking written multiple-choice tests.

1. **Your attitude about the test process can make a difference.** Approach the test confidently and take it calmly. Make a practice run to the testing site a few days prior to the test to become familiar with the route. On the day of the test, allow ample time to travel to the testing site. Arrive early so you are on time and ready.

2. **Listen carefully to all directions.** Ask questions if there is something you do not understand. However, be aware that proctors are instructed not to answer questions about or provide clarification of test content. Make sure you understand the number of questions contained in the test. This test requires that the answer sheet be turned over and additional questions answered on the back of the answer sheet. Failure to follow instructions may result in a low score on the test or disqualification from the testing process.

3. **Be certain that you understand how to use the computer scannable answer sheet correctly.** Be careful to make clean erasures on your answer sheet and to mark only one correct answer per question. Fill in the answer space completely. Do not make any extraneous marks on your answer sheet.

4. **Read all directions carefully; twice if necessary.** You are allowed to write and work out calculations in your test booklet, so you may underline key directions if you prefer. The general directions that will be in your test booklet on the day of the examination appear on pages 6-8. Familiarize yourself with the directions and practice focusing on key information in the directions by underlining that information in this manual.

5. **Try to answer the question before you look at the answer options.** This will allow you to compare your answer to the available choices and pick the option that most closely matches your answer.

6. **Answer the easy questions first.** Postpone more difficult questions until later. However, darken the bubble on an initial choice of an answer to a more difficult question in case you do not have enough time to go back.

7. **Calculate all sample math questions without the use of a calculator.** This test is not designed to allow candidates use of a calculator. Be sure you can solve the math problems with only a pencil and paper.

8. **Be aware of your remaining time during the test.** Pace yourself for the best chance of completing the whole test. Do not spend too much time on any one question. Go back and check your answers if you have extra time.
General Strategies for Taking Written Tests (Continued)

9. **No question is meant to be a “trick” or “catch” question.** No question should have two correct answers, and all words should be interpreted according to their generally accepted meanings. You will be asked to choose the one answer that is most correct among the options given. Your score on the test will be based only on the number of correct options you choose. All of the test questions are weighted equally.

10. **Rephrase difficult questions for yourself.** This may help you clarify what is being asked and make it easier to select the correct answer.

11. **Answer every question if you have time.** There is no penalty for guessing. You can improve your odds of getting the correct answer by using the process of elimination to narrow your alternatives before guessing.

12. **If you feel there is a problem with a question, you may tell your proctor after the test is over.** CPS uses extensive quality control measures to ensure a flawless test; however, mistakes can occur. Any questions brought to the attention of the proctor will be carefully considered. Subject matter experts will review the information, and CPS will take appropriate action if warranted. Because each question counts as only one point, try to focus on doing well on the other questions on the test rather than getting distracted by the question that you feel is incorrect.
INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Explanation: The following three pages are actual representations of the general directions in the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Pre-Apprentice test.

Important: Use a #2 Pencil

Complete items 1 - 7, as shown in the example:
1. Test Title
2. Control Number
3. Agency
4. Signature
5. Date
6. Your Name
7. Your I.D. Number

Items 8 - 10 are optional. This information will be used for research purposes only.
8. Highest Grade Completed
9. Gender
10. Ethnicity

Mark only one box on the answer sheet for each question.

Be sure to mark each answer by the correct number on the answer sheet.

Look at the answer sheet you are using for this test. Carefully note how the questions are numbered. For example, after answering question 17, you must move up to the top of the next column to answer question 18, and after answering question 100, you must turn your answer sheet over to record your answer for question 101.
INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES (Continued)

This test booklet, the items it contains, and other materials furnished to you are the copyrighted property of CPS Human Resource Services.

DO NOT:

Destroy test materials.

Take the test materials from the examination room.

Make copies or notes of the test questions.

Transmit test questions in any form to any other person or entity during or AFTER the examination.

ANY VIOLATION WILL BE PROSECUTED TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW.

YOU MAY WRITE IN THE TEST BOOKLET.

EXAMINATION HINTS

Read carefully and follow the directions given in the booklet.

Read each question completely before answering it.

Do not spend too much time on any one question.

No question is meant to be a “trick” or catch question.

Interpret words according to their generally accepted meanings.

Attempt to answer every question. If you are not sure of the correct answer, mark the one which you think is best. There is no penalty for wrong answers. Your score is based on the number of correct answers.

Check carefully to be sure you have not skipped any pages. Be sure you have answered all the test items.

Plan your time so that you may complete the examination within the time allowance. You will be told when to start and stop. If you have extra time, check your work.

Relax and work steadily.

IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT SURE.
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**Total** 152

**TIME ALLOWANCE:** 3 HOURS

**NOTE**

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TERMINOLOGY IN CPS EXAMINATIONS IS NOT INTENDED TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY GENDER, INDIVIDUAL, OR GROUP OF PERSONS. PRONOUNS ARE USED IN A NEUTRAL, GENERIC SENSE AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS FAVORING ANY INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP OF PEOPLE.

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Welcome to our orientation meeting for new pre-apprentice recruits and congratulations on your employment with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. You are to report to the Training Instructor, Pat Campbell, in Room 135 at 7:30 am on Monday morning for the first day of your eight-week training. Sometime during the first week on the job, please report to Terry Rodriguez in the Personnel Office. He will want you to complete some forms for their records. Mr. Rodriguez will also need to see your Social Security card and a copy of your driver’s license. Your working hours during the first week of training will be Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm with a one-hour lunch break. You will be paid time and a half for all required overtime and for any work done on Sundays. For the first six months on the job, you will be on probationary status, during which time you are not eligible for earning vacation leave. After that time, you will be allowed ten working days vacation and twelve working days sick leave each year in addition to specified holidays.
1. To whom are you to report on the first day of your training?
   a. Pat Campbell, Training Instructor
   b. Pat Rodriguez, Human Resources Manager
   c. Terry Rodriguez, Training Instructor
   d. Terry Campbell, Personnel Specialist

2. When are you to report to the Personnel Office?
   a. Monday morning
   b. Wednesday morning
   c. within three days after you start work
   d. within a week after you start work

3. What do you need to take with you to the Personnel Office?
   a. birth certificate
   b. previous job references and resume
   c. driver’s license and Social Security card
   d. next of kin’s phone number and address

4. What is the time allowed for your lunch break?
   a. 30 minutes
   b. 45 minutes
   c. one hour
   d. one hour and 15 minutes
5. To compensate you for overtime, you will be
   
a. paid at your regular rate.
b. paid at 1-½ times your regular rate.
c. permitted to take the same amount of time off sometime during the following month.
d. permitted to take the same amount of time off sometime during the same fiscal year.

There are a total of 10 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 2

UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN INFORMATION
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your ability to read and understand written material. Each reading passage is followed by a question or questions about the material you have read. Base your answers only on the material you will read and not on any prior knowledge you may have.

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions based on the material you have just read.

In order to obtain a representative sample for research, subjects should be selected at random. Random selection means that all individuals in the population being studied have an equal chance of being selected to participate in the experiment. A truly random sample is formed in such a way that there is no bias in favor of selecting one member of the population over another. Also, the selection of one individual should not influence the selection of any other individual.

6. According to the passage,
   a. random selection is good for a select sampling.
   b. when selecting randomly, everyone gets an equal chance of being selected.
   c. in random sampling, you can pick the kind of people you want for research.
   d. in a random sample, if you pick a certain type of individual it should be taken into consideration.

Character works the same way as does a brand name for a product. People come to expect a certain level of quality and satisfaction from a specific brand name product. When a product earns a certain level of character in the eyes of the public, then there is trust and confidence in the product. This translates into influence.

7. According to the passage,
   a. influence leads to character.
   b. people tend to pick a certain brand name product.
   c. a brand name, like character, is what people come to expect.
   d. character and a brand name work the same way and instill confidence and trust in a product.
Power Cutting Tools

The Lukas tool is a hydraulically operated cutting tool. It has a double-acting hydraulic cylinder with two unlockable check valves which prevent an outside force from either opening or closing the spreader. The Lukas tool is operated with a gas engine but can be powered by a standby pump if the engine fails. Power from the hydraulic pump is transferred to the jaws through a high-pressure hose which is color coded red on each end. The returning fluid passes through another hose which is color coded blue on each end. This tool is generally used when cutting materials made of metal with a diameter of 10 inches or less.

The Partner K-1200 (K-12) is powered by a 100cc two-stroke engine that uses an oil-fuel mixture of 1 to 50. It is used at full throttle when beginning to cut through any material. An important feature of the K-12 is that it cuts with a pulling motion toward the operator, as opposed to a forward motion typical for other power circular saws. The K-12 has a double air filter system - the main filter and a spill filter. The spill filter can only be replaced by trained personnel at an authorized workshop. After refueling, the saw must be moved at least 10 feet away from the fuel site before starting it. To remove the spark plug, both the cylinder casing and the air filter must first be removed.

A chain saw is a portable mechanical saw with a cutting chain that moves in a clockwise direction and is normally powered by a two-stroke gas engine. It uses gasoline with an octane rating of 90 and an oil-fuel mixture of 1 to 40. A safety chain brake is engaged when the hand guard is moved in the forward direction. Most chain saws are only used on wood; however, there are some specialist chain saws that are used for cutting concrete. If a chain saw has not been started for some time, the gas tank must be thoroughly shaken before the saw is started.

The circular saw uses a metal disc or blade with saw teeth on the edge and is most commonly powered by a two-horsepower electric motor with a 7-1/4 inch diameter blade. The bearings are sealed and do not require greasing. There is an automatic clutch which helps prevent kickback if the blade jams. The electronic brake will stop the blade instantly when the motor is turned off. Unlike the K-12 saw, the circular saw cuts in a forward motion away from the operator.
8. According to the passage, a red colored hose indicates
   
   a. a stop button.
   b. a danger area.
   c. a high pressure hose.
   d. a clutch brake is engaged.

9. Which power cutting tool is most likely to be powered by an electric motor?
   
   a. K-12
   b. chain saw
   c. circular saw
   d. Lukas hydraulic cutter

10. Which power cutting tool would be most appropriate for removing a branch from a tree that is nine inches in diameter?
    
    a. K-12
    b. chain saw
    c. circular saw
    d. Lukas hydraulic cutter

There are a total of 18 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 3

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your ability to communicate effectively in writing and measures your knowledge of English grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary.

DIRECTIONS: The following sentences are designed to measure your knowledge of English grammar. For each item, select the sentence that is grammatically incorrect.

11.
   a. The pipeline that John and Mark are working on are proving to be more difficult than expected.
   b. Everyone here is very pleased with the work we’ve done.
   c. The three of us were looking forward to going home to rest after all of the work we had put in.
   d. Each of us has contributed to the project.

12.
   a. He could be a very productive employee if he were to come to work on time.
   b. We should try to reach the first milestone by the end of the day.
   c. They couldn’t have seen the damage to the equipment from where they were standing.
   d. I shouldn’t have went to the meeting earlier today.

13.
   a. I advised my coworkers and boss of the situation.
   b. Heather and me were assigned the most difficult part of the job.
   c. She told him that he is being trained to take over the role of supervisor.
   d. They gave us more work to do and assigned them to a new job.
DIRECTIONS: The following sentences are designed to measure your knowledge of punctuation. For each item, select the sentence that contains an error in punctuation.

14.
   a. We left the work site at 12:30 p.m.
   b. We typically listen to our supervisor Susans’ advice.
   c. Even though it happens over and over again, we still haven’t been able to fix it.
   d. The plan is to start work on Monday, June 15.

15.
   a. No Richard shouldn’t be doing that job because he isn’t certified.
   b. Everyone but our supervisor thought it was a good idea.
   c. Calvin, the contractor onsite, can be reached on his phone.
   d. You knew that I thought it was going to be dirty job before we started.

16.
   a. We didn’t finish by the projected deadline; consequently, we now have to put in overtime.
   b. Here is the list of tools needed for the job: three shovels, jackhammer, sledgehammer, wheelbarrow, and a rake.
   c. The work has been divided into two shifts – the morning shift and the night shift.
   d. They finished the job before schedule, however, the quality of the work didn’t meet expectations.
DIRECTIONS: The following items are designed to measure your vocabulary knowledge. For each capitalized word, select the one word below it which is closest in meaning.

17. VOLATILE
   a. explosive
   b. mobile
   c. flammable
   d. unstable

18. PERMEABLE
   a. breakable
   b. absorbent
   c. soft
   d. malleable
19. Avoid contact with water to prevent oxidization.

The word oxidization means

a. rust.
b. malfunction.
c. discoloration.
d. disfiguration.

20. Avoid prolonged exposure of material to the skin.

The word prolonged means

a. lengthy.
b. direct.
c. intense.
d. superficial.

There are a total of 20 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 4

NUMERICAL SKILLS
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your skills in basic mathematics. Basic mathematics includes addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, fractions, and decimals. You may perform all calculations in this preparation manual and in your actual test booklet. You may also use scratch paper if needed or desired.

DIRECTIONS: Select the single best answer for each question.

21. Add

24,302
31,497
5,100
344

a. 60,233
b. 61,233
c. 61,243
d. 62,243

22. 124,987 minus 113,898 equals

a. 10,989
b. 11,049
c. 11,069
d. 11,089
23. 40,812 divided by 228 equals
   a. 143.0
   b. 169.5
   c. 179.0
   d. 180.0

24. 32 multiplied by 14 equals
   a. 436
   b. 448
   c. 462
   d. 480

25. 530 multiplied by .16 equals
   a. 84.8
   b. 85.6
   c. 96.4
   d. 98.2

26. 42.34 multiplied by 2.55 equals
   a. 107.120
   b. 107.967
   c. 109.187
   d. 109.150

27. 16/18 minus 8/36 minus 1/6 equals
   a. 2/3
   b. 1/2
   c. 2/6
   d. 1/4
28. $3/8$ plus $8/32$ plus $9/16$ equals
   a. $1-3/16$
   b. $1-2/8$
   c. $1-12/32$
   d. $1-2/3$

29. $1/3$ plus $4/9$ is larger than
   a. $4/5$
   b. $9/11$
   c. $6/8$
   d. $8/10$

30. $6$ multiplied by $4$ is $1/5$ of
   a. $4.8$
   b. $24$
   c. $96$
   d. $120$

There are a total of 20 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 5

INDICATOR MATH ITEMS
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your skills in advanced mathematics. Advanced mathematics includes word problems, converting units of measurement, exponents, algebra, geometry, and calculation of perimeters and areas of various geometric shapes. You may perform all calculations in this preparation manual and in your actual test booklet. You may also use scratch paper if needed or desired.

DIRECTIONS: Select the single best answer for each question.

31. How long will it take for a car to travel 14 miles if it travels at a constant speed of 45 miles per hour?
   a. 10 minutes and 30 seconds
   b. 16 minutes and 20 seconds
   c. 18 minutes and 40 seconds
   d. 22 minutes and 20 seconds

32. A generator with a 60 quart tank for fuel is two thirds empty and needs to be refueled before going to the next job. How many gallons of fuel should you add to the tank in order to fill it completely?
   a. 5
   b. 10
   c. 15
   d. 20

33. \((3)^{-3}\) equals
   a. \(\frac{1}{3}\)
   b. \(\frac{1}{27}\)
   c. -9
   d. -27
34. The fourth power of 4 is equal to
   a. 6 cubed
   b. 8 squared
   c. 12 cubed
   d. 16 squared

35. \((6 + 5x)(x - 2)\) equals
   a. \(5x^2 + 4x - 12\)
   b. \(5x^2 - 4x - 12\)
   c. \(5x^2 - 16x - 12\)
   d. \(5x^2 + 16x - 12\)

36. If \(11x + 4 = 15x - 24\), then \(x\) equals
   a. 5
   b. 6
   c. 7
   d. 8

37. \(\frac{x^2 + 12x + 35}{x + 7}\) equals
   a. \(x + 7\)
   b. \(x^2 + 7\)
   c. \(x + 5\)
   d. \(x^2 + 5\)
38. In the triangle ABC shown at the right, if BC = 11 and AC = 5, which whole number is closest to the length of AB?
   a. 12  
   b. 13  
   c. 14  
   d. 15

39. What is the approximate diameter of a circle having an area of 50 square inches?
   a. 8  
   b. 10  
   c. 12  
   d. 14

40. $60 : 15 = x : 5$ Solve for $x$.
   a. 15  
   b. 20  
   c. 30  
   d. 60

41. The three interior angles of a triangle add up to ______ degrees.
   a. 90  
   b. 145  
   c. 180  
   d. 360
42. If \( \frac{x}{126} = 63 \), then \( x \) equals 6

a. 123
b. 132
c. 1,323
d. 1,332

43. The next number in the series 3, 4, 7, 16 is

a. 29
b. 32
c. 38
d. 43

44. If \( x = 35 \) and \( n = 8 \), what does \( 14(3x + n) \div 4 + 27 \) equal?

a. 282.0
b. 316.0
c. 396.5
d. 422.5

45. Solve for \( p \)

\[ y = 12xp^2 - 3 \]

a. \( p = \sqrt{\frac{12x-3}{y}} \)
b. \( p = 12xy^2 - 3 \)
c. \( p = \sqrt{\frac{12x}{y} + 3} \)
d. \( p = \sqrt{\frac{y+3}{12x}} \)

There are a total of 39 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 6

MECHANICAL ABILITY
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your skill in visualizing objects, how they work, and what relationship individual parts of the object have to other parts. Each question is accompanied by a diagram or mechanical drawing.

DIRECTIONS: Select the single best answer for each question.

46. Which pendulum will swing fastest?
   a. A
   b. B
   c. C
   d. D

![Diagram of pendulums](image1.png)

47. If there are four spheres placed on the top of four inclines and released, which would reach the bottom of the incline first?
   a. sphere A
   b. sphere B
   c. sphere C
   d. sphere D

![Diagram of inclines](image2.png)
48. If gear 2 is moved in the direction indicated, gear 1 will move toward direction
   a. A at a faster speed.
   b. A at a slower speed.
   c. B at a faster speed.
   d. B at a slower speed.

49. How much weight is needed on the right side to balance the 5-pound weight on the left side?

50. Which wheels or gears will rotate in the same direction as driver A?
   a. B and E
   b. B, D, and F
   c. C and F
   d. C and E
51. In which direction will the gears turn in the diagram below?

   a. X = clockwise, Y = clockwise
   b. X = clockwise, Y = counter-clockwise
   c. X = counter-clockwise, Y = clockwise
   d. X = counter-clockwise, Y = counter-clockwise

52. Which piece below will complete diagram X to make a square?

   Diagram X
53. Which floor plan below most closely resembles the house?

a. A  
b. B  
c. C  
d. D
54. When A and B are moved apart, the distance between

a. C and D increases.
b. D and H increases.
c. E and F increases.
d. F and G decreases.

55. Which statement best describes the tension in the illustration shown?

a. There is more tension in the rope at point B than point A.
b. There is more tension in the rope at point A than point B.
c. There is the same tension in both ropes.
d. The tension cannot be determined.

There are a total of 30 questions in this section on the test.
SECTION 7

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Explanation: This section of the test is designed to measure your interpersonal skill and ability to interact and get along with people in a variety of situations.

DIRECTIONS: Select the single best answer for each question.

56. Your supervisor gives you instructions for a particular assignment but they are not sufficiently clear. You should

   a. postpone the assignment until a later date and then ask your supervisor to repeat the instructions.
   b. tell your supervisor that you do not fully understand and ask for further explanation.
   c. discuss the instructions with a coworker to get their interpretation of your supervisor’s instructions.
   d. do the assignment to the best you can according to the instructions, then ask for an explanation later if you did not do it correctly.

57. While on the job, you observe a coworker making inappropriate comments to a citizen which could be interpreted as sexual harassment. You should

   a. tell the citizen to report your coworker.
   b. do nothing since you are not directly involved in the interaction.
   c. Inform your immediate supervisor only if the citizen requests that you do so.
   d. inform your immediate supervisor as soon as possible after the incident.
58. Your supervisor has asked you to work on a project that will require you to learn new skills and work with unfamiliar coworkers. You should

   a. agree to work on the project, but let your supervisor know that you are more efficient when working with coworkers that you already know.
   b. agree to work on the project, but let your supervisor know that it will require you to learn new skills.
   c. tell your supervisor that you enjoy learning new skills, but that the quality of the project may suffer as a result.
   d. tell your supervisor that you enjoy working with unfamiliar coworkers, but feel you will better serve the organization by working in your area of expertise.

59. You want to get permission from your supervisor to attend a training that you believe will help improve your job performance, but know there is a limited amount of funding dedicated to training. You should

   a. try to convince your supervisor why the agency should fund the training.
   b. wait to ask your supervisor until there is more funding dedicated to training.
   c. attempt to get your agency to dedicate more money to training.
   d. tell your supervisor it is important that more funding be dedicated to training.

60. A customer remains angry and unsatisfied with your answer to his question despite your repeated efforts to provide an accurate and friendly explanation. You should

   a. ask the customer to calm down before you will respond to any more questions.
   b. ask the customer to let you know what response would make him feel happy and satisfied.
   c. tell the customer that you have answered his question to the best of your ability.
   d. tell the customer that your manager will be able to assist him if he is not happy with your answer to his question.

There are a total of 15 questions in this section on the test.
## ANSWER KEY

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Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Pre-Apprentice

CANDIDATE PREPARATION MANUAL