

# Diagnostic Pretest

*A free 40-question self-assessment from The California REHS Examination Workbook. Find out where you stand before you commit weeks to a study plan.*

**About this pretest.** These 40 questions cover all seventeen content modules of the California REHS examination. Take it BEFORE building your study plan. Honest scoring is the point: no looking ahead, no reaching for a reference, no marking two answers. When you finish, use the scoring grid that follows to identify which modules deserve the most attention.

## Pretest Conditions

**Time limit:** 60 minutes (~90 seconds per question).

**Format:** Closed-book. The pretest's diagnostic value depends on it reflecting your current knowledge without aids.

**Answers:** Mark every question. There is no penalty for guessing.

**Materials:** A pen and a piece of paper to mark your answers. After Question 40, an answer key with the section reference for each correct answer follows.

**Expected scores.** Most candidates score between 18 and 26 correct on the first attempt. A low first-attempt score is not a failure signal — it is a study-planning signal. The scoring grid at the end tells you what your number means and what to do about it.

## Questions 1–40

**1. REHS registration in California is administered by:**

- A. U.S. EPA Region 9
- B. CDPH Environmental Management Branch
- C. California Department of Food and Agriculture
- D. CalEPA

**2. An inspector who, with no legal authority, requires a code-compliant sink to be replaced has engaged in:**

- A. Malfeasance
- B. Misfeasance
- C. Nonfeasance
- D. Discretionary enforcement

**3. The maximum total time to cool a hot TCS food from 135°F to 41°F is:**

- A. 2 hours
- B. 4 hours
- C. 6 hours total (135→70 in 2 hr, then 70→41 in 4 hr)
- D. 8 hours

**4. Whole-muscle beef, pork, lamb, seafood, and shell eggs must be cooked to a minimum of:**

- A. 130°F x 15 sec
- B. 145°F x 15 sec
- C. 155°F x 15 sec
- D. 165°F x 15 sec

**5. A food worker diagnosed with Shigella infection must be:**

- A. Restricted to dishwashing
- B. Allowed to work with gloves
- C. Excluded from the food facility until medical clearance
- D. Sent home for 24 hours

**6. The mnemonic FAT TOM represents the six factors affecting bacterial growth: Food, Acidity, Temperature, Time, Oxygen, and:**

- A. Movement
- B. Moisture
- C. Microorganisms
- D. Minerals

- 7. 100 ppm chlorine sanitizer at 75°F requires a minimum contact time of:**
- A. 10 seconds
  - B. 30 seconds
  - C. 60 seconds
  - D. 2 minutes
- 8. The principal cause of bacterial food intoxication associated with picnic foods (preformed heat-stable enterotoxin) is:**
- A. Salmonella
  - B. Staphylococcus aureus
  - C. Listeria
  - D. Campylobacter
- 9. Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome in California is most commonly associated with:**
- A. Norway rat
  - B. House mouse
  - C. Deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*)
  - D. Roof rat
- 10. Cryptosporidium is concerning in drinking water and pools because:**
- A. It is killed easily by chlorine
  - B. Its cysts/oocysts are chlorine-resistant; must be removed by filtration
  - C. It only causes mild illness
  - D. It is destroyed by boiling for 1 second
- 11. Pasteurization parameters are calibrated to inactivate which heat-tolerant pathogen?**
- A. *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*
  - B. *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever)
  - C. *Listeria monocytogenes*
  - D. *Brucella abortus*
- 12. Water weighs:**
- A. 6.34 lb/gal
  - B. 7.48 lb/gal
  - C. 8.34 lb/gal
  - D. 10.00 lb/gal
- 13. The California MCL for nitrate (as NO<sub>3</sub>) is:**
- A. 10 mg/L
  - B. 20 mg/L
  - C. 45 mg/L
  - D. 100 mg/L

**14. The highest-level mechanical backflow assembly for high-hazard cross-connections is the:**

- A. Atmospheric vacuum breaker (AVB)
- B. Pressure vacuum breaker (PVB)
- C. Reduced-pressure principle (RP/RPBP)
- D. Double check valve (DCVA)

**15. California requires a minimum free chlorine residual in the distribution system of:**

- A. 0.05 mg/L
- B. 0.2 mg/L
- C. 0.5 mg/L
- D. 1.0 mg/L

**16. Secondary wastewater treatment is fundamentally a:**

- A. Physical separation process
- B. Biological oxidation process
- C. Chemical precipitation process
- D. Tertiary filtration process

**17. Recycled water distribution piping is identified by:**

- A. Green
- B. Yellow
- C. Purple (lavender)
- D. Blue

**18. Daily landfill cover should be a minimum of:**

- A. 3 inches
- B. 6 inches
- C. 12 inches
- D. 24 inches

**19. Methane is explosive in air at concentrations of:**

- A. Below 5%
- B. 5%–15%
- C. 20%–40%
- D. Above 50%

**20. Under RCRA, a waste is corrosive (D002) if aqueous pH is:**

- A.  $\leq 4.0$  or  $\geq 10.0$
- B.  $\leq 2.0$  or  $\geq 12.5$
- C.  $\leq 1.0$  or  $\geq 13.0$
- D. Less than receiving stream pH

**21. A Large Quantity Generator may accumulate hazardous waste on-site without a permit for a maximum of:**

- A. 90 days
- B. 180 days
- C. 270 days
- D. 365 days

**22. Personal Protective Equipment Level B is appropriate when:**

- A. Skin absorption is IDLH
- B. Contaminant is unknown and respiratory protection is paramount but skin hazard is lower
- C. Splash protection only is needed and contaminant is known
- D. Minimal chemical exposure is anticipated

**23. California's stricter-than-federal soluble leaching test for hazardous waste is the:**

- A. TCLP
- B. STLC
- C. Paint Filter Test
- D. Bioassay

**24. A small medical waste generator produces:**

- A. <500 lb/month
- B. <200 lb/month
- C. <100 lb/month
- D. <50 lb/month

**25. Biohazardous waste in California may generally be stored up to:**

- A. 7 days at any temperature
- B. 30 days at any temperature
- C. 90 days if kept at  $\leq 32^{\circ}\text{F}$
- D. 180 days at room temperature

**26. California's maximum permitted spa water temperature is:**

- A. 100°F
- B. 102°F
- C. 104°F
- D. 108°F

**27. Maximum cyanuric acid (CYA) concentration in California public pools is:**

- A. 50 ppm
- B. 75 ppm
- C. 100 ppm
- D. 200 ppm

- 28. The standard public swimming pool maximum turnover time is:**
- A. 1 hour
  - B. 6 hours
  - C. 12 hours
  - D. 24 hours
- 29. The State Housing Law is codified principally in:**
- A. H&SC; §§17910–17995
  - B. Civil Code §§1940–1954
  - C. Government Code §§65000 et seq.
  - D. H&SC; §§25000 et seq.
- 30. Title X federal lead-paint disclosure applies to most residential housing built before:**
- A. 1950
  - B. 1960
  - C. 1978
  - D. 1992
- 31. The principal vector of West Nile virus in California is:**
- A. *Aedes aegypti*
  - B. *Anopheles freeborni*
  - C. *Culex tarsalis* (and other *Culex* spp.)
  - D. *Culiseta inornata*
- 32. In Integrated Pest Management (IPM), chemical pesticide application is:**
- A. First response after identification
  - B. Routine alongside sanitation
  - C. Last resort after non-chemical measures
  - D. Never appropriate
- 33. California's principal wildlife reservoirs of rabies are:**
- A. Raccoons and opossums
  - B. Bats and skunks
  - C. Coyotes and foxes
  - D. Squirrels and rabbits
- 34. Ground-level ozone is correctly classified as a:**
- A. Primary pollutant
  - B. Secondary pollutant
  - C. Particulate
  - D. Natural emission only

- 35. CO poisoning produces what classic observable sign?**
- A. Cyanosis (blue lips)
  - B. Yellow jaundice
  - C. Cherry-red appearance (carboxyhemoglobin)
  - D. Profuse sweating
- 36. The Cal-OSHA permissible exposure limit for occupational noise is:**
- A. 75 dB for 8 hours
  - B. 80 dB for 8 hours
  - C. 85 dB for 8 hours
  - D. 90 dB for 8 hours
- 37. Doubling the distance from a point sound source reduces sound pressure by approximately:**
- A. 3 dB
  - B. 6 dB
  - C. 10 dB
  - D. 20 dB
- 38. The three principal toxic routes of entry are:**
- A. Inhalation, ingestion, injection
  - B. Inhalation, ingestion, absorption (skin/eyes)
  - C. Oral, optical, dermal
  - D. Inhalation, dermal, mucosal
- 39. Bloodborne pathogen training for body art practitioners must be:**
- A. 1 hour every 2 years
  - B. 2 hours annually, records kept 3 years
  - C. 4 hours annually
  - D. 8 hours one-time
- 40. If 200 people attended a banquet and 50 became ill, the attack rate is:**
- A. 10%
  - B. 20%
  - C. 25%
  - D. 50%

**STOP — Score the pretest before continuing.**

Now that you have completed Questions 1–40, score yourself against the answer key on the following pages. Do not turn the page until you have finished marking all 40 answers.

## Answer Key

For each question, the correct letter is given along with a brief rationale and the section reference (§X.Y) in the full workbook where the topic is discussed in depth.

- 1. Answer: B.** CDPH Env Mgmt Branch administers the REHS program (H&SC; §§106600–106735).
- 2. Answer: A.** Malfeasance = doing something wrongful with no legal right to do it.
- 3. Answer: C.** Two-stage cooling: 135→70°F in 2 hr, then 70→41°F in additional 4 hr.
- 4. Answer: B.** 145°F × 15 sec for intact whole muscle and shell eggs (CalCode §114004).
- 5. Answer: C.** Big-6 pathogen — exclusion (not restriction) until medical clearance.
- 6. Answer: B.** FAT TOM = Food, Acidity, Temperature, Time, Oxygen, Moisture.
- 7. Answer: B.** CalCode §114099.6 — 100 ppm Cl at 75°F = 30 sec contact.
- 8. Answer: B.** Staph aureus enterotoxin from hand contamination — classic picnic intoxication.
- 9. Answer: C.** Sin Nombre virus in deer mouse droppings/urine.
- 10. Answer: B.** Crypto oocysts resist chlorine; surface water requires filtration.
- 11. Answer: B.** Coxiella burnetii is the most heat-tolerant; vat = 145°F × 30 min destroys it.
- 12. Answer: C.** 8.34 lb/gal — core conversion for chlorine dosing.
- 13. Answer: C.** CA nitrate MCL = 45 mg/L as NO<sub>3</sub> (or 10 mg/L as N).
- 14. Answer: C.** RP/RPBP is the only mechanical assembly for both backsiphonage AND backpressure for high hazards.
- 15. Answer: B.** California minimum free Cl in distribution = 0.2 mg/L.
- 16. Answer: B.** Secondary = biological oxidation (trickling filter or activated sludge).
- 17. Answer: C.** Recycled water piping = purple under Title 22.
- 18. Answer: B.** Daily cover = 6 inches compacted earthen material.
- 19. Answer: B.** Methane LEL–UEL = 5%–15% by volume in air.
- 20. Answer: B.** RCRA D002: aqueous pH ≤2.0 or ≥12.5 (or corrodes steel >6.35 mm/yr).
- 21. Answer: A.** LQG accumulation = 90 days max without TSDF permit.
- 22. Answer: B.** Level B = SCBA + chemical-resistant clothing; minimum for unknown chemical/biological hazard.
- 23. Answer: B.** STLC = Soluble Threshold Limit Concentration, California's stricter soluble test.
- 24. Answer: B.** Medical waste SQG = <200 lb/month.
- 25. Answer: C.** Up to 90 days at ≤32°F (or 30 days if <20 lb/month).
- 26. Answer: C.** CA spa max = 104°F (hyperthermia risk above).
- 27. Answer: C.** CYA max = 100 ppm; above this chlorine efficacy is impaired.
- 28. Answer: B.** Pool turnover ≤6 hours; spa ≤30 min; wading ≤1 hour.
- 29. Answer: A.** State Housing Law = H&SC; §§17910–17995.
- 30. Answer: C.** Title X (1992) lead-paint disclosure applies to most pre-1978 housing.

31. **Answer: C.** Culex tarsalis is California's principal WNV vector.
32. **Answer: C.** IPM places chemical pesticide use last — after sanitation, biological, mechanical.
33. **Answer: B.** Bats and skunks are California's primary rabies reservoirs.
34. **Answer: B.** O<sub>3</sub> at ground level forms by photochemical reaction of NO<sub>x</sub> + VOCs in sunlight — secondary.
35. **Answer: C.** CO binds hemoglobin → carboxyhemoglobin → classic cherry-red appearance.
36. **Answer: C.** Cal-OSHA PEL for noise = 85 dB averaged over 8 hours.
37. **Answer: B.** Inverse Square Law for sound: double distance = ~6 dB reduction.
38. **Answer: B.** Three principal routes: Inhalation, Ingestion, Absorption (skin/eyes).
39. **Answer: B.** BBP training: 2 hr annually; records 3 years (H&SC; §119307).
40. **Answer: C.** AR =  $50/200 \times 100 = 25\%$ .

## Scoring Grid — What Your Number Means

Count the number of correct answers. Find your score band below; the recommended action tells you how to use the rest of your study time.

Score	Band	Recommended Action
<b>34–40</b>	<b>STRONG START</b>	You enter your study window with substantial baseline knowledge. Focus your study time on the specific modules where you missed questions; use the full workbook for targeted review rather than cover-to-cover reading. You may not need the full twelve-week study plan; a six-to-eight-week focused schedule could be sufficient.
<b>26–33</b>	<b>SOLID START</b>	You have a working foundation and clear opportunity for improvement. The twelve-week study plan is well-calibrated for you. Identify the modules where your missed questions cluster and prioritize those in your weekly study time.
<b>18–25</b>	<b>TYPICAL START</b>	This is the most common range for first-attempt candidates. You have substantial study work ahead but the workbook is built for exactly this starting point. Follow the twelve-week study plan systematically. Take a cumulative practice exam at week 8 to gauge improvement.
<b>Below 18</b>	<b>EXTENDED PREP</b>	Your study runway needs to be longer than twelve weeks. Begin with foundational topics (Modules 1, 2, 5, 17) before working through the rest of the modules in order. Consider scheduling your examination for a later cycle to give yourself the preparation time the material genuinely requires. A retake fee is always more expensive than additional preparation time.

### Identifying Your Weak Modules

Look at the section reference (§X.Y) on each question you missed. The first number is the module number. If you missed most of your questions in §2.x, you need to focus on Module 2 (Food Protection & CalCode); if §5.x, then Module 5 (Potable Water); and so on.

Many candidates find their misses cluster in two or three modules — typically the modules where they have less day-to-day field experience. Cluster-targeted review is much more efficient than re-reading the whole book.

**Next steps with the full workbook.**

If you have not yet acquired the full workbook, the diagnostic you just took is the entry point. The full workbook contains 17 content modules organized to the CDPH Job Analysis, 326 module practice questions with rationales, two cumulative 100-question practice exams, six California outbreak case studies, a regulatory citation index, and a twelve-week study plan calibrated to the four scoring bands above. Available through the publisher's landing page.

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