

# SSTS Advisory Committee Agenda

June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

MPCA Office St. Paul, Room 3-1 or Via Web Ex

- 9:30 – 10:00 AM      Coffee, treats and conversation
- 10:00 – 10:10 AM      Introductions, agenda review and appointments and vacancies on committees.  
Sara Heger & Aaron Jensen
- 10:10 – 10:45 AM      Licensing and certification topics  
*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity and provides suggestions and feedback*
1. Exams and certifications numbers, Nick Haig
  2. SSTS Quicktips Tool, Nick Haig
  3. Online accreditation, Nick Haig
- 10:45 – 11:15 AM      MPCA short update items  
*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity*
1. Staff Update, Jim Ziegler
  2. Enforcement actions and citation authority, Nicole Blasing
  3. Holding tank watertightness testing update, Mark Wespetal
  4. Registered product/distribution media manuals, Barb McCarthy/Sara Heger
  5. Septage guidelines update, Gene Soderbeck
  6. Plan for Intermediate Designers and HSW, Gene Soderbeck
- 11:15 – 12:15 PM      Legislative updates  
*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity*
1. Building Sewer – Nick Haig
  2. Lapsed Certification – Nick Haig
  3. Campgrounds and flow determinations – Jim Ziegler
  4. Funding – Jim Ziegler
- 12:15 PM – 1:00 PM    SSTS member topics/open discussion

*Next meetings in 2015: September 10<sup>th</sup> and December 10<sup>th</sup>*  
*Committee Website: <http://septic.umn.edu/events/sstsac/>*

# SSTS Advisory Committee Meeting

6-11-15

**Attendee's:** Sara Heger, Aaron Jensen, Mark Wespetal, Ron Thompson, Pete Otterness, Terry Neff, Ron Jaspersen, Jeff Iverson, Jim Larsen, Cindy Tiemann, Mark Erickson, Chris LeClair, Nick Haig, Jim Ziegler, Michael Rutten, Troy Johnson, Craig Gilbertson, Brandon Montgomery, Jane Seaver, Chris Pence, and Barb McCarthy,

9:30 – 10:00 AM      Coffee, treats and conversation

10:00 – 10:10 AM      Introductions, agenda review and appointments and vacancies on committees. Sara Heger & Aaron Jensen

Sara called the meeting to order. Everyone introduced themselves. Sara stated that Jim's two items on the bottom of the agenda will be moved to an earlier time because he has to leave. Gaylen Goble stated that he was resigning from the committee. He is very busy.

Additions to the agenda:

Craig Gilbertson – Discussion about the arboretum / MOWA

10:10 – 10:45 AM      Licensing and certification topics

*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity and provides suggestions and feedback*

1. Exams and certifications numbers, Nick Haig

Nick Haig reviewed the 2014 SSTS certification exam report that he has been compiling, which includes certification exam data dating back to 1996 (attached). 587 exams were taken in 2014 and 86% of examinees passed their exams. Troy Johnson asked if the trend where there are less people doing more. Nick explained that the spike in 1996 and gradual decrease is most likely because in 1996 the certification became mandatory, so we had a large influx of program participants in the late 1990's. Trends post 2000 can be seen to a lesser extent, such as the housing crash in 2008 and a gradual recovery since. Craig Gilbertson asked if Nick seen anything that seemed out of place with the trends or graphs. Nick stated that he shares this data with the SSTS AC in an effort to stay transparent, and is happy to look into questions that may arise from digesting this data. The only point of note that Nick identified was a specific look at the outcomes from the exam scores of the new specialty areas (Service Provider – 69% passing rate, Intermediate Design/Inspection – 53% passing rate, and Advanced Design/Inspection – 54% passing rate). Nick stated that people can become alarmed with these numbers, but that one of the purposes of the creation of these specialty areas was to raise the bar and implement more difficult concepts and expectations for advanced systems serving large flows or unique sources. Sara Heger mentioned that the number of systems going in each year has gradually gone down over the years as well, and Nick added that he could present the data with system activity if people were interested.

2. SSTS Quicktips Tool, Nick Haig

Nick Haig gave an overview of the Quicktips Tool. Craig Gilbertson asked how long it's been out. Nick said since the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year and it has around 600 hits. Ron Thompson asked how the public finds this. Is it easy for them to find it? Nick explained where its located and how it is found and utilized. Craig Gilbertson asked if the professional search tool could be set up that way as well. Troy Johnson said he

# SSTS Advisory Committee Meeting

6-11-15

liked the format of this tool. Barb McCarthy explained that a web redesign is in process. Nick showed the internal layout of the new website that is being worked on.

### 3. Online accreditation, Nick Haig

Nick Haig introduced the topic and turned it over to Jane Seaver to explain the accreditation standards that have been developed by the agency. We are working with a third party vendor to help develop the online accreditation program. Craig Gilbertson asked when we anticipated online training going out. Nick said it depends on the people who might want to offer an online training. The MPCA is not planning on offering online training itself. Ron Thompson asked if they could get all of their credits online. Jane explained that the number of credits that could be obtained online during a 3 year period would be limited to less than 12, with the exact number yet to be determined. Nick explained some of the thoughts about requiring a mix of online with classroom credits. Ron Thompson asked if we are doing this by policy or rule. Nick explained that we are working on this by policy at this time. Mark Erickson asked if we are going to an online test center for the initial training. Jane said that would be in the future, for now we are working on CE only. Ron Thompson asked how we are moving into E licensing. No work has been done on this that we are aware of, but Jane announced that our new IT system will allow for the online renewal of SSTS business licenses, and that we are moving towards having more services available online. Sara Heger asked that the MPCA management to provide more of a timeline for the group on the online accreditation at the next meeting.

10:45 – 11:15 AM MPCA short update items

*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity*

### 1. Staff Update, Jim Ziegler

Jim Ziegler introduced Brandon Montgomery and gave an overview of his role and duties. Also Pat Shelito retired and that position was posted in Duluth and Ian Harrison will be moving from Detroit Lakes to Duluth. We will be hiring for the Detroit Lakes office when the budgets are approved.

### 2. Enforcement actions and citation authority, Nicole Blasing

Nicole Blasing was out so Aaron Jensen gave the overview. The most recent quarterly enforcement report that has been released is the 1st quarterly report for 2015. In the 1st quarter the SSTS program issued 4 enforcement actions. 3 APOs were issued in January 2015 and 1 APO was issued in February 2015. I have attached the quarterly report if there are any specific questions regarding a specific APO. The SSTS C&E program has established a process for issuing field citations. One field citation has been issued for failure to submit as-builts to an LGU within 30 days. This citation was issued on April 17, 2015. The SSTS C&E staff is currently developing a form for LGUs to use to refer violations to the MPCA for issuance of a Citation or other enforcement action. The goal of the form is to ask for the necessary information that the MPCA needs to start an investigation, but not to be too cumbersome such that it is inconvenient for LGUs to refer violations. We hope to have the form finalized and available on our website within the next month. A notification (email, letter, and/or article in the SSTS newsletter) will go out to LGUs once the form is available. Chris LeClair asked if we could get more detail on the violations. Aaron suggested talking with Nicole Blasing to see if that detail was public information. Chris LeClair will have ticketing authority in a few weeks in Washington County, do we want to be in that loop. Again please talk to Nicole to see what role we would play. Ron Jaspersen asked if there was a process for a professional to make a complaint on an LGU. Aaron stated that there was no form

# SSTS Advisory Committee Meeting

6-11-15

for that but there may be a process in place and that he should talk with Nicole directly to report the complaint and to talk about the process.

## 3. Holding tank watertightness testing update, Mark Wespetal

Mark provided the overview. After review by agency counsel the determination was made that all holding tanks would be required to be tested for watertightness. This test could happen in the field or at the plant. Troy Johnson asked if this would be put into code. The answer is that it is already in code and this explanation by legal counsel reiterates the code. Sara Heger asked if we could put that into the newsletter. The MPCA will add an article to the newsletter.

Sara Heger added another item here about if an alarm was mandatory if you have an effluent screen. A question was asked if an effluent screen was used is an alarm required. For ISTS the code states that both are optional and if a screen is used than it is still voluntary to install an alarm. MSTS require an alarm on the screen. Mark Wespetal provided some history that the rule required an alarm and the Attorney General's office removed that requirement, because we cannot require an alarm on a voluntary effluent screen requirement, since screens are not an ISTS requirement.

## 4. Registered product/distribution media manuals, Barb McCarthy/Sara Heger

Barb McCarthy explained that she has been obtaining manuals from the manufacturers and providing them to Sara Heger. Sara Heger is waiting for the complete list to post them on the U's website. Sara Heger said we need to discuss what we are going to do with those companies that do not provide them. That hasn't been discussed yet. Sara Heger will provide the location of the manuals on the web when that becomes available. The goal is to have it done by the end of June.

## 5. Septage guidelines update, Gene Soderbeck

Aaron Jensen provided an introduction about why the septage guidelines needed updating. Barb McCarthy went over some of the updates she made to the document and said that she provided that draft to Marilee DeGroot for review. Once it is reviewed it will go to the publications team at the MPCA for formatting and will be posted on the website. Most of the changes were minor to align the document with the current rules. This document has been around for a long time and needed some updating. It will likely be formatted differently when it's finished since it is quite old. Aaron said that if anyone wanted to see the draft to contact him for a copy.

## 6. Plan for Intermediate Designers and HSW, Gene Soderbeck

Mark went over the status of the MPCA's stance on Other Establishments and High Strength Waste (HSW). Intermediates can now design and inspect systems that treat HSW. Mark has been working on developing guidance for designing HSW systems. It needs to be finished up and will be provided to everyone for discussion. Nick explained that the MPCA had not historically prioritized this issue, and it had become clear from local reporting that we just don't know if and how designers are anticipating waste strengths for non-dwelling wastewater sources and providing the "extra treatment" as necessary. To that end, the MPCA wants to announce some recommendations and begin a dialogue with design and inspection professionals experienced in working with other establishments so we can strike the right balance between regulations and recommendations. Sara Heger said there needs to be some communication for intermediates to know that they can do HSW. We need to make a public statement or letter or something to let everyone know that they can be doing that work. Nick and Sara explained how the training and testing will need to be better realigned to teach the HSW. Troy Johnson asked if the current Intermediates would need to go to another training to get up to speed. Sara Heger suggested that the continuing education class for those people should be developed to

# SSTS Advisory Committee Meeting

6-11-15

cover HSW. There was a lot of discussion on HSW from the group. The MPCA needs to begin communicating about this issue soon, and an article will be appearing in the upcoming Lil Digger.

11:15 – 12:15 PM Legislative updates  
*Goal -- AC informed of ongoing activity*

## 1. Building Sewer – Nick Haig

Nick Haig provided an update. This is still within the vetoed bill and waiting for approval. Nick showed the language proposed for building sewers and explained the process that was done to develop the rule language. If anyone would like to review the language, please contact Nick.

REQUIRED RULEMAKING; SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS.

The commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency shall adopt rules, using the expedited rulemaking process in Minnesota Statutes, section 14.389, that set forth procedures to conform with the changes to Minnesota Statutes, chapter 115, under this act and to streamline the subsurface sewage treatment system (SSTS) license application and renewal process in a manner that:

(1) surety bond and insurance requirements of licensed SSTS businesses meet the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 115 and section 326B.46, subdivision 2; and

(2) properly trained SSTS installers may complete work on a building sewer with respect to the Plumbing Code and plumbing program and SSTS designers and inspectors may complete work on a building sewer connected to an SSTS with respect to the Plumbing Code and plumbing program.

## 2. Lapsed Certification – Nick Haig

Nick provided an update. This is also within the vetoed bill and waiting for approval. Nick explained the overview of the language in the bill. The MPCA has some rule language drafted but not approved. There are some tight timelines to get the rule written once the legislation is approved.

RULEMAKING; SEPTIC SYSTEM PROFESSIONALS; ELIGIBILITY.

The commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency shall adopt rules, using the expedited rulemaking process in Minnesota Statutes, section 14.389, to create a procedure for previously or currently certification-eligible septic system professionals to apply to re-establish or maintain certification eligibility. The conditional eligibility shall begin upon acceptance of an application by the Pollution Control Agency and end upon completion of recertification procedures, including completion of necessary continuing education and examinations. The length of the conditional eligibility shall be limited to one year.

## 3. Campgrounds and flow determinations – Jim Ziegler

Jim Ziegler explained the current bill and said that the language is in the omnibus bill and waiting approval from the governor and legislature. Some of the highlights are removing the words greater of to allow measured flow or code table values, instead of greater of the two for campgrounds. The rule revisions will need to be made within 18 months of approval, but that time will more likely be 6 months. There will be discussions on how and when the rule will become effective and enforceable.

# SSTS Advisory Committee Meeting

6-11-15

Jim is suggesting a grace period until all of it can be ironed out. Ultimately the agency will need to decide how to handle the situation.

#### 4. Funding – Jim Ziegler

The funding is still being discussed at the legislation. It is looking like we should receive about the same amount of money with maybe a little decrease, but none of that has been finalized yet. Jim also mentioned that consistency is an important need expressed by counties. The plan is to keep the grant allocations consistent and the only thing that might change would be the amount of money received. The formula has stayed the same; the amount everyone gets will be based on the amount of counties that apply for the funds. Jim asked if we are all ok with the way it is happening. Everyone was good with the method.

12:15 PM – 1:00 PM SSTS member topics/open discussion

Craig Gilbertson: Arboretum project. MOWA summer seminar is going to take place at the Arboretum on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. MOWA members are donating all of the labor and the material for the project. The project will be reusing wastewater for irrigation. The installation will start on the 18<sup>th</sup>, with the 19<sup>th</sup> being the showing and training and the project will wrap up on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Craig explained the system. Sara Heger explained that it will be in a very visible part of the Arboretum and there will be a display to advertise the project.

Chris LeClair asked if we can add the homeowners email to the compliance inspection form?

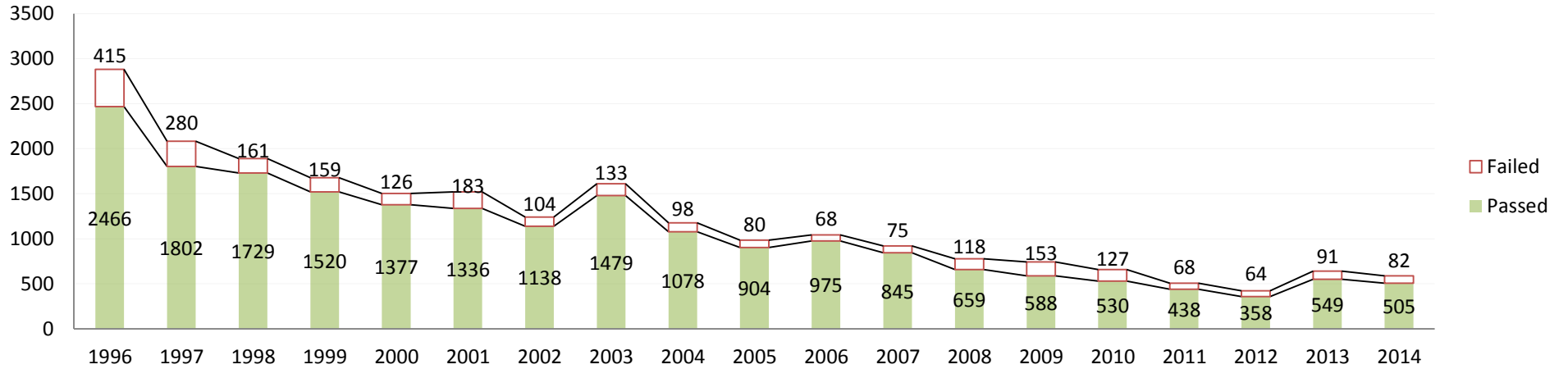
Craig Gilbertson had a question from a MEHA member who went through inspector shopping and was wondering if there is any auditing being done on inspectors. Chris LeClair and Pete Otterness explained how they provide auditing of inspections at the county level. Chris Pence mentioned that they have so many compliance inspections done each year in their county that they can't provide that level of oversight for every one of the inspections. If there is a question on the work and inspector is doing please contact the MPCA compliance and enforcement staff.

Nick stated that the next date for task analysis is July 10<sup>th</sup> for maintainers and service providers. Anyone interested in the development of these specialty areas is encouraged to participate.

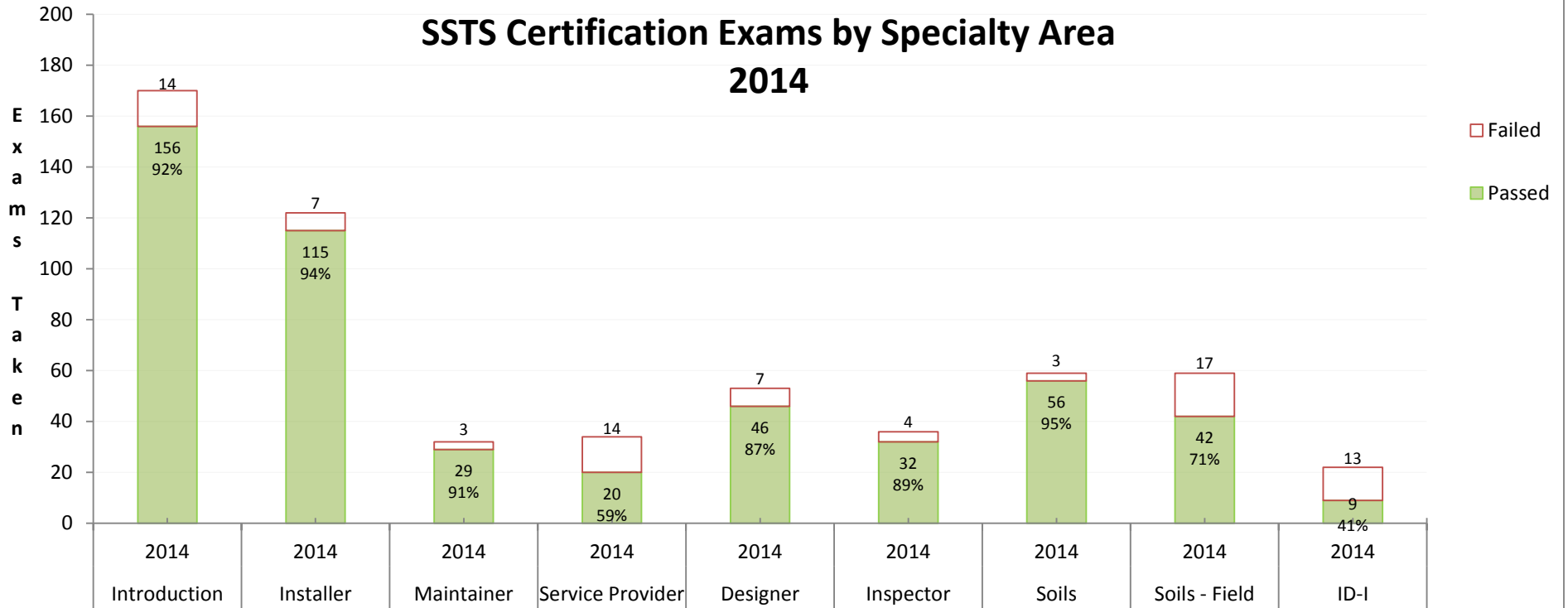
A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Troy Johnson, second by Ron Jaspersen, approved unanimously  
Meeting adjourned at 12:40pm

# SSTS Certification Exam Annual Report - 2014

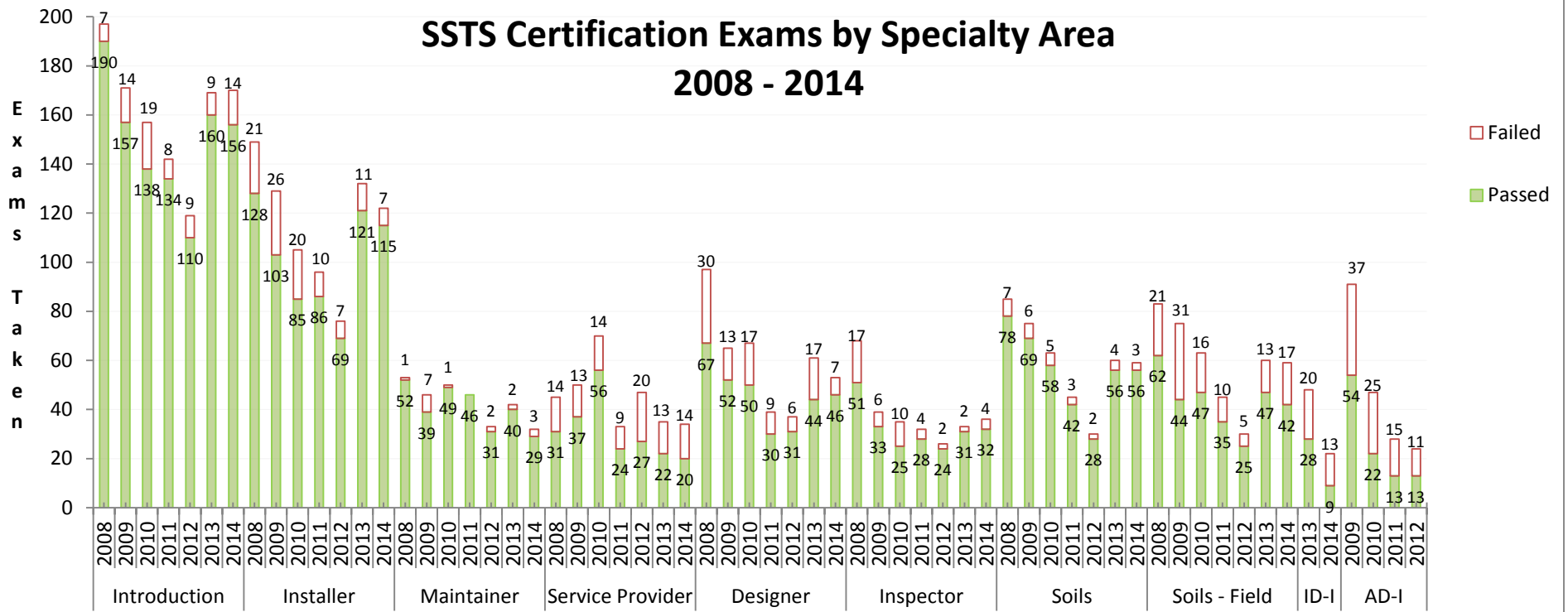
## SSTS Certification Exams 1996 - 2014



## SSTS Certification Exams by Specialty Area 2014



## SSTS Certification Exams by Specialty Area 2008 - 2014





## 1996 – 2014 Annual SSTS Certification Exam Score Statistics by Specialty Area

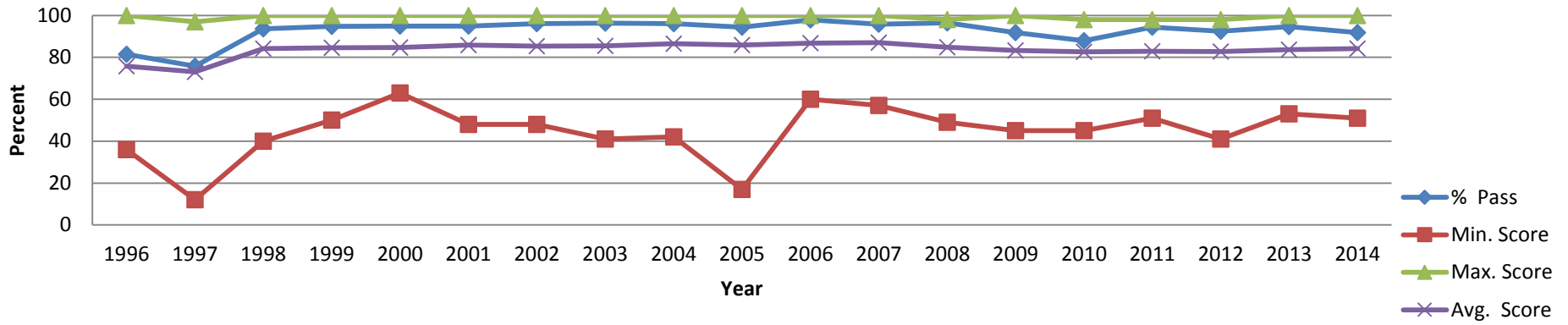
Specialty Area	Training Year	# Passed	# Failed	# Taken	Max. Score	Min. Score	Avg. Score	
<b>Intro</b>		<b>6229</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>6814</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>83.12</b>	
	1996	596	136	732	100	36	75.84	
	1997	534	171	705	97	12	73.12	
	1998	608	41	649	100	40	84.24	
	1999	472	26	498	100	50	84.59	
	2000	444	24	468	100	63	84.72	
	2001	443	24	467	100	48	85.83	
	2002	349	14	363	100	48	85.30	
	2003	504	19	523	100	41	85.49	
	2004	369	15	384	100	42	86.53	
	2005	270	16	286	100	17	85.85	
	2006	320	7	327	100	60	86.78	
	2007	275	12	287	100	57	86.99	
	2008	190	7	197	98	49	84.85	
	2009	157	14	171	100	45	83.29	
2010	138	19	157	98	45	82.63		
2011	134	8	142	98	51	82.89		
2012	110	9	119	98	41	82.79		
2013	160	9	169	100	53	83.69		
2014	156	14	170	100	51	84.23		
<b>Installer</b>		<b>5128</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>5690</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>82.76</b>	
	1996	526	65	591	95	33	79.25	
	1997	468	46	514	97	30	81.05	
	1998	453	51	504	98	28	81.47	
	1999	426	44	470	100	40	83.39	
	2000	384	35	419	100	48	84.17	
	2001	392	57	449	100	38	83.08	
	2002	328	33	361	100	43	83.85	
	2003	441	46	487	100	23	84.09	
	2004	313	25	338	100	33	85.27	
	2005	223	16	239	100	38	85.64	
	2006	273	21	294	100	55	86.00	
	2007	194	21	215	100	45	84.52	
	2008	128	21	149	97	45	80.05	
	2009	103	26	129	97	39	80.23	
2010	85	20	105	97	29	79.10		
<b>Installer</b>		<b>1079</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>85.10</b>	
	1996	89	15	104	97	24	80.86	
	1997	86	10	96	97	48	83.69	
	1998	67	4	71	100	58	86.49	
	1999	88	9	97	98	42	84.10	
	2000	54	4	58	100	53	86.34	
	2001	51	3	54	98	49	84.46	
	2002	57	1	58	100	67	87.31	
	2003	63	4	67	100	62	88.48	
	2004	42	3	45	98	38	86.62	
	2005	67	1	68	98	62	87.15	
	2006	53	3	56	100	55	88.57	
	2007	76	3	79	98	69	87.80	
	2008	52	1	53	96	69	84.26	
	2009	39	7	46	91	49	80.89	
2010	49	1	50	93	56	84.90		
2011	46		46	100	71	87.09		
2012	31	2	33	94	43	81.82		
2013	40	2	42	93	56	82.17		
2014	29	3	32	94	60	83.47		
<b>Service Provider</b>		<b>217</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>73.70</b>	
	2008	31	14	45	88	55	73.27	
	2009	37	13	50	95	54	74.76	
	2010	56	14	70	92	52	76.01	
	2011	24	9	33	88	44	73.15	
	2012	27	20	47	89	50	71.23	
	2013	22	13	35	88	38	71.34	
	2014	20	14	34	94	53	74.29	
	<b>Design</b>		<b>2560</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>3208</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>78.31</b>
		1996	420	99	519	97	49	76.95
1997		287	35	322	95	40	80.21	
1998		187	45	232	97	47	78.88	
1999		196	57	253	97	40	77.85	

Specialty Area	Training Year	# Passed	# Failed	# Taken	Max. Score	Min. Score	Avg. Score
<i>Design</i>	2000	193	48	241	97	31	78.51
	2001	162	77	239	100	40	74.74
	2002	145	37	182	97	44	78.80
	2003	189	47	236	97	48	79.66
	2004	97	20	117	100	29	80.21
	2005	130	32	162	100	37	79.78
	2006	121	27	148	97	33	79.37
	2007	113	25	138	99	33	80.32
	2008	67	30	97	94	44	74.30
	2009	52	13	65	98	52	78.60
	2010	50	17	67	93	33	76.63
	2011	30	9	39	97	43	78.31
	2012	31	6	37	95	43	79.24
	2013	44	17	61	97	39	76.75
2014	46	7	53	95	51	80.51	
<b>Inspector</b>		<b>1828</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>80.76</b>
	1996	293	70	363	97	6	75.50
	1997	134	14	148	100	56	80.14
	1998	207	10	217	99	58	82.42
	1999	149	14	163	98	55	82.71
	2000	114	8	122	96	63	82.80
	2001	127	10	137	96	54	82.85
	2002	105	7	112	98	54	82.01
	2003	106	5	111	98	63	83.50
	2004	114	7	121	100	46	83.07
	2005	87	4	91	98	52	84.24
	2006	87	2	89	96	60	84.22
	2007	81	7	88	100	54	83.38
	2008	51	17	68	92	57	75.47
	2009	33	6	39	92	63	78.46
	2010	25	10	35	90	49	76.71
	2011	28	4	32	88	57	78.13
	2012	24	2	26	90	67	79.38
	2013	31	2	33	90	59	79.82
	2014	32	4	36	94	51	78.72
<b>Soils</b>		<b>2794</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2974</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>83.19</b>
	1996	542	30	572	100	44	83.03
	1997	293	4	297	98	54	84.45
	1998	207	10	217	100	55	83.92
	1999	189	9	198	99	44	84.83

Specialty Area	Training Year	# Passed	# Failed	# Taken	Max. Score	Min. Score	Avg. Score
<i>Soils</i>	2000	188	7	195	100	58	86.96
	2001	161	12	173	100	50	84.23
	2002	154	12	166	100	52	84.70
	2003	176	12	188	95	59	82.16
	2004	143	28	171	98	25	79.60
	2005	127	11	138	97	52	82.55
	2006	121	8	129	97	61	82.46
	2007	106	7	113	95	14	81.84
	2008	78	7	85	94	55	81.01
	2009	69	6	75	94	62	80.76
	2010	58	5	63	93	29	80.78
	2011	42	3	45	94	61	82.02
	2012	28	2	30	94	61	80.50
	2013	56	4	60	94	61	82.37
2014	56	3	59	94	52	81.64	
<b>Soils Field</b>		<b>302</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>75.44</b>
	2008	62	21	83	100	38	75.22
	2009	44	31	75	100	38	71.77
	2010	47	16	63	100	30	73.02
	2011	35	10	45	100	40	78.67
	2012	25	5	30	100	60	79.00
	2013	47	13	60	100	40	78.17
	2014	42	17	59	100	30	75.93
<b>ID-I</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>69.40</b>
	2013	28	20	48	100	42	70.00
	2014	9	13	22	92	46	68.09
<b>AD-I</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>68.42</b>
	2009	54	37	91	87	37	70.04
	2010	22	25	47	90	41	67.00
	2011	13	15	28	84	36	64.93
	2012	13	11	24	96	50	69.13
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>20276</b>	<b>2585</b>	<b>22861</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>81.80</b>

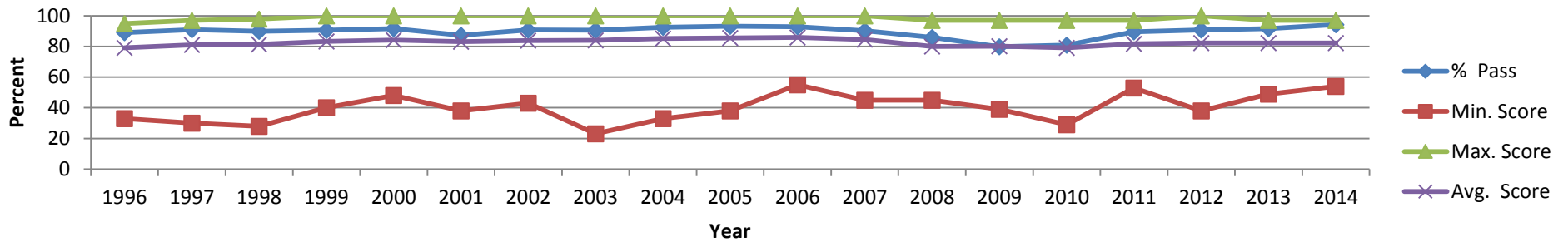
## Introduction to Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



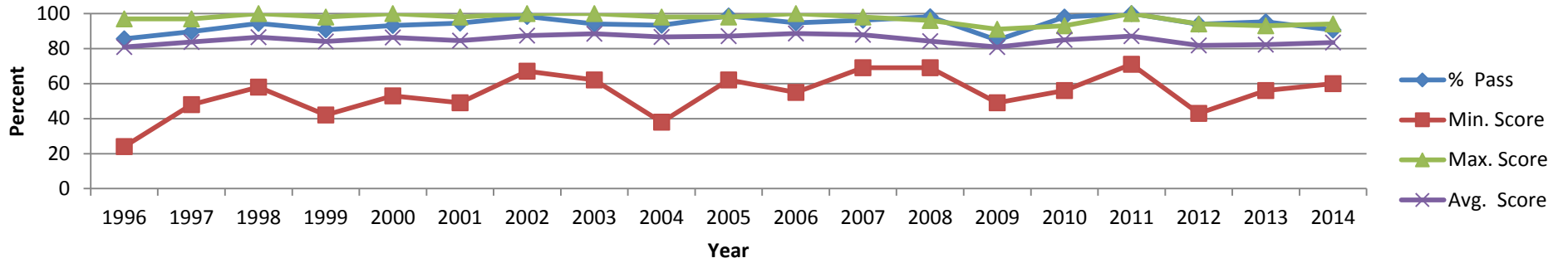
## Installing Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



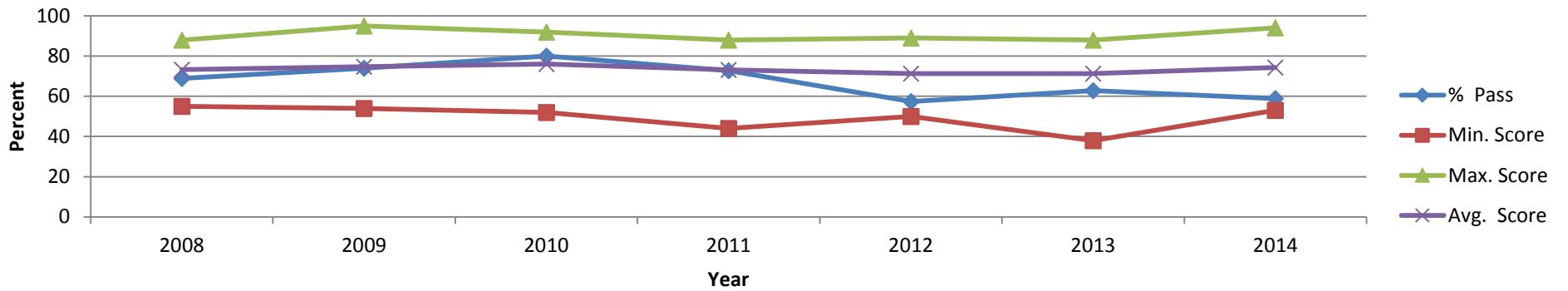
## Maintaining Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



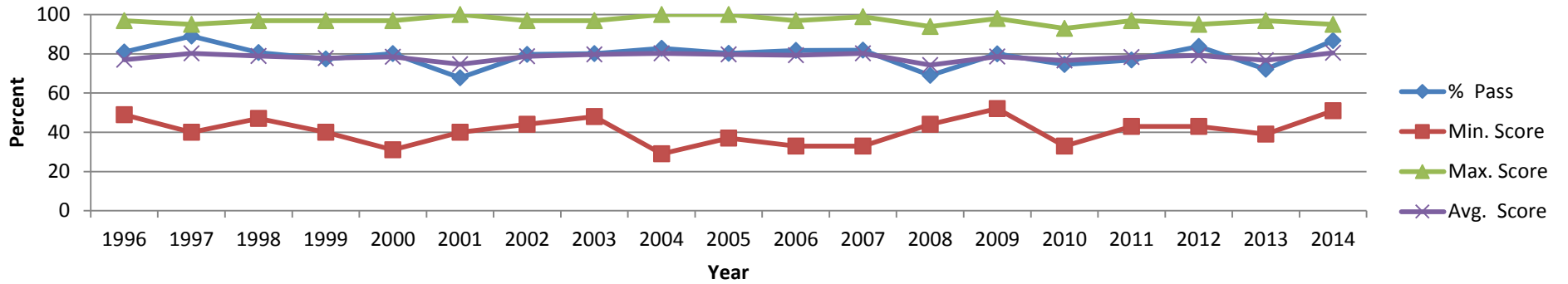
## Onsite System Service Provider

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



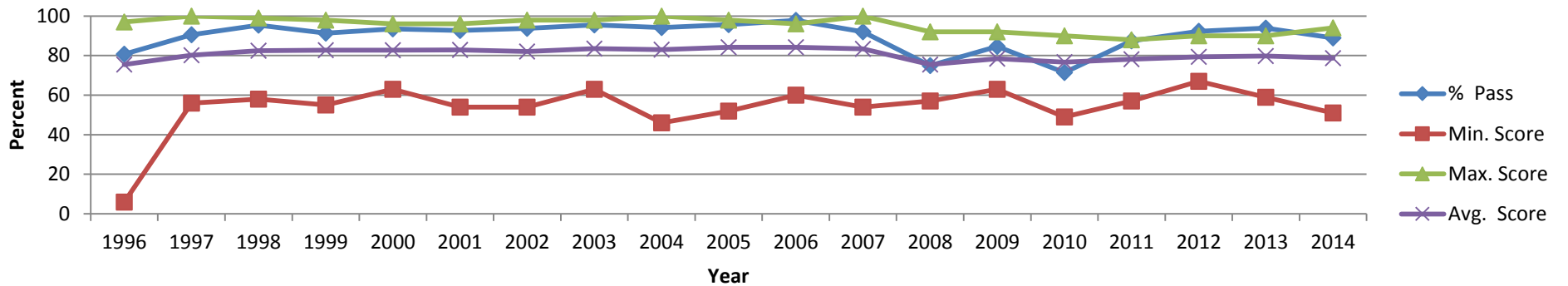
## Basic Onsite System Design

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



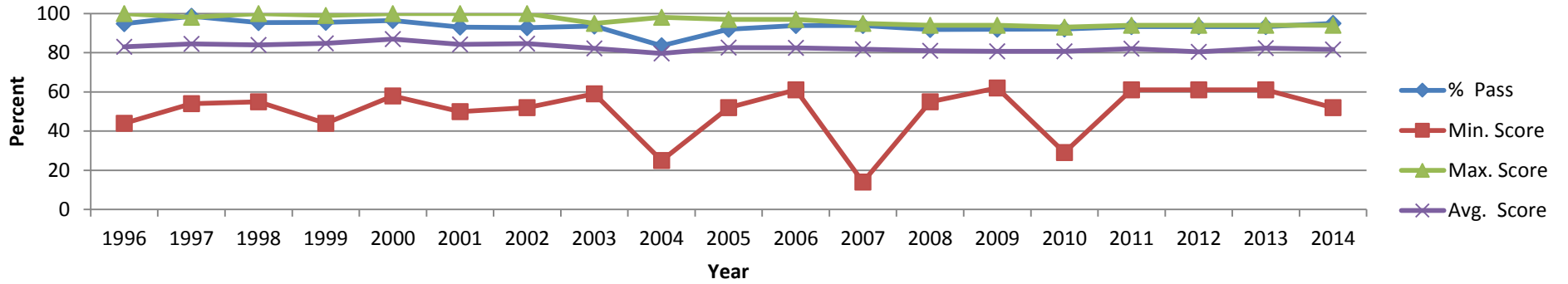
## Basic Onsite System Inspection

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



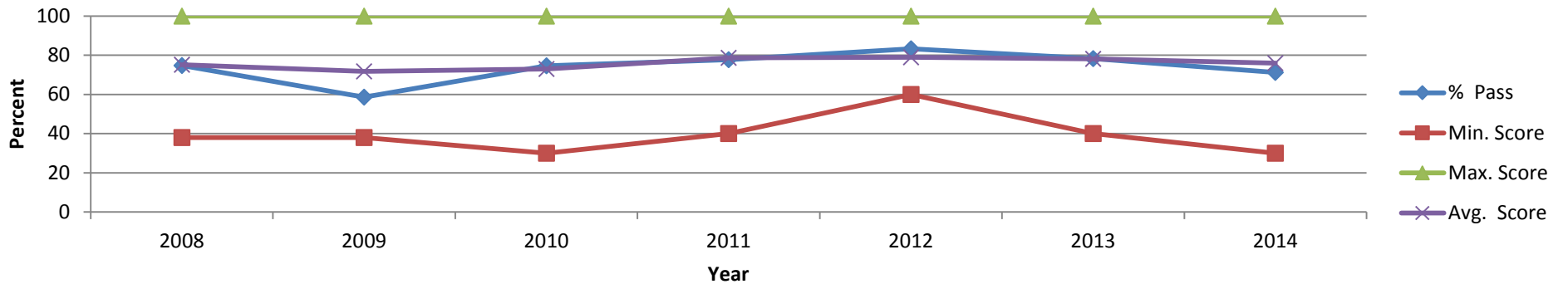
## Soils and Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



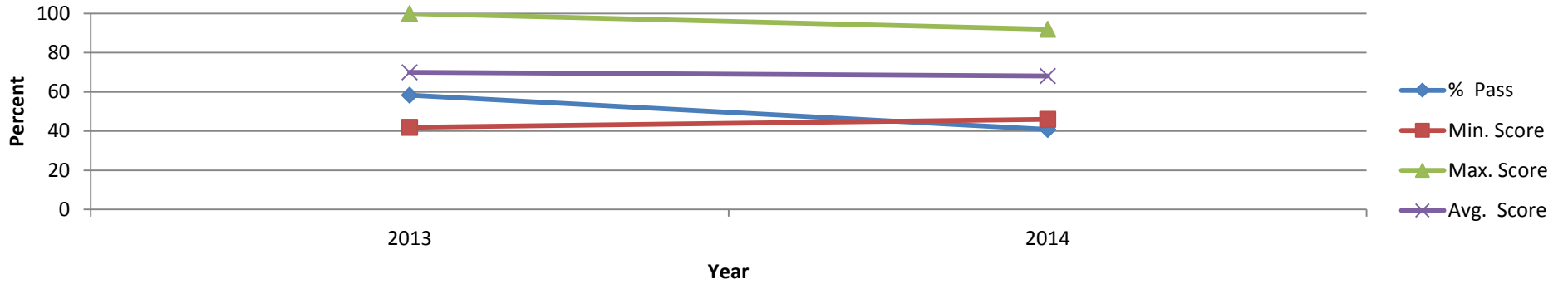
## Soils and Onsite Systems - Field Portion

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



## Intermediate Design and Inspection of Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass



## Advanced Design and Inspection of Onsite Systems

Max, Min, Average, and % Pass

