VirtualOpacity℠

THE FUTURE OF SMOKE SCHOOLS IS HERE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Compliance Assurance Associates, Inc. (CAA)

VIRTUALOPACITY APPROVAL

Is VirtualOpacity approved by the EPA?

Yes. ALT-152A was approved by the federal EPA (link: https://bit.ly/42vM9bz) and we are currently seeking approval through the various state agencies, many of whom have already recognized this modern approach to Method 9 training. Check with your local regulatory body to ensure that use of ALT-152A is approved in your district. Additionally, CAA's website has a database of state status at https://compliance-assurance.com/vr-states.php.

How does VirtualOpacity compare to traditional smoke school?

A statistical analysis was performed similar to EPA's 1975 study that validated traditional smoke school. Our participants exceeded the 1975 standards by a slight margin. VirtualOpacity focuses on comprehensive training to maximize accuracy in visible emissions readings.

How were the plume clips captured?

CAA used EPA ALT-152-approved cameras and Method 9-qualified smoke generators used in traditional smoke schools.

GETTING READY

Do I need special equipment for VirtualOpacity (VO)?

Yes, you will need to purchase at least one virtual reality (VR) Meta Quest 3 headset. We do not sell the headset directly. You can purchase the headset at Amazon at this URL: https://amzn.to/3zSdM2O. This URL is an affiliate link and CAA earns from qualifying purchases. Additionally, headsets are available at Best Buy, Walmart, and Target.

General information about a VR session is available on our website at https://compliance-assurance.com/smoke-school-virtual.php.

Do you come to the trainees or do the trainees come to you?

VO requires no presence of CAA staff. Method 9 certification can be completed on-site at your facility, or wherever you have access to the internet.

What if I have a poor internet connection?

While a fast and stable connection is ideal, we have found that an average connection will suffice. We have tested VirtualOpacity over cellular data and Starlink services with success.

COST AND ADMINISTRATION

What is the cost for certification?

The certification test costs $250 per student for 1-49 enrollments, $225 per student for 50-99 enrollments, and $200 per student for 100 or more students. This price is lower than our nationally advertised rate for traditional smoke school without the other associated costs such as travel expense and lost time.

Do you offer volume discounts for organizations requiring a large number of certifications?

Custom pricing is available.

Do you require a minimum number of trainees?

No.

Will clients/students receive certification reminder emails?

Yes. Just like in-person smoke schools, clients/students will be notified at 60, 30, and 14 days before certification lapse.

Do I need to keep my VirtualOpacity app updated?

Because VirtualOpacity is a web-app, students automatically receive the latest version whenever they log into the system.

VIRTUALOPACITY TRAINING

How long does the training take?

An average reader can finish one test run in approximately 15 minutes while an experienced student can complete the run in as little as 10 minutes. In the time a student typically waits at a traditional smoke school, they can complete certification using VirtualOpacity.

The time estimate does not include the online self-paced lecture for students needing lecture certification: https://compliance-assurance.com/online-self-paced-lecture.php

How many tries does a student have to certify?

The number of tries is unlimited at no additional cost.

Will the test be different each time?

Yes. Per the requirements of ALT-152 we have set a high standard for administering a unique test. The likelihood of receiving the same test twice is significantly greater than 1 in 1 million.

Can a student rewatch a given clip during the test?

Yes. Students can rewatch any clip multiple times during the test to help determine its value. Additionally, our 'scratch' feature allows students to request a different clip with the same opacity value if they want to compare.

Are there examples of unusual backgrounds or reading conditions?

Currently, the program covers the fundamental training required for certification testing. In the future there will be options for students who want to explore challenging or atypical reading conditions.

Are night certifications available?

 Not at this time but please check back as other training tools will be developed.

What if I wear glasses?

The MetaQuest3 headset we recommend is designed to accommodate glasses. Note: students should certify under the conditions in which they expect to do their readings so wearing the eyewear you plan to use in the field is recommended.