

Who are water system operators?

Water Works Operators build, operate and maintain our state's drinking water facilities. These unsung heroes provide the American public with safe and reliable drinking water and help ensure the social, environmental, and economic success of the communities that they serve.

Why take an interest?

Opportunities within the waterworks field cover all levels of experience and education:

- ◆ Licensed Operators
- ◆ Laboratory Technicians
- ◆ Office Support
- ◆ Distribution Workers
- ◆ Maintenance Workers
- ◆ Laborers

Waterworks facilities exist in nearly every community and the treatment and delivery of clean and reliable drinking water will always be essential.

Because of advances in instrumentation and computer-controlled equipment; many drinking water facilities seek applicants with more technical skills. Education and training requirements are increasing to meet new water quality standards and regulations.

As you advance in your career, there are progressing levels of certification that take into account your overall experience.

Positions in the waterworks field offer:

- ◆ Long-term professional employment
- ◆ Attractive salaries
- ◆ Potential benefits (medical, retirement)
- ◆ Professional development
- ◆ Interesting and satisfying work
- ◆ On-the-job training and internships
- ◆ Opportunity to provide a service to society
- ◆ Continued education
- ◆ New technologies

For more information

Wastewater Operator Certification Program

Washington Department of Ecology
Contact: Poppy Carre
360-407-6449 or poca461@ecy.wa.gov
ecology.wa.gov/OpCert

Drinking Water Operator Certification

Washington Department of Health
Contact: William Bernier
360-236-3562 or william.bernier@doh.wa.gov
doh.wa.gov/OpCert

Drinking water publications are online at doh.wa.gov/odwpubs.



Have You Considered a Career in the Water Industry?



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If you need this publication in an alternative format, call 800.525.0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).
This and other publications are available at www.doh.gov/eph/dw.

Why now?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the waterworks industry grew by 20 percent between 2008 and 2018.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the waterworks world saw a major infrastructure expansion. Today, aging facilities and pipes as well as an aging workforce provide an excellent opportunity for young adults who want to pursue this rewarding career.

The American Water Works Association estimates that 30 to 50 percent of the current workforce will reach retirement age in the next 5-10 years. This loss represents an important reduction in expertise and experience, leaving a void that must be filled.



Who should you talk to?

If you are interested, you can inquire at the human resources or personnel departments of cities and towns, counties, special districts, state and federal agencies, and private management firms.

You can also get help finding information from your schools' career counseling office.

Available training

In Washington, five training entities specialize in waterworks training.

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington (ERWOW)
in Shelton, WA www.erwow.org

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)
offices statewide www.rcac.org

Washington Environmental Training Center (WETRC) at Green River Community College in Auburn, WA www.wetrc.org

Contact your local community college to find out about waterworks training in your area. To learn more about drinking water career opportunities, visit the following websites:

- ◆ American Water Works Association
www.awwa.org
- ◆ Association of Boards of Certification
www.abccert.org
- ◆ Rural Community Assistance Partnership
www.rcac.org

