



01

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

One of the major challenges we continue to face is the critical staff shortage in the water and wastewater workforce that operates and maintains our essential drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. In the near future, water sector workers will be eligible to retire at levels that will stress our ability to operate this critical infrastructure. The clean and safe water and the way of life we have come to enjoy in this country cannot be sustained without our water industry specialists. We must address this pending shortage with focused engagement at all levels of government and create successful models focusing on recruitment, retention, training, and community involvement.

PERSONNEL 02

RETENTION

High turnover rates are expensive, inconvenient, and are straining our overall success. Employee turnover and long-standing vacancies requires that we redistribute our employee resources placing us in more of a reactive state instead of a proactive approach on maintenance. Many hours are spent to train new employees, majority do not have direct experience in the industry. This leads to inefficiencies within the workflow.

- Understanding what makes employees leave or stay
- Offer competitive salary and benefits
- Encourage open communication and employee participation
- Ability to make an impact
- Growth Potential
- Recognize achievement and milestones

03

WAGES

Providing competitive pay and benefits attracts and retain qualified members of our team, builds culture, and reduces turnover.

Rapidly rising wages are causing significant issues within the labor market making it difficult to compete with higher wages offered by private companies. New opportunities within the job market across the nation has attracted a large portion of the workforce to leave traditional careers.

ACCORDING TO THE US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

There are about 10,800 openings for water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators are projected each year, on average, over the decade. All of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to other occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

A search of ZipRecruiter there a shows there are:

540 water operator jobs

230 wastewater operator jobs

50 Sewer Collection/Wastewater Conveyance jobs

142 Water Distribution Jobs

308 Meter Maintenance/Meter Reader

904 Utilities Jobs

Posted in the State of Missouri as of July 1, 2023

EPA – AMERICA'S WATER SECTOR WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

A CALL TO ACTION

CITIES AND COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE FACING CRITICAL STAFFING SHORTAGES FOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ESSENTIAL DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE. APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER OPERATORS IN THE U.S. WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO RETIRE IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS AND THE WATER SECTOR HAS BEEN FACING CHALLENGES WITH RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF THE SKILLED WORKERS REQUIRED FOR JOBS IN TODAY'S HIGH-TECH ENVIRONMENT. DUE TO THE SCALE OF THIS CHALLENGE AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTIONS, COLLABORATION TO FIND SOLUTIONS ACROSS FEDERAL, STATE, TRIBAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS PUBLIC UTILITIES, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WATER SECTOR ASSOCIATIONS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IS ESSENTIAL. THE IDENTIFICATION OF THESE CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS AS WELL AS THE NEED FOR A COLLABORATIVE RESPONSE HAS LED THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) TO LAUNCH AMERICA'S WATER SECTOR WORKFORCE INITIATIVE (THE INITIATIVE).

2020 to 2023 Employee Turnover		
Reason	#	Average Years Employed
Retirement	9	15.06 years
Resignation	22	1.77 years

The water sector workforce is the front line of public health and environmental protection and is vital to sustaining our critical water infrastructure investments. Working with federal agencies and state, local, and tribal partners, we will take actions that encourage innovative workforce practices at water systems, highlight the value water protection specialists provide every day, and help make water a career of choice through education and sustained public outreach. — Andrew Wheeler, Administrator, U.S. EPA, October 2020

CURRENT POSITIONS

# Positions	60
# Positions Filled	49
Vacant Positions	11
% Vacant	18.33%
Longest Serving Employee	28.67 years
Shortest Serving Employee	0.05 years
Average Years Employed	8.23 years
Employees with Less than 1 Year	21 (avg. 0.28 years; 35% of Staff)

Number of Employees eligible for retirement in:

- ❖ 10 Years: 6 + 10 employees {27%} 1 Management; 2 Lead; 1 Mid-Level; 2 Entry-Level
- ❖ 5 Years: 3 + 7 employees {15%} 2 Lead; 1 Mid-Level
- ❖ 1 Years: 3 + 4 employees {11%} 2 Management; 1 Lead; 1 Entry-Level
- ❖ 0 Years: 3 employees {.05%} 1 Management; 2 Mid-Level

Currently Utilities has ten (10) employees eligible for retirement in five (5) years. Of those ten (10), seven (7) are eligible for retirement in two (2) years. Of those seven (7), three (3) are currently eligible to retire.

Level of Responsibility	Average Years Employed (Not Including Vacant)
Management/Supervisory {6/8}	19.03 years
Lead Personnel {8/9}	13.45 years
Mid-Level Personnel {12/14}	10 years
Entry-Level Personnel {20/25}	3.63 years
Trainee Position {2/3}	0.54 years

Vacant Positions as of 6/23/2023:

{No recent applications on any positions.}

- Plant Operator Trainee Wastewater Treatment – Setting Interviews/Seeking applications
- Utility Worker I – Wastewater Conveyance – Seeking applications {No applications, posted 6/13/23}
- Sewer Collection Equipment Operator II - Seeking applications {Last applications received 4/10/23 applicant withdrew interviewed with PW, posted 12/28/22}
- Sewer Collection Crew Leader - Seeking applications {No applications received, posted 3/09/23}
- Assistant Director - Seeking applications {Most recent app 6/5/23; not qualified}
- Assistant Engineer (Utilities) - Seeking applications {Most recent app 5/22/23; not qualified}
- 5 New Positions Not Posted until current positions can be filled

BUDGETING

One of the biggest challenges Utilities faces is the aging workforce retirement leading to a huge gap to fill.

Monitoring the average wage increases in other jurisdictions can help determine the appropriate level and validity of salary range or grade structures for its own annual salary increases.

Existing 2023 Budget Book Personnel Services	\$ 4,662,650.00
Rate Model Personnel Services 2023	\$ 4,013,482.00
Rate Model Additional Salary Adjustment/New Positions (Included in 2023)	\$ 1,153,791.00
Rate Model Total Available Personnel Funds	\$ 5,167,273.00
Difference New Proposed(with sewer add pay)/2023 Budget	\$(1,044,149.01)
Difference New Proposed/2023 Model	\$ (103,964.42)

Budget payroll projections are based on the estimate of budgeted positions for the year.

Fully funded salaries associated with vacancies, is building some potential cushion into the budget.

Budget consideration are given for those positions where employees have indicated specific retirement dates. Payouts are budgeted.

Items such as overtime, holiday premiums, shift differentials, uniform allowances, and license/certification pay. These are accounted for in the budget.