

Small Wastewater System Apprenticeship

Overview

The Small Wastewater System Apprenticeship is designed for new hires at small wastewater treatment plants. The one-year program combines education with on-the-job work experience. On completion of this program, apprentices will know how to operate and maintain the wastewater system and have the skills and knowledge to take the Level 1-2 Wastewater Certification Exam.

Training

Apprentices will receive a variety of trainings to prepare them for wastewater system operations and the certification exam.

On-the-Job Training: The apprentice will be working under a mentor at the treatment plant who must commit to providing on-the-job training. Vermont Rural Water will support the apprentice and mentor using the ABC Need-to-Know Criteria, developed by the Association of Boards of Certification, based on skills that will be covered in the certification exam.

Classroom Training: The type and amount of formal instruction apprentices receive will be tailored to the needs of the system. Class options include the Basic Wastewater Course and other classes offered by Vermont Rural Water. All apprentices must take an orientation and OSHA safety training.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these classes may be offered online using Zoom.

Self-Study: Apprentices also have the option to take self-study courses through the Office of Water Programs: *Small Wastewater System Operation and Maintenance, Volume I* and *Small Wastewater System Operation and Maintenance, Volume II*. These six-month courses involve reading a textbook, answering review questions for each chapter, and taking an exam at the end. These courses are eligible for college credit.

It is recommended that apprentices who do not take these courses read the textbooks to study for the exam.

Tours: The certification exam requires operators to know about many types of treatment processes, including those that you do not have at your facility. It is encouraged that apprentices visit other wastewater treatment plants with different processes to better understand different treatment processes. Tours may not be available during the pandemic.

Support

Vermont Rural Water's apprenticeship coordinator, Paula Jackson, will provide support to apprentices and systems throughout the program. This includes orientation, guidance for on-the-job training, check-ins, quarterly evaluations, and coordination of training classes.

Cost

The cost of participating in the apprenticeship program is \$1000, paid by the wastewater system. This cost covers training classes, textbooks, and support for one year. It does not include the certification exam or any elective classes the apprentice chooses to take.

Summary

Apprenticeship length: 1 year

Registered with DOL: No

Position: Flexible

Training required: Flexible

Cost: \$1000