

# Water Distribution Apprenticeship

## Overview

The Water Distribution Apprenticeship is designed for new hires to learn how to operate and maintain water distribution systems and to prepare for the Vermont Water Distribution Certification Exam.

The two-year program combines education with on-the-job work experience. This is a registered apprenticeship through the Vermont Department of Labor. On completion of this program, apprentices will receive their Journey Worker Certificate and will have the skills and knowledge to take certification exam and become a licensed distribution operator.

## Training

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

**On-the-Job Training:** Apprentices will receive 2000 hours of on-the-job training per year, for a total of 4000 hours during the program. The apprentice will be working under a mentor at the water system who must commit to providing this 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 water distribution certification exam.

**Classroom Training:** Apprentices will receive 288 hours of formal instruction during the program. This will include an orientation, the Distribution Certification Course, OSHA Safety Training, and other classes offered by Vermont Rural Water.

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

**Self-Study:** Apprentices will complete two self-study courses through the Office of Water Programs: *Water Treatment Plant Operations, Volume 1* and *Water Distribution Systems Operation and Maintenance*. These courses involve reading a textbook, answering review questions for each chapter, and taking an exam at the end. Apprentices have six months to complete each course.

## **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 \$2000, paid by the water system in two annual installments of \$1000. This cost covers all training classes and textbooks, plus support for two years. It does not include the certification exam or any elective classes the apprentice chooses to take.

## **Summary**

Apprenticeship length: 2 years

Registered with DOL: Yes

Position: Full-time

Training required: 288 hours

Cost: \$2000