

# Water & Wastewater Apprenticeship

## Overview

The Water & Wastewater Apprenticeship is designed for new hires who need both water and wastewater certifications. Apprentices will learn how to operate and maintain water and wastewater systems and to prepare for the Vermont Water Treatment Certification Exam for Class 3/4 and the Vermont Wastewater Certification Exam.

The three-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 the certification exams and become a licensed water and wastewater operator.

## Training

Apprentices will receive a variety of trainings to prepare them for water 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 6000 hours during the program. The apprentice will be working under a mentor at the treatment plant 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 on the certification exams.

**Classroom Training:** Apprentices will receive 432 hours of formal instruction during the program. This will include an orientation, the Advanced Class 3 & 4 Water Operator Certification Course, Class 3 & 4 Exam Prep Course, the Basic Wastewater 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 self-study courses through the Office of Water Programs:

*Water Treatment Plant Operations, Volume 1*

*Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Volume 1*

*Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Volume 2*

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.



[VTruralwater.org/training/apprentices](https://VTruralwater.org/training/apprentices)

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**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 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 \$3000, paid by the system in three annual installments of \$1000. This cost covers all training classes and textbooks, plus support for three years. It does not include the certification exam or any elective classes the apprentice chooses to take.

## **Summary**

Apprenticeship length: 3 years

Registered with DOL: Yes

Position: Full-time

Training required: 432 hours

Cost: \$3000