

# Wastewater Treatment Apprenticeship

## Overview

The Wastewater Treatment Apprenticeship is designed for new hires at wastewater treatment plants to learn how to operate and maintain a wastewater system and to prepare for the Vermont Wastewater 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 wastewater operator.

## Training

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

**On-the-Job Training:** Apprentices will receive 2,000 hours of on-the-job training per year, for a total of 4,000 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 in the wastewater treatment certification exam.

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

**Self-Study:** Apprentices will complete two self-study courses through the Office of Water Programs: *Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Volume 1* and *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 of the course. Apprentices have six months to complete each course. These courses are eligible for college credit.

**Tours:** The certification exam requires operators to know about many types of wastewater 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.

## **Support**

Vermont Rural Water's apprenticeship coordinator 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 \$3,000, paid by the wastewater system in two annual installments of \$1,500. 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: \$3000

The Vermont Rural Water Association will not discriminate against apprenticeship applicants or apprentices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, genetic information, or because they are an individual with a disability or a person 40 years old or older. Vermont Rural Water Association will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship and will operate the apprenticeship program as required under Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 30.