

NJ Water Association Water & Wastewater Operator Apprenticeship Program

Purpose

The objective of Water/Wastewater System Operations Specialist apprenticeship standards is the training of workers skilled in all phases of the industry and who are capable of acquiring the requisite licenses from the NJDEP. To accomplish this there must be well-developed on-the-job training combined with related instruction. The NJWA provides administrative support for the program.

This is a summary of the program and program requirements. Detailed information can be obtained by clicking on the link provided at each section. The information included in the linked documents supplements and supersedes this summary. Questions regarding the program can be sent to info@njwater.org with “Apprenticeship Question” in Subject heading or by calling 609-242-7111.

Occupations Included in Program (USDOL O*NET-SOC Code 51-8031.00)

- ❖ Water Systems Operations Specialist (Licensed Operator): RAPIDS Code 0507
- ❖ Wastewater Systems Operation Specialist (Licensed Operator) RAPIDS Code 0507R

Program Overview – (Links - Standards of Apprenticeship, Appendices A-1, A-2)

- ❖ Two-year Program
- ❖ 4,000 hours of Mentored On-The-Job Training over 2 years
 - Training Elements/Approximate Hours
 - Tools, Equipment & Work Place Safety – 240 Hrs.
 - Vehicles & Specialized Equipment – 400 Hrs.
 - Systems Operation & Maintenance – 1,920 Hrs.
 - Quality Control – 960 Hrs.
 - Logistics, Reports and Supervision – 480 Hrs.
- ❖ 288 hours of Related Technical Instruction (RTI) over 2 years
 - RTT Elements
 - Program Orientation
 - Professional Requirements
 - Introduction to Water & Waste Water Operations
 - Advanced Water Operations
 - Advanced Wastewater Operations Course
 - Operations, Safety Related/Miscellaneous Training
 - Security & Emergency Response
 - RTI May Be Provided By
 - Colleges
 - Vocational/Technical Schools
 - Qualified Water Associations
 - Employers/Consultants

Apprentice Minimum Requirements – (Link Appendix D)

- ❖ Apprentices must not be less than 18 year of age.
- ❖ A high school diploma, General Educational Development (GED) equivalency or other high school equivalency credential is required. Applicants must submit a DD-214 to verify military training and/or experience if they are a veteran and wish to receive consideration for such training/experience.
- ❖ Applicants will be physically capable of performing the essential functions of the apprenticeship program, with or without a reasonable accommodation, and without posing a direct threat to the health and safety of the individual or others.
- ❖ Apprentices will be required to take and pass a drug screening on acceptance into the program and prior to employment.
- ❖ Pursuant to federal guidance all employees of public water systems must pass a background check prior to employment.
- ❖ Apprentices must possess a valid state issued vehicle operator license and be insurable at normal commercial rates on acceptance into the program and prior to employment.

Apprentice Application – (Link Apprentice Application)

- ❖ Apprentice candidate may request an application from the NJWA or the potential employer
- ❖ Application is to be submitted electronically to the NJWA at info@njwater.org with Apprentice Program in subject area or mailed to: NJ Water Association, 505 US Highway 9, Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734.
- ❖ If minimum requirements are met the apprentice candidate will be scheduled for an interview with the NJWA Apprentice Training Committee where the candidate will be ranked among other candidates based on the interview
- ❖ As candidates are reached on the ranking list, they will be forward to a participating employer with available positions
- ❖ The apprentice candidate will be interviewed by the employer
- ❖ If accepted by the employer for entry into the program the employer will notify the NJWA
- ❖ Link to Application.

Apprenticeship Agreement – (Link Appendix B)

- ❖ After an applicant for apprenticeship has been selected, but before employment as an apprentice or enrollment in related instruction, the apprentice will be covered by a written apprenticeship agreement

Supervision of Apprentices

- ❖ No apprentice shall work without proper or adequate supervision of the System Licensed Operator.
- ❖ Mentoring is on a 1:1 basis.
- ❖ Employers will be required to sign an Employer Acceptance Agreement (Appendix E)

Term Of Apprenticeship

- ❖ The term of the occupation and on-the-job training attainment supplemented by the required hours of related instruction will be as stated on the Work Process Schedule and Related Instruction Outline (Appendix A 1, A-2) for each occupation.

Probationary Period

- ❖ Every applicant selected for apprenticeship will serve a probationary period. The probationary period for this program shall be the first 1000 hours of on-the-job training.
- ❖ During the probationary period, either the apprentice or employer may terminate the apprenticeship agreement, without stated cause, by notifying the other party in writing. Any probationary apprentice evaluated as satisfactory after a review of the probationary period will be given full credit for the probationary period and continue in the program.
- ❖ After the probationary period, the apprenticeship agreement may be cancelled at the request of the apprentice or may be suspended or cancelled by the sponsor for reasonable cause after documented due notice to the apprentice and a reasonable opportunity for corrective action.

Hours of Work

- ❖ Apprentices will generally work the same hours as fully proficient Licensed Operator except that no apprentice will be allowed to work overtime if it interferes with attendance in related technical instruction classes.
- ❖ Apprentices who do not complete the required hours of on-the-job training during a given segment will have the term of that segment extended until they have accrued the required number of hours of training.

Apprentice Wage Progression – (Link Appendix E)

- ❖ Apprentices will be paid a progressively increasing schedule of wages during their apprenticeship based on the acquisition of increased skill and competence on the job and in related instruction.
- ❖ Before an apprentice is advanced to the next segment of training or to fully proficient, NJWA will evaluate all progress to determine whether advancement has been earned by satisfactory performance in on-the-job training and in related technical instruction courses based on work experience and related instruction records and reports.
- ❖ The progressive wage schedule will be an increasing percentage or schedule of wages of a licensed operator wage rate as shown in Appendix E. In no case will the starting wages of apprentices be less than that required by any minimum wage law that may be applicable.

Credit For Previous Experience

- ❖ NJWA may grant credit toward the term of apprenticeship to new apprentices. Credit will be based on demonstration of previous skills or knowledge equivalent to those identified in these standards.

- ❖ Apprentice applicants seeking credit for previous experience gained outside the supervision of the sponsor must submit the request at the time of application and furnish such records, affidavits, and other documentation to substantiate the claim.
- ❖ An applicant who is a veteran and who wishes to receive consideration for military training and/or experience must submit a DD-214. The request for credit will be evaluated and a determination made by the NJWA prior to completion of the probationary period. The amount of credit to be awarded will be determined upon review of the apprentice's previous work and training/education record and evaluation of the apprentice's performance and demonstrated skill and knowledge.
- ❖ An apprentice granted credit will be advanced to the wage rate designated for the period to which such credit accrues. NJWA will notify the Registration Agency (USDOL) any credit granted and the wage rate to which the apprentice is advanced.
- ❖ The granting of advanced standing will be uniformly applied to all apprentices.

Transfer Of An Apprentice and Training Obligation

- ❖ The transfer of an apprentice between apprenticeship programs and within an apprenticeship program must be based on agreement between the apprentice, employer, and the NJWA.
- ❖ The transferring apprentice must be provided a transcript of related instruction and on-the-job training by the NJWA.
- ❖ Transfer must be to the same occupation
- ❖ A new apprenticeship agreement must be executed between the apprentice and new employer.
- ❖ The apprentice must receive credit from the NJWA for the training already satisfactorily completed.

Detailed program information is available by clicking on the links for:

Apprenticeship Standards

Appendix A-1 (Water Systems Operator)

Appendix A-2 (Wastewater Systems Operator)

Appendix B (Apprenticeship Agreement)

Appendix D (Qualifications/Selection Procedures, Applications)

Appendix E (Employer Acceptance Agreement)