

WATER AND WASTEWATER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT / APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

FLORIDA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION



Overview of Program

Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) has partnered with the US Department of Labor (DOL) and Florida's Department of Education (DOE) in creating a workforce development program for water and wastewater operators.

To meet the requirements of the program, apprentices receive 288 hours of technical instruction in addition to their 4000 hours of on-the-job learning. This instruction helps to strengthen and round out the knowledge base of the apprentice.

This program is not meant to replace any Apprenticeship or Trainee Programs you have in place. It is intended to enhance the training, develop comradery with other men and women in the water and wastewater industry, and increase their pride in a career that is vital to the health and safety of Florida.

"Over the next decade, the water sector is expected to lose between 30 and 50 percent of the workforce to retirement".



"It takes highly skilled water and wastewater personnel to ensure the public supply of safe drinking water and to protect our lakes, streams and groundwater. In addition to increasing professional demands, utilities will soon be forced to replace many of their most experienced employees". (National Rural Water Association).

TWO YEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT / APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- First 10-12 months will focus on learning the Sacramento State Water or Wastewater curriculum
- Level C Water or Wastewater 2-day Review prior to scheduled exam
- Tours of Water and Wastewater facilities to enhance understanding of classroom instruction (these will continue throughout the Program to expose the apprentice to the variety of treatment processes / plant types throughout Florida)
- Focused review of any material that an apprentice may require
- FRWA will work with the apprentice to submit required application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Operator Certification Program
- The second year will include:
 - ◆ Safety Training (including chemical handling, Lockout / Tag out, Blood borne Pathogens)
 - ◆ Electrical Equipment Troubleshooting
 - ◆ Hands on Training (Heavy machinery, maintenance)
 - ◆ Emergency Response and Emergency Management
 - ◆ CDL Training for Class A CDL Exam
 - ◆ Laboratory and Regulatory Requirements, Sample Handling and Reporting
 - ◆ Basics of Utility Management

This program is a **U.S. Department of Labor and Florida Department of Education approved program** that results in a nationally recognized Certificate of Completion.



Benefits of Workforce

Development:

- As members of the industry, we are the most qualified people to train our workers.
- Apprenticeship offers well rounded individuals for employment
- Apprenticeship offers an opportunity to improve and develop the workforce in our industry.

In addition to the curriculum required to receive a Class C operator's license, the hands on training includes: heavy machinery such as vacuum trucks, generators, pumps, motors; emergency response; emergency coordination; lab testing; basics of utility management; Class A CDL training and more. This helps each apprentice become a valuable resource to their employer.



PROGRAM DETAILS

Start Date: November 10 from 9-11 am (Participating Utility Orientation Meeting) webinar

Training Start date: January 12 & January 19, 2021

Training Location: TBD (Several utilities that are able to host periodically)

Training commitment off site: two (2) days per month

Price: \$1500 per apprentice, \$1000 per apprentice if a system sponsors more than one

- Price covers all trainings and materials (California State University Sacramento Office of Water Programs books and classes); FRWA will be using OWP's instructor materials to teach the class
- Price does not cover certification exam, travel, or salary for apprentices

RESPONSIBILITY OF SPONSORING UTILITY:

- Select prospective interns to ensure a "good fit" regarding learning interests and work ethic.
- Provide FRWA with feedback on the apprentice's performance related to: understanding of basic instructions; initiative to ask questions; professionalism; communication with staff members; and traits beneficial to their work at the utility.
- Evaluate apprentice based on the benchmarks established by the utility and the Program

Keep records of the apprentice's progress:

- Ensure the apprentice obtains experience outlined in the training plan.
- Perform evaluations based on the competency criteria and the aptitude, skills and progress of the apprentice.
- Ensure the apprentice is given instructions in safe working methods.
- Make any necessary arrangements to ensure the apprentice is attending monthly training and completing the required education courses.
- Act as the contact person for FRWA Apprenticeship Coordinator and Trainers.
- Assure that the apprentice's monthly work record and monthly evaluation are complete, reviewed by the mentor and submitted to the Apprenticeship Coordinator by the 5th day of the following
- Participate in collaborative problem solving with their apprentice.
- Gather and give direct feedback about the apprentice's performance.
- Support the apprentice's accountability for their actions and the progress made on meeting the goals

The program runs for 2 years. The curriculum schedule may be adjusted to meet the needs of the utilities.

If they choose, employers may have an apprentice sign a Scholarship-Loan Agreement where the apprentice promises to repay the cost of the program either in years of employment or through reimbursement.