



Position Profile
Executive Director
Kentucky Rural Water Association
Bowling Green, Kentucky

The Association

The Kentucky Rural Water Association (“KRWA”) was formed in 1979 as a private 501(c)6 nonprofit organization whose members are utilities representing over 95% of the public drinking water and wastewater customers in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As the largest utility organization in the state, KRWA’s goal is to foster professionalism as well as provide non-regulatory training, technical assistance programs and advocacy efforts. Based in Bowling Green, the organization represents the interests of over 300 public utilities and over 200 associate members, which are organizations that support and serve the industry. KRWA has an annual operating budget of \$3.2+MM and 20+ staff working in Bowling Green and remotely while serving members. KRWA is governed by 8 Directors representing member utilities and 1 non-voting Associate Director representing associate members, who are typically industry experts from throughout Kentucky.

Members of KRWA benefit from training programs, both virtual and in-person, major conferences that focus on professional networking and industry topics, technical assistance, apprenticeship program, legislative engagement in the state capital of Frankfort and in Washington DC, weekly eNews updates and quarterly publications and a low-cost financing program through the Kentucky Rural Water Finance Corporation affiliate. KRWA is one of the largest rural water associations affiliated with the National Rural Water Association, based in Duncan, Oklahoma.

KRWA’s Executive Director has served the organization since its founding over 40 years ago and has announced his plan to retire in 2021. He will remain in his position until a successor is appointed, and an appropriate overlap period established. As a result, the Board of Directors has embarked on a national search to recruit a new Executive Director who will guide the organization and its important statewide utility industry leadership activities into the future.

More information can be found on KRWA’s website: www.krwa.org

The Position

Location

The Executive Director is based at KRWA offices at 1151 Old Porter Pike, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42103; telephone 270.843.2291. In addition to a 6,000 sq.ft. office building, KRWA has an on-site training workshop on its 2½ acre campus and owns an additional 16 acres on the other side of Old Porter Pike. KRWA also has a small apartment in Kentucky’s capital city of Frankfort for the Executive Director’s use during legislative sessions.

Reporting Relationships

The Executive Director reports to the President of the 8-member Board of Directors. The Board of Directors typically meets bimonthly with additional meetings at KRWA conferences and other meetings held as required in person, virtually or via conference call.

The Executive Director supervises the KRWA 20-member staff, about half of whom are based in Bowling Green while the others work virtually throughout Kentucky. Key staff reporting to the Executive Director includes the Assistant Director, Senior Program Specialist, Information Technology Manager, Compliance Specialist, and the Training Specialist.



Position Profile
Executive Director ~ Kentucky Rural Water Association

Other important interactions and working relationships include: employees of KRWA members including utilities and associate members; elected officials at the local, state, and Federal level and their staffs; state and Federal EPA representatives; National Rural Water Association and other rural water organizations throughout the country; outside financial advisers and consultants.

Position Charter

The Executive Director serves as the Chief Executive Officer of KRWA, responsible to the Board of Directors for effective conduct of the affairs of the Association. This executive will recommend and participate in the Board's formulation of mission, goals and objectives and related policies. Within that framework, the Executive Director plans, organizes, coordinates, controls, and directs the staff, programs, and activities of the association.

Major Duties and Responsibilities

Within the limits of the charter and by-laws of the KRWA and policies established by the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, with appropriate delegations will:

- Establish KRWA's organization structure for the headquarters office and the related staffing structure.
- Establish administrative policies and procedures for headquarters function.
- Recruit, hire, and train staff and administer an effective personnel program which includes position descriptions, performance standards, performance appraisals, and a compensation system.
- Develop and supervise an effective program of membership development and membership services; this includes training assistance and conferences, technical assistance, and related programs.
- Develop and maintain a publications program which is responsive to the needs of the membership; this currently includes a variety of electronic and hard copy publications delivered to members and other constituents on a weekly and annual basis along with publications during legislative sessions.
- Develop and conduct an education program to advance the professional / technical / managerial skills of the membership.
- Organize and conduct an annual conference which includes programs, exhibits, and other events consistent with the objectives of the association.
- Conduct research necessary to the association and inform the Board, elected officials, and membership as appropriate.
- Maintain effective internal and external public relations.
- Serve as spokesman for the association in conjunction with the Board President.
- Maintain an effective government affairs program to represent the interests of KRWA's members to Congress, State Legislature, and governmental agencies as appropriate; this includes serving as KRWA's Legislative Agent and working in concert on legislative issues with other associations and organizations including the National Rural Water Association.
- Manage the finances of KRWA, including the preparation of an annual budget (2021 budget is \$3.2MM) and long-range forecasts of needs.
- Ensure the legal integrity of the Association.
- Plan and coordinate meetings of the Board of Directors and related committees.
- Provide periodic reports to the Board of Directors along with recommendations.
- Serves as Secretary and Treasurer of the Kentucky Rural Water Finance Corporation.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Board.

Travel

The Executive Director will have occasional planned travel: meetings with members throughout Kentucky; attendance at KRWA meetings and conferences; in Frankfort during Kentucky's legislative session; in Washington DC to meet with elected officials and related agencies; National Rural Water Association meetings.



Position Profile
Executive Director ~ Kentucky Rural Water Association

Compensation

The Executive Director is expected to earn an attractive compensation package; appropriate benefits and some relocation assistance will be provided. The Board of Directors conducts an annual performance and compensation review of the Executive Director.

The Candidate

Education

A Bachelor's degree, preferably in business administration, is required; an advanced degree in business, law, or related field is desirable. Demonstrated commitment to continued professional development through the American Society of Association Executives or Certified Association Executive designation desirable.

Professional Qualifications

The ideal candidate must have a proven track record of success and may come from a variety of backgrounds such as: serving as the top executive within a comparably sized utility-related association; experience as a "#2" or other senior-level executive at a larger association as noted above; or a management leader or executive from a utility, public water, or wastewater entity. Experience with the water/wastewater utility industry is strongly preferred. At least five years of experience in a leadership role is required. In addition, significant Board interaction is strongly desired.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- **Membership development** (track record of membership retention, increased value and relevance).
- **Board relationships** (significant involvement with governance issues and Board of Director interactions).
- **Planning** (experience in developing and implementing both operational and strategic plans).
- **Water/wastewater industry** (professional experience with and/or knowledge in water/wastewater industry strongly preferred; utility background preferred).
- **Political arena** (experience developing effective working relationships with elected/appointed officials and their staffs).
- **Advocacy** (demonstrated background of successfully influencing legislative activity).
- **Management experience** (strong human resource development; has effectively managed teams of people).
- **Fiscal management** (demonstrated ability to manage financial affairs of an organization, i.e., develop revenue sources and control expenditures to preserve financial stability).
- **Technology** (can utilize the available technological capabilities to enhance the effectiveness of the association; knowledge of social media).
- **Negotiation skills** (can effectively represent the organization in successful discussions and decisions on key issues).
- **Fund raising** (successful funding activities including development programs and special events).
- **Media/public relations** (articulates objectives and policy positions to the media and the community at large).
- **Vendor relations** (experience engaging with national and regional vendors).
- **Sales orientation** (ability to market and promote the organization to potential members and vendors).
- **Regional knowledge** (familiarity with the Commonwealth of Kentucky desirable).

Desired personal traits

- **Integrity** (possesses honesty and the highest ethical and moral standards).
- **Leadership** (a take charge individual with vision; proactive versus reactive).
- **Intelligent** (bright; street smarts and natural intelligence).
- **Communication skills** (good listener; excellent written and oral communication skills).
- **Self-starter** (strong personal work ethic with a "roll up the sleeves" attitude).



Position Profile Executive Director ~ Kentucky Rural Water Association

- **Management style** (empowers staff and holds them accountable; provides basic direction and allows staff team to execute).
- **Vision/creativity** (can plan for the future and brings “outside the box” ideas).
- **Teamwork** (speaks of “we” first, not “I”; relishes in sharing credit with others).
- **Personable** (strong human relations skills; relates well to people; builds constructive and effective relationships).
- **Credibility** (can command respect of Board, members, staff, elected officials and other constituents).
- **Collaborative** (values working with and through others to achieve positive results).
- **Change agent** (willing to push the envelope and challenge traditional thinking).
- **Visibility** (highly visible to staff and members).
- **Energetic** (genuinely enthusiastic; strong personal work ethic).
- **Organizational skills** (results oriented; meets established goals and objectives).
- **Risk taker** (willing to take calculated risks based on thought out action and available information; isn’t afraid to challenge status-quo thinking).
- **Executive presence** (polished; self confident).
- **Disposition** (able to enjoy life; possesses a sense of humor).

Challenges and Opportunity

The projected first year accomplishments and projects for the new Executive Director of KRWA include:

- Establish presence as the Association’s Executive Director, becoming immersed in the details of the day-to-day operations of KRWA and becoming knowledgeable about the work of staff, finances, programs, Board members and members. Strengthen KRWA’s role and leadership on behalf of its members as positive and critical partners for Kentucky’s quality of life as the state works through COVID-19 recovery.
- Initiate formal and informal introductions and connections with the KRWA membership through varied communications and in-person gatherings and meetings, thereby developing strong and trusting relationships with key constituencies.
- In concert with the Board and staff, evaluate the strategic direction of KRWA through the review of and development of strategic, operational, and budgetary plans.
- Become a visible and effective advocate for KRWA in Frankfort and Washington DC. In partnership with Board and members, establish policy and strategy for 2022 Commonwealth of Kentucky legislative session and ensure advocacy campaigns designed to achieve results.
- Participate in meetings and educational seminars scheduled for the balance of 2021; work with Board and staff representatives to evaluate the effectiveness of and participation in these meetings and programs.
- Based upon the long-tenured employment of a number of other key KRWA staff members, begin planning for transitions for these leaders through development of an appropriate succession plan.

The Executive Director position of the Kentucky Rural Water Association is an outstanding opportunity for an executive to lead a professional association with a 40+ year history of success and impact on members and the state. An experienced staff and committed Board ensure the historical integrity of the organization and a strong foundation for KRWA going forward. At the same time, the utilities which make up the association face challenges that include workforce development, technical issues, and funding challenges. KRWA must continue to provide outstanding services and programs as well as advocate on behalf of the membership in the years to come.



Position Profile
Executive Director ~ Kentucky Rural Water Association

Bowling Green, Kentucky

Bowling Green, located in south central Kentucky, is the 3rd largest city in the Commonwealth, with over 71,000 residents and a regional population of over 230,000. The city is the regional hub for services, entertainment, healthcare, and recreation, with a strong local economy featuring operations of Fortune 1000 corporations, mid-size businesses, entrepreneurial start up enterprises and the 20,000-student Western Kentucky University. Bowling Green is the fastest growing metropolitan area in Kentucky.

Located along Interstate 65, Bowling Green is 148 miles from the state capital of Frankfort, 115 miles from Louisville, and 64 miles from Nashville, Tennessee. Residents of Bowling Green point to many reasons why it is a great place to live with quality healthcare, favorable cost of living, strong educational systems, short commute times, year-round choices in outdoor recreation, multiple venues for viewing arts and entertainment including galleries, museums, intercollegiate and minor league athletics, and the performing arts.

More information on Bowling Green and the surrounding area can be found on the following websites:

- City of Bowling Green: www.bgky.org
- Bowling Green Area Convention & Visitors Bureau: www.visitbgky.com

Contact

The client organization we represent, and WAVERLY PARTNERS firmly support the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability. If you are aware of an outstanding association or business executive who meets these requirements, please contact WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the KRWA Board on this search.

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