

Are you interested in...



Serving your community?



Supporting a clean environment?

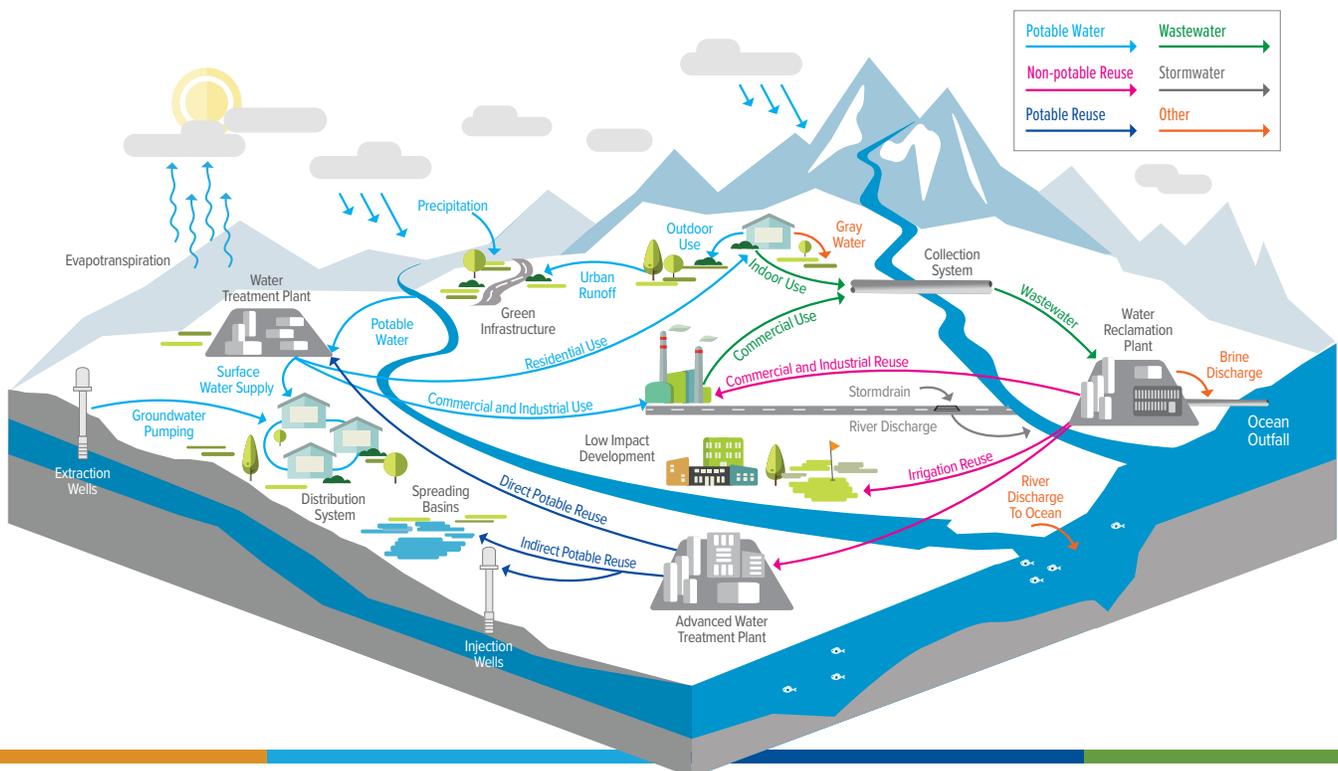


Having a stable, well-paid career?

If “YES”, then joining the Oklahoma Water Workforce might be for YOU!

Oklahoma’s drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater is facilitated by the water workers in our state. Water moves from the environment, either as surface water or groundwater, to towns or cities through precipitation or built infrastructure, and back again in a full life cycle. Water workers support strong communities by delivering water to your tap that is safe to drink. They collect and clean it after use so that the water is ready for its next intended use or to be returned to the environment. The water workforce consists of a wide variety of roles that work collaboratively to move the water cycle forward.

Currently, Oklahoma’s Water Workforce is facing challenges regarding *recruitment, training, and retention* of employees and needs strong individuals with a variety of strengths and interests to join the sector. The industry is stable, provides on-the-job training, tuition reimbursement, opportunities for professional development, and much more. **We want YOU to help us fill these essential roles in our Oklahoma communities!**



The following lists a variety of water industry roles and short descriptions. Learn more about some of these careers by visiting [Work for Water's website](#).

- Water/Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator
- Line Maintenance Technician
- Laboratory Technician
- Electrician
- Mechanic
- Water Distribution/ Wastewater Collections Operator
- Civil/Environmental Engineer
- Utilities Meter Reader
- SCADA Technician
- Utility Manager/Supervisor



Water/Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator (Median Salary, \$54,890)

ROLE: Operation and maintenance of a variety of equipment for the purpose of treating [water](#) to potable (or drinking) standards before it is distributed for use, and/or removing chemical and biological pollutants from [wastewater](#) and subsequent sludge before it is released back into the environment or reused.

ABILITY TO: Conduct system inspections for proper functionality; execute various laboratory procedures; follow safety protocol; effectively communicate verbally and through writing; analyze water quality and operational data and take appropriate action(s); learn new technologies as they become available; provide basic service on mechanical and electrical equipment; read and interpret engineering plans; potentially manage other plant staff; collaborate with other professionals to develop recommendations to solve technical problems.

REQUIREMENTS: High School (HS) diploma or equivalent is required. Licensure is required for all operators but can start under temporary certification. Class A-D licensure requires training, examination, & experience. Learn more about Water Operator Certification from the [Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality \(ODEQ\) website](#).



Line Maintenance Technician (Median Salary, \$44,310)

ROLE: Identify, maintain, and perform routine repair existing distribution and collection system infrastructure.

ABILITY TO: Work with small hand tools, construction and detection equipment; follow safety rules and regulations; obtain and record data in computerized programs; communicate effectively with coworkers and utility customers; understand engineering plans and maps; work outdoors and under extreme weather conditions.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is preferred but not required. Some employers may require safety certifications after hiring.



Laboratory Technician (Median Salary, \$56,750)

ROLE: Conduct quality testing and/or compliance monitoring on water and/or biosolids to verify regulatory compliance and inform utility decision making. Sometimes also referred to as Water Quality Technician or Specialist.

ABILITY TO: Work with a variety of laboratory equipment to conduct various laboratory procedures; maintain accurate records of all activities; collaborate with other departments to implement strategies for improvement; read and apply applicable environmental regulations; effectively communicate verbally and in writing.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is required. An associates or college degree in a relevant scientific (e.g., chemistry, biology, environmental science, etc.) field is usually preferred, and sometimes required. Utilities often require laboratory technicians to be [licensed as an operator](#).



Electrician (Median Salary, \$61,590)

ROLE: Install, maintain, and repair electrical power, communications, lighting, and control systems for treatment and conveyance facilities.

ABILITY TO: Identify and solve technical issues; read and apply electrical drawings to install electrical systems; use various hand and power tools to complete tasks; work well with others to help design electrical systems.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is required. Training can be acquired on the job, technical college (or vo-tech) classes, and apprenticeship as a pathway to licensure. Licensure requirements vary on utility rather than position. Find out more about becoming an electrical journeyman through the [Oklahoma Construction Industries Board](#) (OCIB).



Mechanic (Median Salary, \$46,700) 

ROLE: Install, maintain, and repair of a variety of treatment and conveyance facilities and related equipment.

ABILITY TO: Learn various repair techniques; perform routine maintenance to verify that machinery runs properly; clean and upkeep building; collaborate with other professionals such as electricians and HVAC technicians; diagnose problems and troubleshoot to solve them; work with a variety of hand and power tools.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is required. Typically, employees are trained through technical college (or vo-tech) classes and/or on-the-job training. Licensure requirements vary on utility rather than position. Learn more through the [OCIB](#).



Water Distribution/Wastewater Collections Operator (Median Salary, \$54,890) 

ROLE: Monitors and controls water and/or wastewater distribution and/or conveyance facilities such as pump or lift stations and piping, often monitoring pressure and flow rates.

ABILITY TO: Conduct system inspections to verify proper functionality; follow safety protocol; effectively communicate verbally and through writing; evaluate data and operational conditions then take appropriate action(s) if necessary; understand system requirements and applicable regulations; maintain and/or repair system equipment; learn new technologies as they become available; collaborate with other professionals to develop recommendations to solve technical problems.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is required. Licensure is required for all operators but can start with temporary certification. Class A-D licensure requires training, examination, & experience. Learn more about Oklahoma Certification from [ODEQ](#).



Civil/Environmental Engineer (Median Salary, \$100,000)

ROLE: Design, plan, and supervise the construction and maintenance of infrastructure projects such as treatment facilities, distribution and conveyance systems, and stormwater collection. Typically, civil ([Median Salary](#)) or environmental ([Median Salary](#)) work in the water industry.

ABILITY TO: Analyze as-builts and other project-related data then apply it to project design; understand and comply with regulatory requirements; prepare cost estimates; design facilities and processes to satisfy treatment, distribution, or conveyance needs; effectively communicate with clients and other professionals verbally and through writing.

REQUIREMENTS: A bachelor's degree is required but a master's degree is preferred for employers. Licensure is encouraged for all engineers but not required for employment. Certification information can be found through the [Oklahoma State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors](#).



Utilities Meter Reader (Median Salary, \$41,940) 

ROLE: Manual data collection from meters to track the consumption of water for various types of utility customers such as residential, commercial, and industrial properties.

ABILITY TO: Keep detailed records of meter readings and other on-site observations; recognize system abnormalities based upon site and data observations; perform basic maintenance on the meters themselves; professionally interact with utility customers; perform physical work exposed to extreme weather conditions.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is not required but preferred. Training is typically acquired upon hiring.



Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Technician (Median Salary, \$72,800)

ROLE: Deploys, maintains, and operates utilities' SCADA systems as they relate to treatment, distribution, and conveyance operations.

ABILITY TO: Perform a variety of operational and repair tasks to maintain and service SCADA systems; use a range of hand and power tools; execute basic mathematical calculations; interpret electrical drawings and specifications; comprehend and follow various safety procedures; collaborate with various utility technicians and operators.

REQUIREMENTS: HS diploma or equivalent is required; relevant supplementary coursework at a vocational school or college/university; Associate's degree preferred; [Control Systems Certification](#) may be required for some roles; some training completed on-the-job.



Utility Manager/Supervisor (Median Salary, \$167,740)

ROLE: Oversees the planning, operation, and maintenance of a system's treatment facilities and network of distribution and/or collection infrastructure. The scope of this role will vary based upon the size and complexity of the system.

ABILITY TO: Hire, direct, train, and supervise staff; maintain oversight of short and long-term budgets; interpret technical and legal documentation to provide public safety and regulatory compliance; coordinate work through collaboration with others; solve problems effectively and efficiently; communicate with industry peers and utility customers.

REQUIREMENTS: A bachelor's degree with multiple years of relevant experience is typically required. However, an equivalent combination of education and relevant experience can be an adequate substitute. Depending upon the utility's size, an operator's license is preferred.

There are quite a few positions that are not listed in this guide that help sustain the water industry. A non-extensive list of these careers are as follows: office administrator, grant writer, accountant, general contractor, and compliance specialist.

Please note that all roles, responsibilities, and requirements for specific roles vary by employer and may differ from what is listed here.

Find out about available water industry jobs in Oklahoma by visiting:



[Oklahoma Rural Water Association Classifieds](#)



[Southwest American Water Works Associations Career Center](#)



[Work for Water Oklahoma](#)

Information provided in this handout has been adapted from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, American Water Works Association, Water Environment Federation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Brochure was developed using funds from OWRB and USACE.



OKLAHOMA
Water Resources Board



US Army Corps
of Engineers®