

## Win with Water!

### Finding and Keeping Your Water Workers



As the shortage of skilled public workers grows more pressing with retirements and private sector wage competition, municipalities need new approaches to recruiting and retaining skilled water workers. This is an “all-hands” effort, as town budgets are subject to voter approval, yet public water is so dependable, affordable and out of sight that most voters do not know what their water is worth.

Here are a few suggestions to consider and share with your fellow citizens:

- **Career Awareness.** Drinking water is local, with sources, treatment and distribution systems typically located within the towns they serve. Providing clean, safe and affordable drinking water is a health-based, mission driven career. Talk to your water managers about holding tours and open houses for students and other community members to introduce them to this honorable profession. [Use this career path](#) to understand what it takes to work in the water world.
- **Accurate Job Descriptions.** Understand the critical skills required for each position (see [Need To Know criteria for Grade 2 water Operators](#)). Create job descriptions that meet most of these skills. For example, many towns require water workers to hold a CDL commercial license, even paying workers for the required training. With a CDL license workers can make substantially more in the private sector and often leave for better pay.
- **Workplace Flexibility.** Balance your needs with your employee’s. Increased job flexibility (shift times, job sharing, performance-based goals) and “soft” benefits (training, education, advancement, flex time) are both attractive to workers and feasible for employees.

Drinking water is a non-partisan necessity that can unite communities around its values and benefits, from stewarding the source to sustainably delivering safe, clean, and affordable water to every tap. We hope you see the opportunity in raising the profile and compensation of your water systems and their workers!

**Win with Water!** is an informational series to raise awareness and provide actionable steps to public water system managers, administrators, and policy makers.



**NHWWA**  
NH WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION



**NH**  
WATER  
POLLUTION  
CONTROL  
ASSOCIATION



NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**Environmental  
Services**

