

Context for WW Operator Staffing Challenges

By state regulation the 24/7/365 Paseo Real Wastewater Treatment Plant must be run by a level 4 wastewater operator at all times. In red below, find answers to questions related to hiring a temp to fill one of those shifts.

What is wastewater division staffing in total, and how many vacancies are there by area? Are collections also experiencing vacancies? What are the areas of greatest need?

WW

Admin:	6 positions	1 vacancy	17%
Maintenance:	4 positions	3 vacancies	75%
Collections:	17 positions	6 vacancies	35%
Operations:	25 positions	10 vacancies	40%
Lab:	6 positions	1 vacancy	17%
Compost:	4 positions	1 vacancy	25%
Engineering:	6 positions	1 vacancy	17%
	68 Total	23 vacancies	34% vacant

The areas of greatest need are the 16 vacancies in operations and collections which we are targeting with two initiatives discussed below.

Why is this contract needed? What will the operators perform and when? Have we used operator contracts before? Why do we need 400k for one person?

The contract is needed to temporarily fill a NMED Level 4 shift supervisor, they would keep the facility running for the shift assigned. The facility requires a Level 4 operator 24/7/365. Yes, we have used Contract operators to fill positions as needed.

For 24/7/365 operations, and day shift and a night shift is used. Each shift alternates between 3, 12 hour shifts one week, and 4 12 hour shifts the next week thus covering 12/7/365 with two people. Each of those shifts gets 36 hours of regular time one week, and 40 hours of regular time and 8 hours of overtime the next week. The contract rate is \$140/hr total for regular time and \$200/hr total for overtime meaning a total of 76 hours of regular time and 8 hours of overtime every two weeks.

$76 \times 140 + 8 \times 200 = \$12,240$ per 2 weeks, or $\$318,240$ per year. Request is for \$400k plus tax to have some cushion in case other shifts need to be covered by the contract.

What is this contract only one year (as opposed to 3 or 4 years)?

Perhaps we should consider a longer-term contract but, we do not want this to be a long-term solution.

What are doing to recruit and retain operators?

More competitive compensation:

Water and Wastewater Operator Certification-based retention incentive. Recommended by staff, approved by union, waiting FD and CM signature on Union Contract MOA

Utilities Operator position to align positions and salary targets in water and wastewater. Will result in increases to target salaries for operators, particular wastewater operators. Waiting HR approval and creation of new job descriptions created by PUD.

More effective recruitment:

- Storytelling video campaign featuring operators

- “Consider a Career in Water and Wastewater” flyer development

Wider reach for recruitment:

- Outreach to community college

 - Outreach to local and regional high schools

 - Social media for storytelling campaign

 - Post openings on non-traditional platforms: LinkedIn, Craigslist, Reddit, etc.