



KRWA Staff Member Greg Metz explains some of the components in the Apprenticeship Training Trailer.

WATER AND WASTEWATER OPERATORS ARE ESSENTIAL TO EVERY COMMUNITY, CREATING A STABLE JOB OPPORTUNITY FOR LONG-TERM CAREERS.



Learn and Earn!
Kansas Rural Water Association
**APPRENTICESHIP
PROGRAM**

The KRWA Registered Apprenticeship Program is recognized by the Kansas Department of Labor and with other state associations through National Rural Water Association, under the U.S. Department of Labor. The Apprenticeship Program is designed to help train the next generation of skilled workers and provide standardized training across the nation in Drinking Water and Wastewater professionals' occupations. Apprentices will earn-while-they-learn in a structured two-year training program that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction. Apprentices work with knowledgeable and passionate people who ensure that Americans can continue relying on safe drinking water and vital wastewater services that protect public health and the environment.

Water and wastewater workers provide an invaluable service – day in and day out. Their work is essential to protecting public health and the environment. See the next page for more information about the KRWA Apprenticeship Program. To apply, contact KRWA Apprenticeship Coordinator Monica Wurtz.

Program Overview

Over the next decade, the water sector is expected to lose between 30 and 50 percent of the workforce to retirement. To combat disproportionate retirement, KRWA has partnered with the National Rural Water Association to develop an Apprenticeship Program that will offer two new career paths – Water System Operation Specialist and Wastewater System Operation Specialist.

Minimum Requirements for Apprentices:

1. At least 18 years of age
2. High school diploma, GED or equivalent
3. Physically capable of performing essential functions
4. Take and pass drug screen
5. Pass a background check
6. Valid state issued driver's license



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WATER
association

quality water, quality life

The mission of the Kansas Rural Water Association is:

Provide education and leadership necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Kansas' water and wastewater utilities.

Benefit for Apprentices

Water and Wastewater System Operators help provide safe drinking water to millions of Kansans and protect our natural waterways. Operators are a vital part of our communities. Without properly trained personnel in these roles communities can suffer. During their training, apprentices will work alongside professional operators, learn skills that can be taken anywhere, and earn a wage while they learn.

Participating Apprentices will be required to:

- Meet the Minimum Requirements for apprentices
- Register as an Apprentice with KRWA
- Be employed or be willing to become employed by a Participating Member System
- Complete the 2-year program:
 - 4,000 on-the-job training hours
 - 288 related instruction hours (classroom hours)

Benefit for Systems

Many Water and Wastewater Operators in Kansas have worked at the same utility for most of their career. With retirement, they will depart with decades of valuable institutional knowledge. These training programs will offer member systems a way to pass down and retain critical skills and knowledge of their water and wastewater systems to the next generation of industry workers.

Participating Systems will be expected to:

- Identify and support an experienced mentor to provide guidance and on-site training to apprentices
- Pay the apprentice's wages
- Take advantage of Program Coordinator to resolve concerns and ensure best outcome for apprentice
- Strongly consider retaining apprentices following program completion

If you are interested in registering as an Apprentice or becoming a Participating Member System contact KRWA Apprenticeship Program Coordinator:

Monica Wurtz, KRWA Technical Assistant
email: monica@krwa.net
cell: 785-262-7301

Spotlight on Apprenticeship

Name of Apprentice: Chancey Dial
System: City of Norton
Apprenticeship Track: Water Systems Operation Specialist
Apprenticeship Start Date: March 17, 2022



Chancey Dial

help with flushing hydrants in the distribution, pigging the inlet lake line, and I help periodically with fixing leaks in the distribution. I also help with operation and maintenance of the city's sewer plant.

KRWA: What is your favorite part about being a water system operator?

Dial: I think the best part of being an operator is taking water from the lake and ground water wells and producing water that is safe to drink for everyone in the city.

KRWA: What is the most challenging part about being a water system operator?

Dial: It is a challenge to keep up with the changes in raw surface water quality and how to adjust our treatment to handle those changes.

KRWA: What made you interested in KRWA's Apprenticeship Program?

Dial: I was encouraged to join the apprenticeship program by my supervisor, Ken Anderson. I wasn't sure what all was involved in the program, but once I learned more about it, it sounded like I would benefit from the program.

KRWA: What do you hope to achieve or what have you achieved by participating in the program?

Dial: My goal is to obtain a Class III or IV water operator license from the state of Kansas. For the city of Norton, an operator must have at least a Class III license.

KRWA: Would you recommend the program to anyone that might be considering it (either already employed by a utility or not)? Why?

Dial: Yes, I would recommend the apprenticeship program. The courses are set up in a way to keep you motivated to learn the material.



KRWA: How long have you worked for the city of Norton? Any previous experience?

Dial: I have worked for the city of Norton for five years. Prior to working for the city, I worked at the Norton Correctional Facility as a guard. I had no prior experience with water or sewer before coming to work for the city.

KRWA: What are your main responsibilities at the water treatment plant?

Dial: My main responsibilities are helping with the operation and maintenance of the city's water treatment plant. We treat a mixture of surface water and ground water. I perform daily and weekly tests including, jar tests, monochloramine, free ammonia, turbidity, chlorine dioxide, and chlorine residual in the distribution. I also perform filter backwashing and I check chemical storage as well as the pumps. Outside of the plant, I

Monica Wurtz began work with KRWA in October 2013. She previously worked at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and also worked at US EPA Region 7 for four years. Monica is considered a national expert on various drinking water regulations.



KRWA Apprenticeship Participates in Ellsworth Career Fair

On March 7, 2023, KRWA had the opportunity to participate in a career fair with the City of Ellsworth Water/Sewer Department at the Ellsworth Jr./Sr. High School. KRWA Apprenticeship Coordinator, Monica Wurtz and Ellsworth Water/Sewer Superintendent, Joe Travnicsek, started off the morning, by speaking for 25 minutes to a group of students in a breakout session. Wurtz and Travnicsek provided a brief overview of the water and wastewater treatment processes and



they discussed careers in the water/wastewater industry as well as the KRWA Apprenticeship Program. For the remainder of the day, Wurtz and Travnicsek manned a booth in the school's gymnasium and visited with students as they made their rounds. Travnicsek brought two different models of water meters that the city uses and explained how they worked to students.

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