



Keegan Michael, city of Gardner, trains on installing saddles and corp stops.



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

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

*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



KANSAS  
RURAL  
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:**

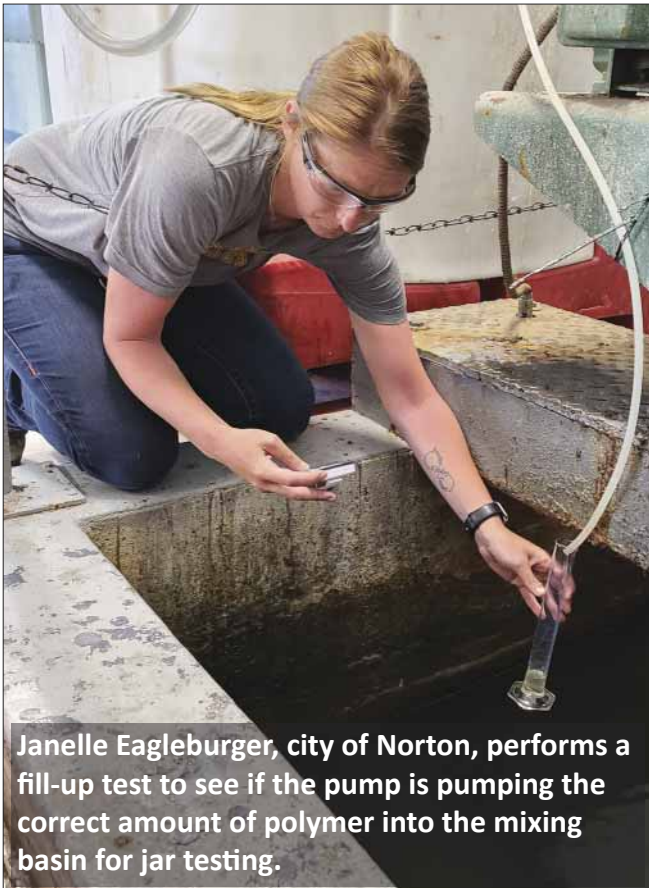
- Identify and support an experienced mentor to provide guidance and on-site training to apprentices
- Pay the apprentice's wages
- Take advantage of Program Coordinator to resolve concerns and ensure best outcome for apprentice
- Strongly consider retaining apprentices following program completion

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](mailto:monica@krwa.net)  
cell: 785-262-7301

# Spotlight on Apprenticeship

**Name of Apprentice:** Janelle Eagleburger  
**System:** City of Norton  
**Apprenticeship Track:** Water Systems Operation Specialist  
**Apprenticeship Start Date:** August 11, 2022



Janelle Eagleburger, city of Norton, performs a fill-up test to see if the pump is pumping the correct amount of polymer into the mixing basin for jar testing.

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

**Eagleburger:** I have worked for the City of Norton for one year and two months. Prior to working for the city, I worked as a nurse for eight years. 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?**

**Eagleburger:** My main responsibilities are helping with the operation and maintenance of the city's water treatment plant. We treat a mixture of surface and groundwater. I perform daily and weekly tests including, jar testing with fill-up for measure of chemicals, calibration of equipment, monochloramine, iron, manganese (high range), 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 help with flushing hydrants in the distribution, driving trucks when needed, pigging the inlet lake line, fixing leaks in the distribution, and also help with the sewer plant.

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

**Eagleburger:** I believe the best part about being a water system operator is jar testing. It is like simulating a mini treatment plant to find the right amount of chemicals for the plant to produce safe drinking water to the distribution.

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

**Eagleburger:** There are times when it can be extremely difficult to keep up with the changes in the raw surface water quality and how to adjust our treatment plant to handle the changes.

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

**Eagleburger:** My supervisor Ken Anderson, after hearing about the amount of information that the program provides to help make a better operator, I wanted to learn more.

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

**Eagleburger:** I hope to obtain a Class III water operator license from the State of Kansas. I have achieved a Small Systems license with help from the Suncoast Learning Program and classes with Stewart Kasper that are provided through the apprenticeship program.

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

**Eagleburger:** Yes absolutely, I would recommend this program to anyone. Coming into this program, I knew nothing about water or how it operates and now I have learned so much from just being in this program. This program helps motivate you to keep learning the material in a fun way.

*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.*





1165 W 149th St.  
Olathe, KS 66061  
(913) 829-3300

**Carson Mulholland  
Sales**

Mobile: (913) 972-8165  
E-mail: camulholland@winwaterworks.com

**Chris Caruthers  
Sales**

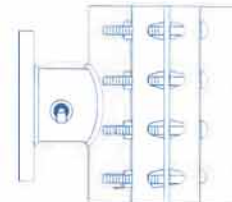
Mobile: (913) 963-8684  
E-mail: cdcaruthers@winwaterworks.com

- ADS - HDPE Storm Pipe, Detention, Retention
- Apco/Crispin/Cla-Val/Val Matic - Specialty Valves
- Ay McDonald - Brass Water Service Products
- Cherne - Muni & Test Balls
- Clay & Bailey - Castings
- Clow Valve - Valves & Fire Hydrants
- Contech - Corrugated Metal Culvert
- Deeter/Neenah Foundry - Castings
- DFW/NDS - Couplings & Drainage Products
- Diamond Plastics - PVC Pipe
- Dura Plastics - PVC Pressure Fittings
- EBAA Iron - Megalugs & Restraints
- Fernco - Repair Couplings
- Hersey/Mueller Systems - Water Meter Systems
- Highline - Valve & Curb Boxes
- Hydrant Repair Parts - Hydrant Extensions & Parts
- Infiltrator Systems - Septic Chamber Systems
- Integrity Fusion Products - HDPE Fusion Fittings
- JM Eagle - PVC & HDPE Pipe
- Kennedy & M&H Valve - Valves & Fire Hydrants
- McWane - Ductile Iron Pipe
- Multi-Fitting - PVC Sewer Fittings
- North American Pipe - PVC Pipe & Rest. Jnt. Pipe
- Pipelife/Jet Stream - PVC Pipe
- Plastic Trends - PVC Sewer Fittings
- Romac Industries - SS Repair Clamps & Grip Rings
- Sigma - DI Fittings & Valve Boxes
- Smith Blair - Tapping Sleeves & Clamps
- Tyler Union - DI Fittings & Valve Boxes
- United Pipe & Steel - PVC, Steel & Copper Tube
- US Pipe Fab - Fabricated Flange Pipe
- Watts - Backflow Preventors
- Wilkins - PRV Valves

**RENTAL & SERVICE**  
Live Main Taps (4"-24")  
Tap Machine Rental (3/4" - 2")  
Hydrostatic Test Equipment Rental  
Electrofusion Machine Rental



**WHOLESALERS OF PIPE  
VALVES - FITTINGS  
WATERWORKS - SANITARY  
SEWER  
STORM SEWER**



**"BEST SERVICE IN TOWN"**