

San Jose Water Company

San José, CA

I. Presenter: Michael Smallman, System Operator C

II. Mission-Critical Job Category: Water Distribution Operator

III. Treatment Plant Characteristics:

- Water Treatment and Distribution
- 374 employees
- 1,000,000+ customers served

IV. Nature of the job

The Operations department is primarily responsible for managing flows, pressures, and reservoir levels throughout the city and supplying the water needed to meet the public's water demands. Operations is also involved in infrastructure development, regulations, water quality etc. In a nutshell, "OPS" is the place where we need to be familiar with just about every aspect of the system from source to supply.

V. Why is this work important for operational reliability?

Balancing pressures, flows, and energy demands system oversight and dealing with current issues and making improvements for the future are all necessary for the continued delivery of water.

VI. Education and experiences that will help students prepare for career technical education

- Try the summer hire program at San Jose Water.
- Develop a link to Sacramento State College & OWP.
- Start learning and gearing for Distribution and Treatment Licenses.
- Try attending a water conference in your area from AWWA or Cal-Nevada.

VII. What do you like about your job?

- Salary/benefits
 - Tuition reimbursement, great family benefits for raising a family, accrued paid vacation time are all nice perks of the job.
- Job security
 - SJW is a private company that can survive economic slumps – there will always be work in the water industry.
- Service to the community
 - I take pride in knowing that such a large system is maintained by us and we are delivering a safe and reliable source to the community every day.
- Interesting work/opportunity to learn
 - I am currently involved in many learning avenues. Being an operator is exposing me to so many great opportunities to grow and learn. I feel that I can't learn fast enough all of the things that I would like to know about the water industry. Everyday allows me to pursue another means of gaining knowledge about infrastructure, regulations, and technology.

- Work outside
 - C'mon! It's California? Why work inside??

- Enjoy working in a team
 - This work is not accomplished without it.

- Work/life balance
 - Work hard, play hard – enjoy what you do!

- Building and fixing things
 - Get your hands dirty!