



## Hi-Desert Water District Classification Specification

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**Job Title:** Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator - OIT/1/2/3

**Job Grade:** Operator in Training (OIT): 6

Plant Operator 1: 8

Plant Operator 2: 10

Plant Operator 3: 12

**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt

**Date:** January 2026

### **JOB SUMMARY**

These positions are in the Wastewater Treatment Operator classification (class) series. Under direct or general supervision of the Chief Plant Operator or Lead Plant Operator, operates, repairs and maintains the District's wastewater treatment facilities, including sewer lift stations, and reclamation systems; reads and interprets charts and meter readings for analyzing the efficiency of plant operations; maintains chemical inventory; and performs other related work as required.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS:**

Operator in Training (OIT), is the trainee-level class in the plant operations series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn District and operational procedures for wastewater treatment equipment and facilities. As experience and certification is gained, assignments become more varied and the work is performed more independently. This class is alternately staffed with Plant Operator 1 and incumbents may advance after gaining experience, obtaining the required level of certification, meeting the qualifications of and consistently performing the work of the higher-level class.

Plant Operator 1 is the entry level class in this plant operations series. Under direct supervision, incumbents perform all tasks related to the operation of wastewater treatment plants, including the reclamation system, and associated equipment and facilities. As experience and certification is gained, operators may independently operate plants and appurtenances under the certification of a senior Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator. This class is alternately staffed with Plant Operator 2 and incumbents may advance after gaining experience, obtaining the required level of certification, meeting the qualifications of and consistently performing the work of the higher-level class.

Plant Operator 2 is the journey level class in this plant operations series. Under minimal supervision, incumbents perform all tasks related to the operation of wastewater treatment plants, including the reclamation system, and associated equipment and facilities. May be designated as "operator in charge" as defined by SWRCB (Chapter 26, Title 23 of the California Code). This class may be alternately staffed

with Plant Operator 3, and incumbents may advance after gaining experience, obtaining the required level of certification, meeting the qualifications and consistently performing the required level of certification, meeting the qualifications of and consistently performing work of the higher-level class.

Plant Operator 3 is the advanced journey level in this class series. Incumbents are fully competent to independently perform all tasks related to the operation of wastewater treatment plants, reclamation system and associated equipment and facilities. May be designated as “operator in charge” as defined by SWRCB (Chapter 26, Title 23 of the California Code). Incumbents in this classification possess comprehensive knowledge of plant operations and maintenance protocol. They assist in training, directing and supervising the work of less experienced staff assigned to a treatment plant.

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

*The duties shown are done to differing levels of complexity and under differing level of supervision depending upon the experience, certification level and training of the incumbent. Higher levels of the operator class are expected to completely and independently undertake the duties listed, while lower levels may be assigned less complex tasks such as vegetation management, maintenance and chemical delivery, and require instruction and assistance, or may singly accomplish only a portion of a listed activity. Class specifications are only intended to present a description summary of the range of duties and responsibilities associated with specified positions. Therefore, specifications **may not include** all duties performed by individuals within a classification.*

- Operates District vehicles and equipment.
- Performs a variety of maintenance and repair on wastewater treatment and reclamation system facilities including landscape maintenance such as weed and vegetation control, plumbing activities such as assisting in the repair of pipe leaks, shutting down systems and installing pipes, chemical feed lines and fittings.
- Monitors and controls the operation of District wastewater treatment and pumping facilities to achieve proper processing of wastewater within mandated operating requirements such as the Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR).
- Monitors the treatment processes, develops and maintains records and spreadsheets, entering data in appropriate logs, and develops and submits reports as required.
- Tests operating and auxiliary equipment, logs readings from meters, recording charts, and SCADA make necessary process adjustments to maintain optimum plant performance.
- Performs visual and audible inspections of processes and machinery to ensure proper operations and safety, operates valves and controls to feed chemicals into the systems.
- Inspects pumps, motors, valves, filters, meters, and related plant equipment, performing preventive maintenance and repairs.
- Performs daily wastewater treatment plant routines according to the plant’s standard operating procedures.
- Operates and maintains a variety of automatic and manually controlled equipment, motors, and pumps used in the treatment, and disinfection of wastewater.
- Takes samples, performs standardized quality control tests, and adjusts plant equipment accordingly.
- Makes regular calculations of plant flow rates to ensure efficient plant operations.

- Reads, interprets, records data and makes regular assessments of raw and treated wastewater quality for BOD, TSS, pH, temperature, alkalinity, and other pertinent data to maintain proper plant operating conditions.
- Operates and maintains various hand and power tools and equipment.
- Assists contractors and representatives of other agencies with work or services to be performed at District facilities.
- Observes pumping equipment and troubleshoots and identifies possible problems and operating difficulties.
- Operates a District vehicle, driving to lift stations and other facilities for inspection and maintenance work.
- Practices and ensures adherence to District and OSHA safety procedures and requirements.
- Always be on the lookout for unsafe conditions, correct immediately or report.
- Participates in training programs.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

### **JOB SPECIFICATIONS**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Regulatory requirements, procedures, equipment and techniques used in the collection, storage, transportation and preparation of water samples for field or laboratory testing for both untreated and treated wastewater.
- Physical characteristics of wastewater, safe handling of laboratory chemicals and reagents.
- General laboratory and field analytical procedures and laboratory equipment.
- Basic arithmetic including calculating proportions and percentages and measuring concentrations.
- Safe work methods and safety precautions as related to the job.
- Methods, materials, procedures, and equipment used in the adjustment, repair, operation, and maintenance of wastewater treatment plants and facilities.
- Wastewater treatment methods, principles and Best Management Practices.
- Standard water quality tests.
- Federal, state, and county regulations pertaining to wastewater treatment operations.
- Methods and precautions for handling and storing potentially hazardous chemicals.
- Operation and maintenance of hand and power tools and light to moderately heavy power-driven equipment.
- Operation and application of Microsoft word processing and spreadsheet software applications.
- Plant measurement and recording equipment.
- Correct application and usage of the English language, including spelling, grammar and punctuation.

#### **Skills and Abilities:**

- Operating, maintaining and repairing a variety of wastewater treatment systems and equipment.
- Recognizing and correcting or reporting unusual, inefficient or unsafe operating conditions.
- Reading a variety of gauges, charts and meters; recording data accurately and making appropriate process adjustments.

- Making calculations as necessary to summarize data results, ascertain data trends, and aggregate information over time.
- Conducting basic chemical and physical tests of influent, effluent, sludge and related materials.
- Using and maintaining the tools and equipment of the work skillfully and safely.
- Handling hazardous chemicals in a safe manner.
- Basic computer skills including word processing, basic spreadsheets, maintaining and sharing computer files.
- Collecting and accurately entering data and creating spreadsheets as assigned.
- Maintaining accurate records of work performed.
- Using, properly maintaining, and ensuring the security of District-owned equipment that may be provided to assist in the performance of assigned duties.
- Understanding and following oral and written directions.
- Establishing and maintaining professional and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work and providing excellent customer service.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision.
- Read and write at a level required for successful job performance.
- Perform algebraic and geometrical calculations and metric conversions.
- Organize and maintain records and files, assemble data and prepare reports.
- Perform a variety of operations and maintenance assignments.
- Perform strenuous, manual labor often exposed to inclement weather conditions.
- Operate forklift, pallet jacks, barrel lifts and hand trucks.
- Use a variety of tools with skill and safety.
- Provide excellent customer service skills and relations.
- Understand and operate manual and automatic plant control systems.
- Read plant measurements and recording equipment, interpreting results to adjust plant operations.
- Troubleshoot, diagnose, and correct a variety of operating problems.
- Use proper safety precautions in working with wastewater plant chemicals.
- Perform standard wastewater quality tests.
- Maintain, interpret, and update plant records and logs.
- Read and interpret plant piping and distribution diagrams.
- Understand and carryout oral and written directions.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with those contacted during the work.

### **PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING CONDITIONS**

*The essential functions of this position may require the employee to perform the following physical activities. Some of these requirements may be accommodated for otherwise qualified individuals requiring and requesting such accommodations.*

#### **Physical Demands**

- Stands and walks for extended time periods.
- Must be able to frequently carry, push, pull, reach, and lift equipment and parts weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Frequently stoops, kneels, crouches, crawls, and climbs throughout the course of the day.
- Walks, stands and crouches on narrow, slippery, or erratically moving surfaces, or uneven terrain.

- Works in an environment with exposure to dust, dirt, and significant temperature changes between cold and heat.
- Works in confined spaces; at heights, such as ladders or on a tank, and around raw sewage.
- Exposure to various vapors and/or airborne particles from powder and liquid chemicals; strong fumes; and unpleasant odors.
- Exposure to loud sounds from equipment.
- Communicates orally with District staff in face-to-face, one-to-one, and group settings.
- Utilizes cellular telephones and mobile radios to communicate.
- Uses office equipment such as computer terminals, copiers, and FAX machines.
- Hearing and vision within normal ranges with or without correction.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Education, Training and/or Previous Work Experience**

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the knowledge and abilities to perform the position is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required knowledge and abilities would include the following:

- High school diploma or equivalent.
- Pass FIT and SCBA testing requirements of Respiratory Protection Program.

### **License / Certificate:**

Plant Operator-In-Training (OIT) – In addition to the qualifications above, the Plant Operator (OIT) has:

- Current California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade OIT certification issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) or obtain within 60-days of hire date.
- Must obtain California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade 1 certification issued by SWRCB within 18 mon of hire date as a condition of continued employment.

Plant Operator, Grade 1– In addition to the qualifications above, the Plant Operator 1 has:

- Current California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade 1 certification issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).
- One-year of experience operating and maintaining water treatment and related facilities as a Plant Operator OIT.
- Must obtain California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade 2 certification issued by SWRCB within 18 months of obtaining Grade 1 certification as a condition of continued employment.

Plant Operator, Grade 2– In addition to the qualifications above, the Plant Operator 2 has:

- Current California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade 2 certification issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).
- Two-(2) years of experience operating and maintaining water treatment and related facilities, including one full year equivalent to that of a Plant Operator 1.

Plant Operator, Grade 3– In addition to the qualifications above, the Plant Operator 3 has:

- Current California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade 3 or higher certification issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).
- Three (3)-or more years of experience operating and maintaining water treatment and related facilities, including one full year equivalent to that of a Plant Operator 2.

Operators at every level must complete the designated number of contact hours (i.e., continuing education/training requirements) as determined by the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to maintain the required certifications. Certifications are required as a condition of continued employment; failure to comply with SWRCB regulations pertaining to required certifications for the position will result in the termination of employment.

**Other requirements:**

- Completion of and satisfactory results of pre-employment drug and alcohol test; physical examination (including x-ray) indicating fitness for duty; DMV record review; and background investigation.
- Plant Operator positions are all safety-related positions subject to the District's Drug Prevention and Employee Testing Program.