

# YOU'RE A "LIFE SAVER"

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By Carrie Bolton

## **That's right, pat yourself on the back because that's what you are!**

As professionals in the water industry, you are role models, problem solvers, plumbers, electricians, mechanics, welders, leak detectors, MEOs, CDL & plow drivers, carpenters, landscapers, engineers, road crew, community members, and most of all... trusted and dependable - just to name a few!

Water Operation Specialists are a critical part of everyday life, providing your community with safe drinking water, while ensuring your water system is performing effectively and as efficiently as possible. The life of an operation specialist each day may not go as planned, water emergencies come first and without notice. When your community or businesses depend on water, there's no such thing as a "scheduled" water emergency. Police officers, firefighters and teachers are routinely praised for their value in public service with good reason, however, water operation specialists who provide safe drinking water often go unnoticed.

This career can be challenging at times as we all know, especially convincing board officials at budget time that unforeseen expenses arise. But the reward! It's one of the most stable and secure jobs in the country because there will always be a need for you. As well, the satisfaction of a job well done that has benefitted your community is the greatest feeling!

According to the EPA, statistics show that roughly one-third of Water Operation Specialists will be retiring within the next 10 years. With that being said, we must encourage our youth to consider a career in the water industry. The EPA announced October 15, 2021, the selection of 10 organizations to receive a total of \$3.8 million in funding for a new grant program that will help build the water workforce and help provide career opportunities in the drinking water and wastewater field. NYRWA also provides training through our Apprenticeship Program.

I personally became an Operation Specialist because I love the village I live in and the desire to become part of a team protecting and maintaining my village's water system. At NYRWA we understand the challenges you face and are here to assist you. Please don't hesitate to call or email us with questions or concerns. We thank you for your service and commitment. You are "Life Savers" and provide "Quality on Tap". 💧💧

Resource: Statistics referenced from [www.epa.gov/sustainable-water-infrastructure/water-sector-workforce](http://www.epa.gov/sustainable-water-infrastructure/water-sector-workforce)

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