

## LEAD PLANT OPERATOR

*This class specification indicates, in general terms, the type and level of work performed as well as the responsibilities of employees in this classification. The job functions described are not to be interpreted as being all-inclusive to any specific employee.*

### **DEFINITION**

Under direction, leads, oversees, and participates in the most complex and advanced work of staff responsible for operating, monitoring, and maintaining plant equipment to control unit processes; provides training, field direction, and guidance on complex construction shutdowns; ensures wastewater treatment plant operates within regulatory guidelines; and performs duties as assigned.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives direction from assigned supervisory and/or management staff. Exercises no supervision of staff. Exercises technical and functional direction and provides training to lower-level staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This classification is the fourth of four levels in the plant operator job series. Positions oversee the day-to-day work of staff in assigned areas of responsibility and ensure that equipment, systems, and facilities in OC San wastewater treatment plants are operated and maintained in a safe and efficient manner. Responsibilities include performing diverse, specialized, and complex work involving decision-making responsibilities, analyzing data, making independent recommendations regarding the solution of complex operational issues, and coordinating assigned activities with other departments and staff. Performance of the work requires the use of considerable discretion and the knowledge, qualifications, and experience to provide technical and functional direction to assigned staff related to all operational processes, procedures, techniques, and related area(s) of assignment. Assignments are given with general guidelines and positions are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines, and methods to deliver work products or services. Work is typically reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements. This class is distinguished from the Operations Supervisor in that the latter has full supervisory authority for planning, organizing, and overseeing the full scope of assigned operations functions within the department.

### **EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS** (Illustrative Only)

*The following essential job functions are typical for this classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed job functions and/or may be required to perform additional or different job functions from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.*

- Leads, plans, trains, and reviews the work of staff responsible for the operation and control of wastewater through the treatment plant and operating, monitoring, and maintaining plant equipment including engines, motors, boilers, compressors, and pumps to control unit processes; provides technical direction including assessment of performance for assigned staff; assigns and coordinates work assignments; covers scheduled time off for assigned staff as necessary.
- Participates in the development of goals and objectives for wastewater treatment operation activities.
- Verifies the work of assigned employees for accuracy, proper work methods, techniques, and

compliance with applicable standards and specifications; ensures wastewater treatment plant operates within regulatory guidelines.

- Plans, coordinates, and executes construction-related outages, isolation of equipment and processes, and major maintenance shutdowns; provides written outage and lock out/tag out (LOTO) procedures to operations staff; approves or denies the majority of construction outage requests; advises Operations Supervisors and Chief Plant Operator on major construction outage requests.
- Oversees construction related field activities including reviewing construction plans and specifications and communicating closely and advising engineering and construction management staff on field change orders and field activities; provides construction information to operations management and staff on major construction and maintenance activities.
- Coordinates work and projects with other divisions, departments, and outside agencies including attending Capital Improvement Program (CIP) design and construction meetings and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) planning meetings.
- Executes routine operation process changes and advises on major process changes.
- Performs the more complex and advanced operational tasks and activities.
- Oversees the maintenance, compilation, and updating of a variety of plant operations logs, reports, and lists; gathers and analyzes data and prepares a variety of reports.
- Attends meetings and trainings as necessary; maintains current knowledge and understanding of treatment plant processes.
- Responds to inquiries in a courteous manner; provides information within the area of assignment; and resolves complaints in an efficient and timely manner.
- Ensures safety and health procedures and precautions are adhered to, corrects unsafe work conditions/practices, and/or reports unsafe work conditions/practices to assigned supervisory or managerial staff.
- Performs duties as required.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Operations, services, and activities of a wastewater treatment program.
- Basic engineering and construction management principles.
- Advanced principles, practices, operating procedures, materials, chemicals, and equipment related to the operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment plant and related facilities.
- Advanced operating principles and preventative maintenance methods and techniques related to plant equipment, such as valves, pumps, and motors, and facilities.
- Advanced methods and techniques of reading and interpreting gauges, recording devices, and related system monitors.
- Advanced methods and techniques of collecting samples and conducting laboratory tests and procedures related to wastewater treatment analysis.
- Emergency maintenance and repair procedures related to wastewater treatment facilities.
- Advanced principles of chemistry, biology, and mathematics.
- Confined space entry requiring the use and operation of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- Safety principles, practices, and procedures of all facilities, equipment, and materials used in wastewater treatment operations including the proper handling of chemicals.
- Principles and practices of record keeping and reporting.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and ordinances relevant to area(s) of responsibility.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Current equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

**Ability to:**

- Plan, organize, and coordinate the work of assigned staff.
- Effectively provide staff leadership and work direction.
- Inspect the work of assigned staff and maintain established quality control standards.
- Train assigned staff in proper and safe work procedures.
- Independently perform a variety of advanced operational tasks and activities.
- Plan, coordinate, and execute construction-related outages, isolation of equipment and processes, and major maintenance shutdowns including writing detailed outage and LOTO procedures.
- Read and interpret gauges, recording devices, and related monitors and adjust plant processes.
- Collect a variety of wastewater samples and conduct appropriate tests in accordance with state and federal regulations and requirements.
- Diagnose complex operational problems and perform effective maintenance on equipment.
- Perform complex inspections, monitor processes, diagnose complex operational problems, and perform effective maintenance of treatment plant facilities and equipment.
- Make accurate arithmetic calculations.
- Read and interpret construction drawings and specifications.
- Safely and effectively use and operate hand tools, mechanical equipment, power tools, and equipment required for the work.
- Enter confined space including the use and operation of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- Direct the maintenance of accurate logs, records, and basic written records of work performed.
- Understand, interpret, apply, and ensure compliance with all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Comply with safe work practices and procedures in the workplace.
- Provide a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and OC San staff.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Employment Standards:**

Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be qualifying as determined by OC San.

1. High school diploma or G.E.D., supplemented by college level course work or specialized training in wastewater treatment plant operations or a related field.
2. Five (5) years of increasingly responsible experience in wastewater treatment plant operations.

**Licenses and/or Certifications:**

- Must possess a valid California Class C driver's license.
- Must possess a valid Grade IV California Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certificate.

**Disaster Service Workers:**

All Orange County Sanitation District employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through state law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with the Orange County Sanitation District requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are required to complete all related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- Mobility to work the plant; to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; frequently reach, twist, turn, kneel, bend, stoop, squat, crouch, grasp, and make repetitive hand movement in the performance of daily duties; to climb and descend ladders, to operate varied hand and power tools and equipment, and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various OC San sites, projects, and/or meetings.
- Perform medium to heavy physical work; to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 51 pounds with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.
- Work requires entry into confined spaces and the use of confined entry equipment and protective safety equipment.
- Vision to read printed materials, recording devices, and related monitors and to inspect and operate equipment; color vision to read gauges and identify appurtenances.
- Field work requiring frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards.
- Finger dexterity to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and operate tools and equipment.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

- Field work with exposure to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, confining workspace, heights, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, hazardous physical substances and fumes, dust, and air contaminants.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- Probationary Period: All OC San employees, except classifications considered “at-will”, are subject to the probationary period provisions as specified in the applicable Memorandum of Understanding, policies, and/or resolutions. Employees who have not yet successfully completed their initial probationary period serve “at-will” and may be released from employment without cause or recourse to any appeal or grievance procedures.
- Pre-Employment: All employment offers are contingent upon successful completion of OC San’s pre-employment process, which includes a background investigation, a physical examination, and a drug screen.
- Work Location Assignment: Employees will be assigned to a work location based on business needs which may be located at any/all of OC San locations; this work location may be changed at any time.