

OUR PASSION

Water professionals have dedicated their careers to providing clean and safe water to protect everyone's health, planet and quality of life. The water sector constantly seeks innovative solutions to community and water system challenges. Water is our passion. We'd like it to be yours, too.

Did you know?

- There are more than 100,000 highly trained water professionals, more than 153,000 public drinking water systems, and more than 16,500 publicly owned treatment works in the United States.¹
- Together, they provide water and sewer services to more than 300 million Americans and work tirelessly to protect public health and more than three million miles of rivers and streams, more than 40 million acres of lakes, more than 87,000 square miles of estuaries, 95,000 miles of coastal waters and marine waters.²
- There is a vast infrastructure—800,000 miles of water pipe and 600,000 miles of sewer line—right beneath your feet! These systems have worked silently for years, in some cases more than a century, to deliver and remove your water and wastewater.
- Treatment plants are highly regulated and can face a number of complex issues. Storms can cause flooding in sewers, water can become polluted, pipes can break, an ever-growing population can stress water supplies and new contaminants requiring additional regulations and treatment can emerge. Water professionals are responsible for handling all of these challenges, often with limited financial and staff resources.
- Clean water doesn't take holidays! Teams of water sector professionals and the infrastructure that supports our way of life work on-call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to protect public health and the environment.

Why should you care?

- Our initial investments in U.S. water purification and treatment systems have all but eliminated the water-related diseases, such as cholera and dysentery, that threatened our communities just a century ago.³
- Next to surgical advances and other cutting-edge technologies, water and wastewater treatment might not seem as important, but the reality is that clean water and sanitation alone have likely saved millions—perhaps billions—of lives since these services were widely implemented in the 19th and 20th centuries.⁴
- Although Americans enjoy the benefits and protection provided by water and wastewater treatment, globally, water-related diseases still kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war.⁵
- Every year, aging and under-funded water infrastructure spills 860 million gallons of untreated waste into America's waterways, including untreated or partially treated sewage, bacteria, parasites, synthetic hormones, pharmaceuticals and agricultural wastes. These spills are preventable, but funding for water infrastructure projects is at a historic low.³
- Water is good for the economy. It is estimated that fixing our stormwater and wastewater systems alone would generate nearly 1.9 million jobs.³

Small actions can make a BIG difference.

- Invest in your water infrastructure.
- Don't take water for granted. The water we have now is all that we will ever have. Use it wisely.
- Think before you flush. Everything you send down the pipe ends up at your local wastewater treatment plant. We are all part of the water cycle. We all live downstream.
- Educate yourself. Take a tour of your local water and wastewater treatment plant to learn what happens to the water that you drink and use.
- Read and understand your water and wastewater bill.
- Stay informed about the water quality issues facing your community by contacting your local municipality and attending public meetings.

You need water. Water needs you.

Indispensable to jobs, the economy, our health and our communities, water runs through our lives in many ways. Everyone uses water and everyone is responsible for it.

We must all work together to keep our water clean and healthy. To do that, we each need to learn to value water. **To learn more, visit www.WatersWorthIt.org.**

BE AS GOOD TO WATER AS WATER'S BEEN TO YOU.
WATER'S WORTH IT.[®]



www.WatersWorthIt.org

1. U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (DHS), [EPA], (2010). Water Sector-Specific Plan: An Annex to the National Infrastructure Protection Plan. Retrieved on May 23, 2012 from <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/nipp-spp-water-2010.pdf> 2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], (2008). EPA Office of Water: You Can Make A Difference! Careers in EPA's Office of Water [Powerpoint presentation]. Retrieved on May 23, 2012 from http://water.epa.gov/aboutow/careers/upload/20070108_recruitment_presentation.pdf 3. Glasick, Peter, and Phaedra Ellis-Lambkins (2011). Jobs and Water for America (Oct. 5; <http://www.forbes.com/sites/peterglasick/2011/10/05/jobs-and-water-for-america/>) 4. Childs, Dan and Kansagra, Susan (2007). 10 Health Advances That Changed the World (Sept 20; <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/TenWays/story?id=3605442&page=1#.T76BZUzKyxE>) 5. World Health Organization (WHO), (2004). Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study. Retrieved on May 23, 2012 from http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/GBD_report_2004update_part2.pdf