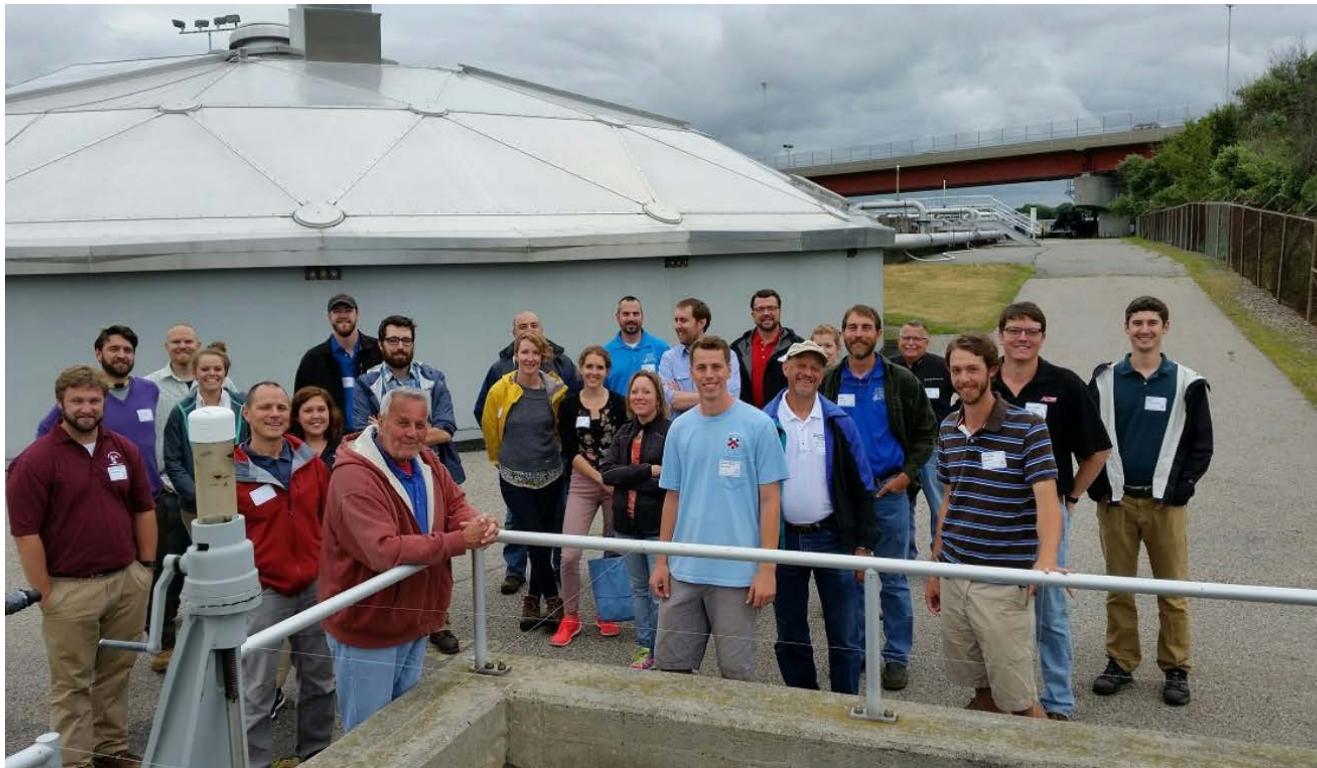


Attracting, Retaining and Growing Young Professionals

November 14th, 2019

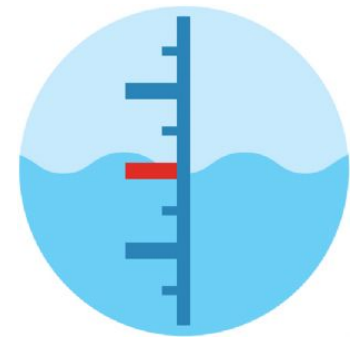


**Young
Professionals
Committee**
A MEMBER OF THE
OUTREACH COUNCIL



Today's Agenda

- Introduction to the current workforce dynamics
 - Workforce statistics
 - State of the Industry
 - Who is a Young Professional?
- Attracting Young Professionals
 - Tapping into the next generation
- Retaining Young Professionals
 - Keeping the resources you have
- Growing Young Professionals
 - Encouraging the trend
- Taking Action
- Questions



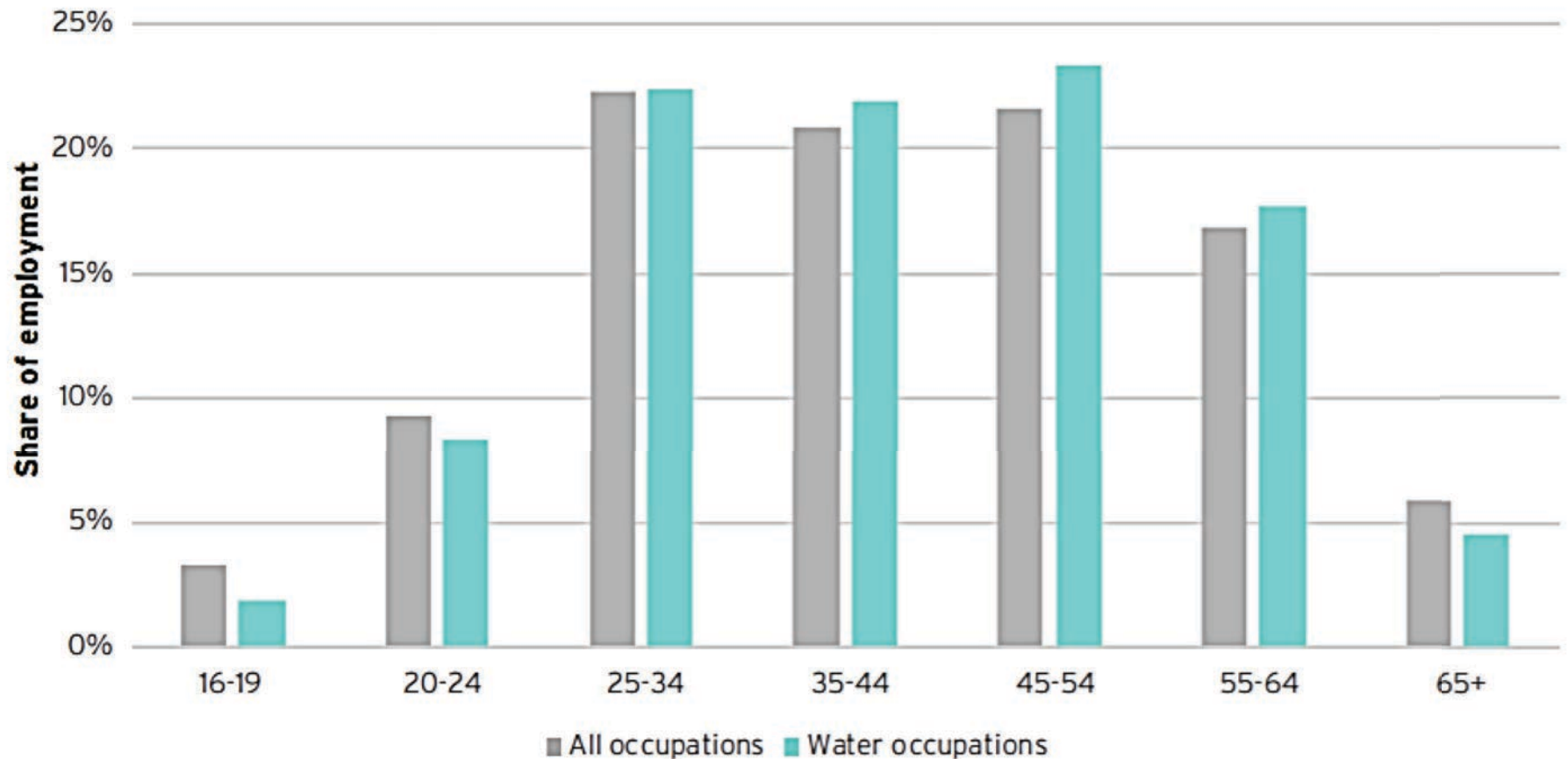


Understanding the Workforce

History Of The Workforce

- Passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972 spurred a huge influx of engineers, operators, and mechanics
 - 47 years since CWA passage, significant workforce retirement
- Between 1972 and 2012 in the United States...
 - population receiving secondary treatment increased from 75 million to 90 million (20% increase)
 - population receiving advanced treatment increased from 7.8 million to 127 million (1530% increase)
 - population receiving less-than-secondary treatment decreased from 60 million to 4.1 million (90% decrease)

Age Range of Workers in Water Occupations vs. All Occupations



Source: Brookings analysis of BLS Occupational Employment Statistics and CPS data

An Aging Workforce

Approximately one-third of drinking water and wastewater operators in the U.S. will be eligible to retire in the next 10 years according to the EPA



- Serious crisis amongst the entire industry
- Knowledge transfer and institutional knowledge
- Difficult to attract young individuals to the water and wastewater industries with other opportunities available
- Poor public understanding of the jobs available

What is a Young Professional?

WEF defines a Young Professional as...

- Under 5 years of experience in the industry
- Under the age of 35
 - Students transferring from University to a Profession
 - Operators graduating from trade school or college education to the workforce
 - Career change from a different industry
- “Young Professional” status offers financial benefits
 - Reduced registration fee at conferences
 - Opportunity to join NEWEA Young Professionals committee
 - Reduced membership costs



News Releases

[CONTACT US](#)

[SHARE](#)



News Releases from Headquarters > Water (OW)

EPA Announces Water Workforce Initiative to Help Recruit and Prepare the Next Generation of Clean Water Professionals

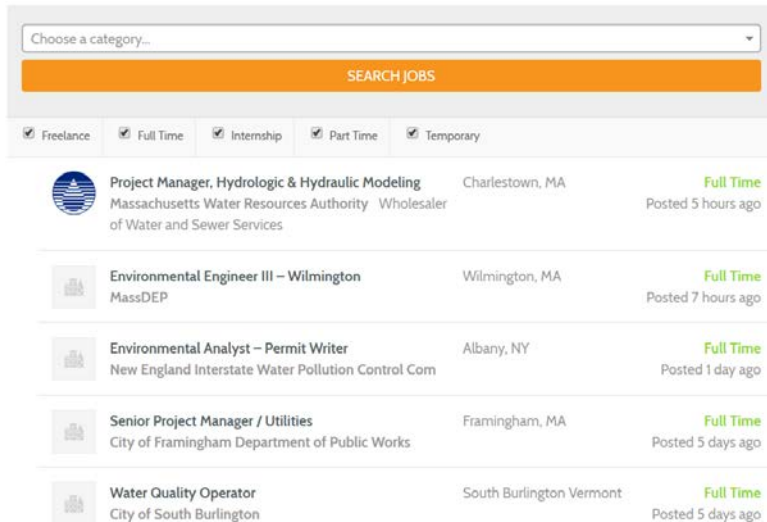
09/24/2019



Attracting Young Professionals

Job Postings of the 21st Century






- Use social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
 - Focus on the FREE
- Use your member association resources
 - NEWEA job bank
 - NEWEA Career Brochure
 - WEF Career Center
 - Easy to fill out job posting form and it's FREE



Choose a category...

SEARCH JOBS

☒ Freelance ☒ Full Time ☒ Internship ☒ Part Time ☒ Temporary

	Project Manager, Hydrologic & Hydraulic Modeling Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Wholesaler of Water and Sewer Services	Charlestown, MA	Full Time Posted 5 hours ago
	Environmental Engineer III – Wilmington MassDEP	Wilmington, MA	Full Time Posted 7 hours ago
	Environmental Analyst – Permit Writer New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Com	Albany, NY	Full Time Posted 1 day ago
	Senior Project Manager / Utilities City of Framingham Department of Public Works	Framingham, MA	Full Time Posted 5 days ago
	Water Quality Operator City of South Burlington	South Burlington Vermont	Full Time Posted 5 days ago



City of Portland, Maine posted a job.

October 31 at 3:54 PM · 🌐

Lots of new job opportunities available! We're currently looking for an Administrative Officer and Senior Accountant in the Planning & Urban Development Department; Financial Eligibility Specialists in our Social Services Division; Recreation Programmers in our Community Centers; and more!

Visit <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1107/Current-Job-Opportunities> to find out more.



- Newspapers/classifieds are no longer the norm
- Young Professionals seeking jobs are informed, have access to data
- Highlight your innovation
- Similar format for online job postings
- Highlight job security in the industry

Benefits Are Key

- Mindset of operating a business, just like operating a plant
- Need to offer competitive vacation time
 - Informal NEWEA YP Poll
 - 2 weeks paid vacation
 - 3 weeks at 5 years
 - Flexible PTO: sick + vacation = PTO
- Work hours flexibility
 - Work from home/remote where applicable
 - Extended work days in exchange for short work week
- YPs today are looking for unconventional
- Planned and Intentional Professional Development
 - Both engineering and operational staff
 - “if the budget allows”
- Support from management to “get involved”
- Career path and expectations
 - Established or flexible



Initiatives From a New England Utility

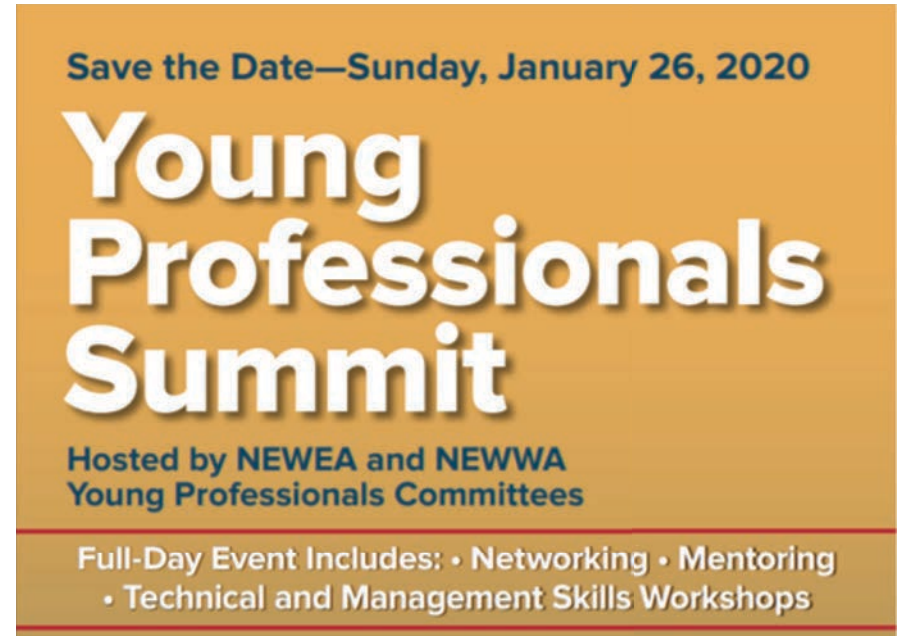
- An established co-op program with several Boston based Universities Wentworth, Northeastern, and UMass Boston
 - Allows junior level employees to have supervisor or manager roles
- Interns are a resource
 - Nearly 45 in the summer of 2019
 - No formal intern program established
- Conducted succession planning interviews
 - Hired an outside firm
- Encourage attendance at NEWEA/NEWWA conferences

Retaining Young Professionals

Support and Encourage Networking

Many opportunities for member organization networking in 2019...

- NEWEA Young Professionals Committee
- Networking Opportunities
 - Poo and Brews
 - Max \$25 attendance
 - 6 offered already in 2019
 - Planning a Poo and Brew at your facility
- Young Professionals Summit
 - Under \$100 to attend
 - Attendee donates time
- Mentoring Program
 - Established external mentoring



Maintaining a “Preferred Employer Workplace”

- Continue to develop career path documents and initiatives
- Support continued or increased involvement in Professional Organizations
- When justified, acknowledge good performance
 - NEWEA YP Award
- Engage YPs to help develop solutions for attracting more YPs to your organization
 - Let YPs provide input in organizational decisions
 - Opportunities for increasing responsibility
 - Reflect on areas for improvement within organization
 - Develop solutions or allow brainstorming
 - Transparency





Growing Young Professionals

Fostering Opportunities

- Make it easy and possible for YPs to approach management with new ideas
- Be open to changing things up
- Ask for and encourage new ideas



- Lead by example, show what the industry has done for your career
- Encourage inter – department (engineering and operations) collaborative projects or initiatives
- Share your experiences



Acknowledge Strong Performance

- Encourage pride in everyday work
- Establish clear expectations
 - As careers grow goals and expectations should too
- Showcase success stories or “lessons learned” within your organization
- Not all acknowledgements need to be monetary
 - Conference attendance
 - Direct and positive feedback
 - “Employee Spotlight”



Work Life Balance

- Understanding and emphasizing the importance of time off from work
 - Maintaining reasonable workloads
- Allowing work to be flexible when employee has been flexible for work
 - Two way street
- Show that this is a career, not just a job
 - Lead by example
- Professional Development and Industry events allow for a break in the regular day to day activities
 - Changing the pace



Significant Takeaways

- The water and wastewater industries offer well established careers with appealing job security
- Professional organizations, leaders in the industry, and regulatory agencies understand there is a need for making a more sustainable workforce



- Many opportunities and avenues for adjusting practices to focus on Attracting, Retaining, and Growing Young Professional in the industry



Building a dynamic and diverse water workforce for the 21st century is absolutely vital to continuing to deliver on our sector's mission to protect public health and the environment.

— Tom Kunetz, WEF Past President

Be a part of the solution,
develop a sustainable workforce





Thank you. Questions?

Colin O'Brien, NEWEA YP Committee Chair

Senior Staff Environmental Engineer

Brown and Caldwell | 1 Tech Drive Suite 310 Andover, MA 01810

cobrien@brwnclld.com

T 978.983.2049 | C 978.906.1382



