



# WORK FOR WATER NEW ENGLAND

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The New England Water Workforce Collaborative (Work for Water - New England) is an effort led by New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA) and New England Water Works Association (NEWWA), in collaboration with drinking water and clean water associations throughout the New England region.

The Collaborative is working to develop a Strategic Plan, which will outline the proposed establishment of a regional workforce organization with the mission of addressing the most pressing water workforce challenges for long-term workforce sustainability and reliability.

The Collaborative is currently preparing for implementation of the Strategic Plan and is asking for volunteers from any segment of the water industry, as well as individuals working for organizations with complementary goals, to volunteer on one of the five committees.

Staff members of drinking water, clean water, and stormwater utilities are encouraged and eligible to serve as the Chair of one of these committees. If you are a member of any other sector of the water industry or engaged in a sector with compatible goals (e.g., education, public health, or employment), you are invited to serve as a committee member.

Descriptions of the committees can be found below.

To sign up for a committee, visit the following link:

<https://forms.gle/4RQxr4SVud1gutGp6>

### **1. Coordinated Outreach Committee**

The Coordinated Outreach Committee will work with utilities, other components of the water industry (e.g., consultants and contract operators), and partners in other sectors with complementary interests (e.g., education and non-profit organizations) to increase the awareness of all sects of the community (including students, parents, teachers, and school counselors) of the value of water and the advantages, availability, and importance of jobs in the water industry.

## **2. Coordinated Recruitment Committee**

The Coordinated Recruitment Committee will work with other utilities, other components of the water industry (e.g., contract operators), and partners in other sectors with complementary interests (e.g., military services for veterans, non-profit organizations, and government organizations designed to support full employment) to promote awareness of jobs openings in the water industry and effectively recruit diverse and qualified individuals to fill those jobs.

## **3. Collaborative Training Committee**

The Collaborative Training Committee will work with other utilities, other components of the water industry (e.g., consultants and contract operators), and other sectors with complementary interests (e.g., educators and non-profit organizations) to ensure that diverse candidates obtain basic communication, math, and science skills, as well as the specific technical skills required to perform mission-critical skilled trades jobs in the water industry.

## **4. Effective Incentives Committee**

The Effective Incentives Committee will

- conduct research on current disincentives for employment in mission-critical jobs in the water industry (e.g., pay and benefits that are not commensurate with the level of responsibility, working conditions, and on-call expectations of the job),
- conduct research on organizational culture disincentives and other issues that discourage retention,
- conduct research on incentives that utilities in other geographical areas and New England employers in different industries have developed to support recruitment and retention, and
- present recommendations to drinking water and clean water service providers for a wide range of changes to pay, benefits, working conditions, and organizational arrangements as needed to attract and retain high-quality staff.

## **5. Effective Communication Committee**

The Effective Communication Committee will develop and use of a wide range of tools and communication channels to obtain the support required to implement and maintain effective programs for reaching, recruiting, mentoring, retaining, and rewarding high-quality staff in mission-critical jobs. This committee should include expanding the awareness of the community and elected officials of the operational risks associated with inadequate staffing of mission-critical jobs, the need for investment to address current inadequacies, and the need for ease of recruitment to be considered in the actions of legislators, utility managers, and credentialing bodies.