GRAND RAPIDS
PUBLIC UTILITIES
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Grand Rapids Public Utilities
500 SE 4th Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-326-7189
HR@grpuc.org

Job Description
Lead Water Treatment Plant Operator

Position Title: Lead Water Treatment Plant Operator

Department: Water

FLSA Status: Non-exempt

Pay Grade: 3

State Job Match: Water Treatment Plant Operator, Water Plant Supervisor

Date: November 2026

Commission Approval Date: November 10, 2026

Primary Objective of Position

Under general supervision, this position performs lead-level technical and operational work in the daily operation, monitoring, and minor maintenance of the Water Utility; monitors treatment processes and water quality, assists with troubleshooting, and supports regulatory compliance; provides technical guidance and assistance to Water Treatment Plant Operators to ensure safe, efficient, and compliant plant operations; performs related duties as required.

Essential Functions of the Position

Essential duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them if the work is similar, related, or logical to the position.

- Leads daily plant operations by providing work direction and technical guidance to Water Treatment Plant Operators.
- Performs water quality testing and sampling, interprets results to determine treatment processes, monitors treatment effectiveness and regulatory compliance.
- Operates, monitors, and adjusts treatment equipment and processes to ensure safe and effective water treatment.
- Troubleshoots operational issues and implements or recommends corrective actions.

- Assists with training and development of Water Treatment Plant Operators on operating procedures, equipment, and safety practices.
- Maintains accurate operational records and prepares required reports related to water quality, chemical usage, and plant performance.
- Ensures proper handling, storage, and use of treatment chemicals and adherence to established safety procedures.
- Assists the Water Operations Director with regulatory compliance, operational planning, and identifying process and equipment improvements.
- Additional duties as deemed necessary by supervision, which are of an equal or lessor nature, based on job qualifications.

Subject Matter Expertise

This position serves as a technical Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the Utility. The incumbent is required to maintain authoritative knowledge and provide guidance in the following areas:

- Minnesota Public Water Supplier Water Treatment Plant operations, treatment processes, equipment, chemical applications, and water quality requirements.

Examples of Performance Criteria

- Plant operations are coordinated effectively, treatment processes are maintained within established parameters, and water quality meets applicable regulatory standards.
- Operational records, water quality testing results, and required reports are accurate, complete, and maintained timely.
- Equipment and process issues are identified and addressed promptly.

Minimum Qualifications

- AAS Degree in Water Quality Science, Water Environment Technologies, Water Operations, or a BS Degree in Biology, Environmental Studies, or a closely related field; or an equivalent combination of education and experience to successfully perform the essential duties of the job.
- Minnesota Class B Water Operator certificate and three (3) years of experience working in the operation and/or maintenance of a water utility system.
- Valid Minnesota Commercial Class B Driver's License, or the ability to obtain one within 3 months of hire.
- Knowledge of water treatment processes, chemical applications, water quality, and drinking water regulations.
- Ability to operate and maintain water treatment equipment, instrumentation, and process control systems.

- Ability to perform water quality testing and sampling using established procedures.
- Ability to troubleshoot equipment and process issues and perform routine maintenance.
- Ability to provide work direction, technical guidance, and training to other employees.
- Ability to maintain and interpret operational records, water quality results, and reports.
- Strong math skills, including calculations related to chemical dosages and flow rates.
- Effective oral and written communication skills.
- Proficiency with computers and software used in plant operations and maintenance.
- Ability to work independently, exercise sound judgment, and take initiative.

Desirable Qualifications

- Understanding of the federal, state, and local regulations as they relate to the position.
- Experience with industrial equipment, generators, and maintenance practices.
- Familiarity with utility SCADA systems.
- Ability to read and interpret blueprints and technical drawings.
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Wastewater License or equivalent knowledge of the principles and practices of wastewater collection and treatment.

Supervision

- Manager: Operations Manager
- Supervision of others: May assist in providing on-site direction or training to assigned employees, apprentices, or contractors.

Working Conditions

- Work is performed both indoors and outdoors, involving exposure to noise and extreme weather.
- Regularly required to use hands to handle tools, reach with arms, and operate heavy utility equipment.
- Frequently required to stand, walk, climb, balance, stoop, and kneel. Must frequently move up to 25 pounds and occasionally move up to 100 pounds.
- Vision requirements include color vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.
- May be required to participate in an on-call rotation for after-hours emergencies.

Conditions of Employment

- Successfully pass a criminal background check and drug & alcohol screening.
- Successfully complete a Physical Demand Analysis.
- Serve and complete a six-month probationary period.
- Maintain a valid Class B Water Operator certificate.
- Maintain a valid Class B commercial driver's license.
- Comply with all organizational and departmental policies and procedures.

This position description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and the employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the utility and requirements of the job change.

Grand Rapids Public Utilities is an Equal Opportunity Employer in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.