



Process Engineer

Water/Wastewater

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What does a typical day look like in this role?

Some days tracking plant performance and optimization metrics on the computer, other days hands-on working with plant equipment or on smaller plant improvement jobs with our operations & maintenance staff



What is the typical work setting?

In the water treatment plant 2 days per week, and water reclamation facility 3 days per week. Remote work occasionally, but it's nice to be directly in the plant daily. 7a – 4p, 5 days per week. Conditions vary, but probably about 50% computer-based work and 50% plant-based work



What ongoing education or training is required or beneficial?

For a PE license, need to obtain and keep track of PDHs (professional development hours). For operator licenses, need to get CECs (continuing education credits). You can count educational hours for both!



What are the most challenging aspects of this career?

Trying to break down complex problems into smaller steps to tackle them. Plants are complicated!



What are the most rewarding aspects of this career?

Seeing plant processes work more efficiently over time – or seeing a project to completion

Education Requirements

What level of education is typically required?

Bachelor's degree in an engineering field

What specific fields of study are most relevant?

"Utility" fields of engineering – Civil, Environmental, Water Resource, Hydraulic, etc.

What are the common entry-level positions?

Typically this role would be someone early to mid-career in engineering. Likely starting out as a design engineer for either a utility or a consultant

What soft skills are important?

Written & spoken communication skills are vital – taking complex topics and breaking them down so that everyone involved can have a good understanding.

An inspiring book: Water Always Wins – Erica Gies

You can always learn something. It's important as engineers to have an open mind and seek advice from operators, mechanics, and maintenance staff who work on these things daily.