



American Water Works  
Association



# BACK TO SCHOOL

Choosing the Best Education  
Path for You



## PURSUIT OF SUCCESS

For individuals trying to enter the industry, taking college courses can be very difficult, especially if it has been years since their last class.

In the blue-collar trades, we often hear, “I was never good at school” or “I am not good at reading or math”, and because of these insecurities, self-limitations occur.

If you do not read regularly, then studying for an exam can be challenging. If you are not practicing math equations then, of course, math problems on an exam can and will be difficult. But just because you aren’t used to doing these things on a regular basis doesn’t mean that you aren’t capable of doing them.

Remind yourself that it is not about how smart you are, it is about how are you smart. Believe in yourself!

**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE ONLY  
DEFINED BY WHERE YOU FOCUS YOUR  
ENERGY AND TIME MOST.**



**EDUCATION IS  
NOT LEARNING OF  
FACTS, BUT THE  
TRAINING OF THE  
MIND TO THINK.**

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

## FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

By furthering your education in the water industry, you will not only prepare yourself for future career opportunities but increase your knowledge that can be applied in the workplace.

INDIVIDUAL COURSES	TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM	2–4 YEAR DEGREE(S)
<i>(Trade School, Community College or College)</i>	<i>(Trade School, Community College or College)</i>	<i>(Community College or College)</i>
It all starts with one course to fall in love with the industry and for those trying to level-up in their career; each class can get you closer to your goals. If you can't make it to class for a semester, there are many online and at-home course options.	These are a series of courses specific to learning a variety of theories, regulations, and industry practices. Intro to Water Technology, Advanced Water Distribution, Wastewater Treatment, etc...	There are degrees out there to compliment everyone's career goals. If your goal is to get into management, engineering or some sort of professional position, you might find that a degree will be required.
RESULT  Operator Certification Programs (OCP) in each State will have educational requirements. Successfully completing correspondence courses will meet OCP requirements as well as prepare you to pass operator exams.	RESULT  Programs develop an individual's skills and awareness to better serve them in the workplace. Most programs qualify as actual operator work experience.	RESULT  The Water Industry is filled with great career opportunities for those that take their educational goals beyond the professional certification program level. From Water Resource Management, Finance, Operations Management, Environmental Engineering, and more, the choice is yours

## SOMETHING TO KEEP IN MIND

If you are trying to “tap” into the industry with your first job, know that it will take time but remind yourself that everything of great value does not come easily.

Do not wait to reach your educational goals to apply for a position in the water business because most jobs will require some hands-on experience to go with those operator certs and water tech courses. If you can get your “foot in the door” while you are taking courses, this will streamline your learning curve.

The American Water Works Association and WaterWisePro Training have teamed up to create resources for operators looking to start or advance their careers.

We hope that these resources offer motivation and guidance for those front-line workers who are or will be making a difference in the future of water.

AWWA's Water System Operations (WSO) brand includes a variety of certification resources that fit any study style.

WaterWisePro Training offers distribution and treatment exam prep courses in various states and represents the CA-NV section.



Steve Hernandez, WaterWisePro Training



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