WATER AND WASTEWATER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

IS YOUR COMMUNITY READY FOR THE CHALLENGE?

WHAT IS THE RISK?
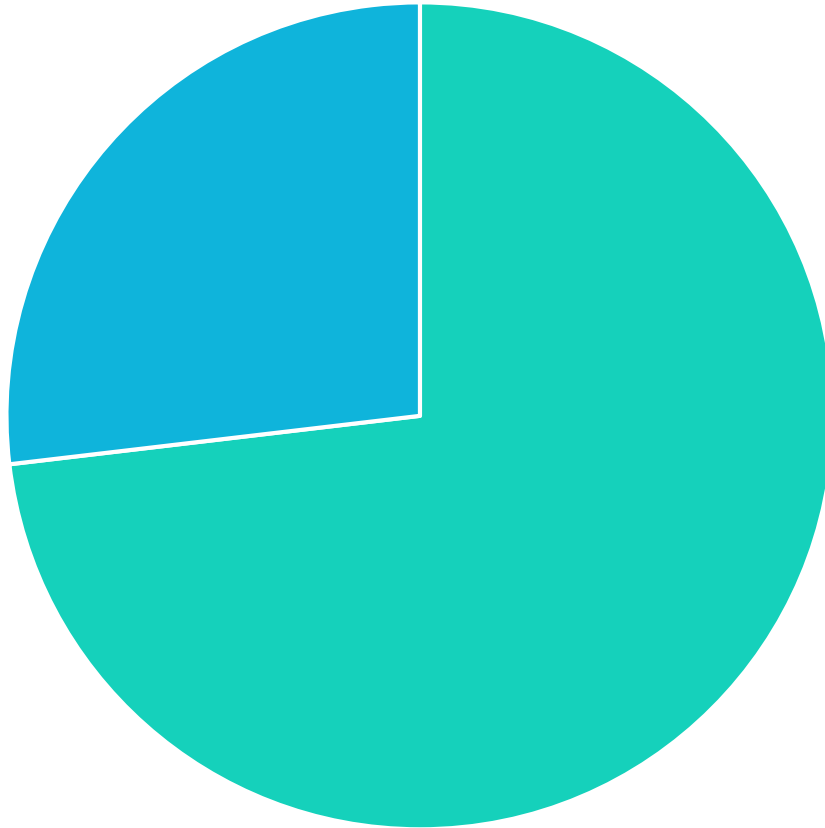
2,467

7th in the top 10

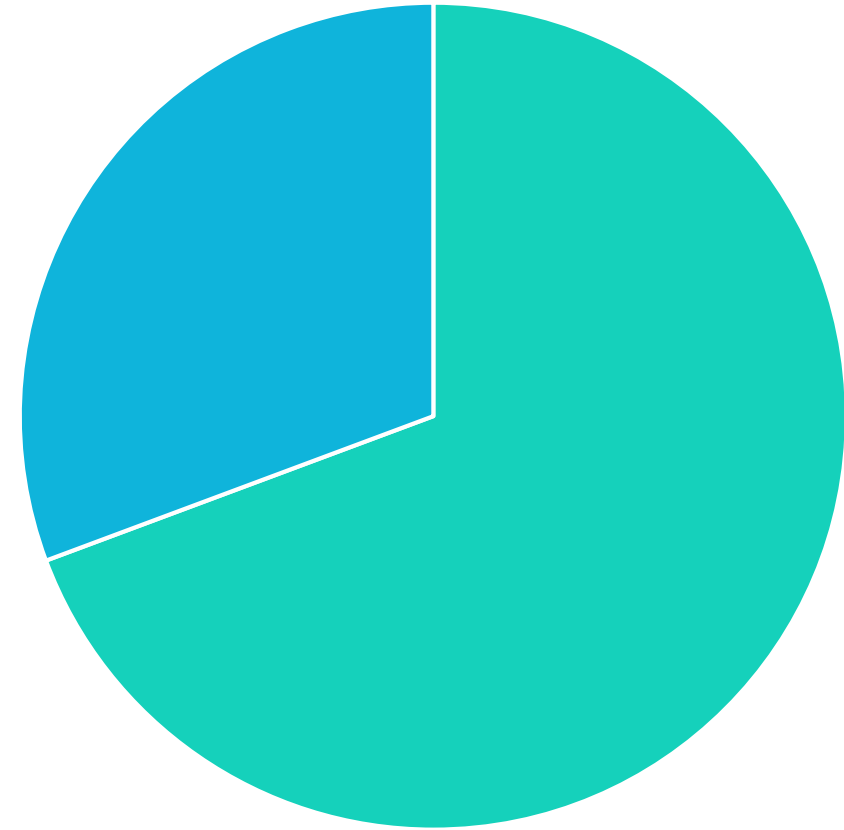50% in 5 years

WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS IN INDIANA?

Water systems

Wastewater

- Small
- Medium and large

- Total
- 1 MGD or less

Across the Country

The US employs over 1.7 million people in
the water/wastewater-related industry

Inclusive of 212 different occupations. Indiana has nearly 3,500
utility workers specifically in an operator role.

2% overall in the workforce

Water sector needs

Acknowledge varying sizes, growth and capacity

Greater public visibility

Barriers to support a more diverse water workforce

Ongoing need to retain and grow talent

Lack of proactive recruitment & succession strategies

On-the-job training in the water sector

How do we address these needs?

GOALS TO ADDRESS NEEDS

- Provide a clear pathway to operator certification.

- Develop and provide periodic review of curriculum at technical and vocational schools for a well-rounded workforce.

- Recognition of Water Industry apprenticeships and certification programs

- Fully engaging the Indiana Dept of Veterans Affairs for water workforce opportunities.

Engage with Legislators and local elected officials.

RECRUITING WHAT ARE THE PATHS?

High School College track

- Environmental Management, Civil Engineering, Water Systems Technology, and Hydrology are some of the degree paths that college path people may pursue

- These are critical in the water industry, as engineers and hydrogeologists help the water professionals manage water resources for both surface water and groundwater.

- Not every student will wish to pursue a college degree, and that is okay. It takes a holistic viewpoint and approach to make the water industry work.

High School Non-College track

- Apprenticeships are a vital pathway to building the professionals of tomorrow.

- Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeships are a key method of developing high school age people into the water industry.

- While there are more water and plumbing apprenticeships in Hancock County, there are Drinking Water and Wastewater Apprenticeship programs in the City of Greenfield.

- There is an Apprenticeship for both through the Alliance of Indiana Rural Water

PATHS CONTINUED:

Veterans

- Employment for veterans leaving the military are a huge source of viable workforce members.

- They are ideally suited to mission-oriented tasks

- Regulatory compliance is typically a source of strength

- Can work Independently or as part of a team culture.

Transitional

- This group are workers that may have been in agriculture or manufacturing that either were left behind or are seeking a better path for their future.

- This groups is typically well suited to the type of work inherent in the water world.

- They will invest in an employer if that employer invests in them.

CONCLUSION- TAKE AWAYS

GET INVOLVED!
Local leaders need the community to engage in these programs and help ensure our work force is properly funded

HOLD LOCAL LEADERS TO ACCOUNT
Our water and wastewater personnel do not have a strong enough voice in county leadership. Without the publics involvement, the shortage of qualified people to run these critical systems will worsen

TALK TO YOUR SCHOOL BOARDS
Young people have to be allowed, encouraged, and supported to explore non-college pathways to success. The trades are just as important as any college program.

ENCOURAGE POSITIVE RECOGNITION
Water, Wastewater, and Electricians are unsung heroes. they make sure you have all resources you need to have your coffee in the morning.

KNOW WHAT THE CONCERNS OF THE UTILITIES ARE
Changing regulations are making significant changes in the way public utilities have to function. Visit your local Utility, go to board meetings, read the information the utility provides. Be a civic leader for the future.

INVEST, INVEST, INVEST
Education is the key to success. Math, Science, History, Social Studies are all valuable tools to building the future operators of our county.

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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