

So How Do You Get "There" From "Here"?

Possible courses of study:

Management and Administration

- Public administration
- Finance and business
- Accounting, computer sciences, business courses, personnel administration, speech, English and humanities courses, government or political science, and social sciences

Municipal Engineering

- Civil engineering
- Mechanical and electrical engineering
- Mathematics, chemistry, surveying and business administration
- Graduate level public works administration

Environmental Engineering

- Environmental sciences
- Civil engineering
- Chemistry/Biology
- Mathematics and sciences, chemistry, economics and business administration
- Graduate studies in sanitary engineering and environmental sciences
- Urban Ecology
- Ecological Risk Assessment
- Water Resources

Transportation

- Civil engineering
- Structural engineering
- Mathematics and sciences, chemistry, economics and business administration
- Advanced studies in transportation and transportation planning

Fleets, Public Buildings and Grounds

- Mechanical and industrial engineering
- Civil engineering
- Architecture
- Forestry, biology, landscape & architecture
- Automotive mechanics
- Mathematics, biology, electronics, technical courses and apprenticeship programs
- Advanced studies in public administration, law, public works administration, finance or marketing

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Graduate Degree or Professional Certification

- City engineer
- City manager
- Financial manager
- Public works director

Bachelor's Degree

- Accountant
- Electrical engineer
- Mechanical engineer
- Land surveyor
- Civil engineer
- Environmental engineer
- Environmental health specialist
- Landscape architect
- Marketing coordinator
- Photogrammetrist (aerial mapper)
- Structural designer
- Transportation engineer
- Waste reduction/recycling coordinator

Associate's Degree

- Administrative, accounting technician
- CAD technician
- Drafting technician
- Environmental compliance inspector
- Laboratory technician
- Marketing assistant
- Personnel administrator
- Environmental specialist
- Traffic signal and lighting technician

Vocational/Technical Schools

- Automotive mechanical
- Drafting
- Computer training, operation, and maintenance
- Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning operation and maintenance
- Heavy Equipment Operation, Maintenance, and Repair
- Horticulture and plant sciences
- Office Management

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High School Diploma

- Account clerk
- Administrative assistant
- Billing coordinator
- Customer service
- Driller's assistant
- Engineering/surveying aid or technician
- Engineering technician
- Equipment operators
- Equipment service worker
- Facilities maintenance
- Highway maintenance
- Library clerk
- Mechanical maintenance technical
- Office assistant
- Photo lab technician
- Plant and equipment mechanic
- Public works inspector
- Public works maintenance worker
- Street sweeper operator
- Treatment plant operator
- Underground construction/maintenance specialist
- Water/wastewater maintenance
- Welder/mechanic
- Word processor

For Further Research

For more information, go online or contact your local public works department today to see what jobs and career opportunities are available. If you learn better by doing, you might find that some agencies can give you much needed experience through part-time or temporary positions they have open. Some agencies even offer internships that provide college credit.



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PUBLIC WORKS CAREERS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE!





"A career in public works is another way of helping our communities and families improve their quality of life...and is also a way to provide a safe and healthy environment...so that birds, fish and all other wild animals can thrive and enrich our lives. Seeking a career in public works is another way to protect our nation, and a good public works infrastructure will guarantee a healthy and happy life for our children and their children."

Julio Fuentes
Senior Traffic Engineer
City of San Diego, California



"My career in public works has been gratifying and rewarding in both a personal and professional manner. I really enjoy working in a field that reaches out and touches the lives of everyone around by making a positive difference in the quality of life of the city and surrounding area. I also enjoy the camaraderie that public works professionals across the country share."

Melissa Smith Gentry, P.E.
Public Works Director
City of Columbia, South Carolina

The Power Of Public Works!

It's all around you. Public works is all the things that go into making your life safe, convenient and comfortable. Every day people depend on the efforts of public works professionals to provide you with the facilities and services you probably take for granted. If your drinking water's clean, your streets are paved, your highways are safe, your trash gets picked up regularly or if you use your community's airports, parks, zoos and swimming pools, then you depend on public works. In some cases, even the gas to keep you warm and the electric to power your TV are owned and operated by public works.

All levels of public government—federal, state/provincial, and local—are involved in making life better for all of us. But the private sector also has a role in public works. Private engineering firms and planning consultants do much of the planning and design work, and private contractors perform most of the construction work. The private and public sectors offer countless opportunities for bright young people.

Focusing on Diversity

The modern public works operation is diversity personified. It's full of people with varying backgrounds, levels of education, and competencies, and the scope of public works is awesome. Public works people can be anything from laborers to city managers. They can be licensed or certified, have a graduate degree or a high school diploma, or even a G.E.D. With millions of people involved in the trillion dollar public works industry, a one-size-fits-all approach just doesn't work anymore!

Making A Difference!

Maintaining and improving society's infrastructure assets is a huge responsibility, and public works professionals are constantly searching for better technology and more creative ways to fulfill their responsibilities. There has never been a greater need in the public works field for bright young people who want their lives to make a difference.

Roads and bridges are aging, water in some areas is inadequately treated, our wastewater systems are overburdened, and solid waste is rising while our landfills are declining. These and many other challenges are what your generation will be facing in the future. You can be a part of the solutions that will affect your children and society for years to come.

Is public works right for you?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you feel a responsibility to improve your community's quality of life and protect the living environment at the same time?
- Do you want to do something with your life that makes a difference to others?
- Can you make tough choices and put in the hours preparing for a career in a technical or professional discipline?

Can you see yourself in public works?

If your answer is yes, there are many interesting choices and combinations to explore. Don't box yourself in with arbitrary decisions right now. Before finalizing your education plans, take the time to do the research and talk things over with career counselors and people in the public works profession.

A career in public works provides many rewarding opportunities to earn the respect of others—and build self-respect as well—while keeping communities safe and healthy places for everybody.



"Public works engineering was a career I knew very little about while in high school and in my early college years. As I learned more in my college engineering program, I began to see where my overall career goal of civil engineering service aligned with public service. This has led me to a rewarding and challenging career in local government, where I have been for the past eight years."

Dan Stack, P.E.
Senior Civil Engineer
City of Overland Park, Kansas