



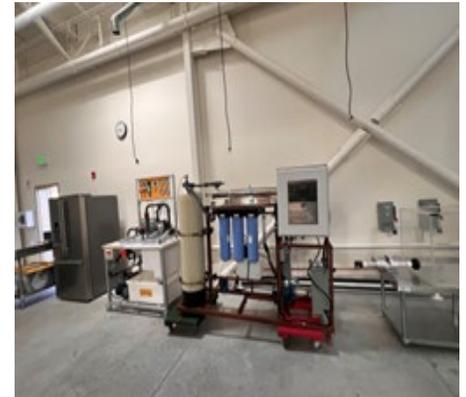
February 2026

Water Resources Technology – SRJC Petaluma

Career Education | Construction Training Center

The Water Resources Technology (WRT) program is a high-impact Career Education (CE) pathway on the Petaluma Campus, housed within the Santa Rosa Junior College Construction Training Center (CTC). The program directly supports Strong Workforce and Perkins priorities by addressing documented regional labor shortages, preparing students for high-road employment, and producing industry-recognized credentials aligned with workforce demand.

The program offers three stackable (mini) certificates, two full certificates, and one Associate of Science degree, allowing students to enter the workforce quickly while maintaining clear pathways for advancement. This stackable credential model supports Strong Workforce goals related to short-term certificate completion, job placement, and wage gains.



As an anchor program within the Construction Training Center, WRT contributes to a regional infrastructure workforce ecosystem, aligning with other CE programs focused on construction, utilities, and environmental systems. Collectively, the program advances SRJC's mission by delivering measurable credential outcomes, strong employment alignment, and equitable access to living-wage career pathways on the Petaluma Campus.

Instructional Model & CTC Integration

Instruction in the WRT program emphasizes hands-on, applied learning delivered in small class settings, allowing for individualized instruction, close faculty mentorship, and extensive use of specialized equipment housed in the Construction Training Center. Students engage directly with treatment system simulations, pumps, instrumentation, and field-based experiences that mirror real-world operational environments and industry workflows.

Over the past six semesters (three academic years), enrollment in WRT courses has shown steady recovery and growth, reflecting renewed student demand and a strengthened program. This growth has been particularly notable in Wastewater Treatment, where enrollment increases have resulted in improved instructional efficiency and sustained student persistence. In the current academic year, Wastewater Treatment course fill rates have exceeded 90%, signaling both healthy enrollment levels and effective utilization of instructional resources.

Courses are designed to prepare students for California state licensure exams and immediate entry-level employment, while also supporting incumbent workers seeking to maintain or upgrade certifications. This dual-purpose instructional model extends the program's impact beyond first-time students and aligns with Perkins V priorities related to high-quality CTE delivery, modern equipment, strong student outcomes, and efficient program productivity.

Faculty bring extensive industry experience, ensuring curriculum remains responsive to regulatory changes, emerging technologies, and evolving workforce expectations.



Employment Outcomes & Industry Alignment

The program maintains strong employer partnerships across the North Bay, resulting in direct workforce outcomes:

- More than 20 regional water and wastewater agencies have hired SRJC students into full-time positions.
- Employer demand continues to exceed the regional supply of trained operators, reinforcing the program's role in addressing critical workforce gaps identified through Strong Workforce regional planning.



Workforce & Employment Alignment

High-Demand, Living-Wage Careers

Water and wastewater occupations provide stable, living-wage employment with benefits and clear advancement pathways. Entry-level operator positions in the North Bay typically exceed regional living-wage thresholds, with opportunities for overtime, specialty certifications, and promotion into lead and supervisory roles.

Retirement Replacement & Talent Pipeline

The water and wastewater workforce is experiencing significant retirement-driven turnover, with a large share of current operators approaching retirement age. This "retirement replacement" demand has created sustained openings across public utilities and private sector facilities.

Credential Attainment & Workforce Supply

Recent awards data demonstrate consistent and meaningful credential production, particularly in core operational certificates tied to immediate employment needs:

- Across the past three academic years, the program has awarded nearly 100 certificates and degrees, with the strongest concentration in Wastewater Operator, Water Treatment, and Wastewater Treatment Operations certificates.
- Short-term certificates continue to function as effective on-ramps for entry-level employment, supporting rapid workforce placement in a sector facing widespread retirements.
- Associate of Science degree awards reinforce longer-term career mobility and supervisory pathways, aligning with Perkins outcomes related to career advancement and retention.

These outcomes reflect a balanced CE portfolio that supports both immediate labor market entry and sustained career progression—a key Strong Workforce performance indicator.

Contact Information

For additional information about the WRT program, contact Vanessa Luna, Dean of Instruction and Enrollment Management at waterresourcestechnology@santarosa.edu or visit: <https://appliedtechnology.santarosa.edu/water-resources-technology>