

Name:

Keith

Job title:

Office construction foreman, Joensuu Water



Career:

My educational background is in community development. Before becoming a technician I graduated from secondary school. Previously, I have worked a few years for Helsinki and Kontiolahti communities. When this position at Joensuu water was opened I applied and got the job.

Responsibilities:

My work is comprised of two main aspects: customer service and investment. Customer service entails solving problems for customers, conducting contracts between the client and waterworks, as well as preparing reports and statements for customers and authorities. When investing, I represent the water maintenance in projects with the city of Joensuu. Whenever the city has construction work on the streets, water maintenance will be made in the same time. I am involved in planning and implementation of these. The actual planning is done by consults, my role is to give the premises and monitoring the actual plans.

Typical day at work includes meetings in planning or at construction site. On site visits I try to make at least two or three every week. These include monitoring and inspecting the site and I have to be available in case water maintenance issues arise. On sites I am not officially manager but more in an expert role. Rest of my day I spend with customer service solving clients' problems.

Essential skills in my job:

- Team working and cooperation
- Organisational skills: planning for sustainable solutions, budget monitoring
- Problem-solving skills
- Precision

What I need to know in my job:

- Technical knowledge
- Knowledge of relevant regulations as the field is highly regulated

Joensuu Water

Joensuu Water is founded in 1927. Since 1997 it has operated as a public utility. Joensuu Water has 47 members of staff, most of them technicians. The waterworks supplies and distributes water and maintains the infrastructure and sewerage treatment. The water supply covers 757 km and sewerage 824km. The waterworks monitors its plants automatically. There are 16 groundwater intake plants in the system, two of them are back up plants. 10 treatment facilities in many communities and 12 water tanks are part of the waterworks. Inhabitants living in properties connected to the water supply and sewerage was at the end of 2013 over 60000.



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Working with professionals from various fields and with customers requires team work. Organization skills are important to prioritize. Rarely do we have foreign clients, so language skills are not too much emphasized. Technical knowledge gained through all these years at waterworks is important, as well as knowing all regulations affecting water maintenance since this is a highly regulated field.

Personally, I find this industry very interesting and have enjoyed my job always. The varying features of the work and working with people makes it interesting. Challenges are budget related: keeping the planning in budget with such a little resources certainly requires concentration. Far-reaching planning should be emphasized more the get more sustainable solutions in water maintenance. Creating a continuum should be aspired. One major challenge is the ageing of water maintenance infrastructure.

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