

Santa Clara Valley Water District San José, CA

Assistant Operating Officer — Water Supply Division



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The Santa Clara Valley Water District

The mission of the Santa Clara Valley Water District is to provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (District) is the largest multi-purpose water district in California. Headquartered in San Jose, California, in the heart of Silicon Valley, the District serves nearly two million people in Santa Clara County and encompasses the County's 1,300 square miles. The District provides a reliable and safe supply of water; enhances streams and watersheds through creek restoration and habitat protection; provides flood protection for homes, schools and businesses; and partners with other agencies to provide trails, parks and open space for community wellness and recreation.

The District secures and delivers a reliable, safe supply of water year-round via a complex network of storage, distribution and treatment facilities. Providing a reliable, high quality water supply requires the continual efforts of technically trained staff; local and regional coordination; maintenance of existing water supplies and infrastructure, and financial investments to secure additional supplies and equipment for the future. Most of the operations are continuous activities driven by water availability, water demand requirements, regulatory mandates, and maintenance needs.

With an overall current FY2014 budget of approximately \$470 million and a staff of 730 employees, the District manages 10 dams and surface water reservoirs, four water treatment plants, a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, nearly 400 acres of groundwater recharge ponds and more than 275 miles of streams. The District also provides wholesale water and groundwater management services to the local municipalities and private water retailers who deliver drinking water directly to homes and businesses throughout Santa Clara County.

The District is governed by a seven member Board of Directors. The Board of Directors appoints the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who serves as the day-to-day executive manager of the District and is responsible for all finances, operations, and selection of staff. The current CEO is Beau Goldie. Key management staff reporting to the CEO include: the Chief Operating Officer-Water Utility Enterprise, Chief Operating Officer-Watersheds, Chief Administrative Officer, and Director of Ethics and Corporate Governance.

Water Utility Enterprise

The Water Utility Enterprise has an assigned staff of 300 and an overall budget of about \$259M. It is comprised of four Divisions: Water Utility Capital, Water Utility Operations & Maintenance, Water Utility Technical Support, and Water Supply Division.

The Water Supply Division is responsible for managing the water supply and conservation programs of the District. It has an annual budget of approximately \$77 million and staff of about 65 assigned to specific units/programs, covering Recycled Water, Imported Water, Water Conservation, Water Supply Operations Planning and Analysis, Groundwater Monitoring and Analysis, and Wells and Water Measurement. Additional information about the responsibilities and areas of focus of the Water Supply Division is provided below.

Local Surface Water and Groundwater

The District's complex network of reservoirs, creeks and specialized ponds replenishes the groundwater basin using local and imported water sources. The District's "managed" recharge augments natural recharge to help maintain the basin for beneficial use, and prevent over-pumping and land surface subsidence. Water pumped from the groundwater basin through wells is used by water retailers, private well owners, and farmers. Both imported water and water captured in local reservoirs is treated at state-of the art drinking water treatment plants and delivered to local water retailers.

Imported Water

Much of the county's water supply comes from the Sierra Nevada range of northern and eastern California conserved in State and federal reservoirs, and then released to rivers that flow toward the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. This "imported water" is pumped from the southern Delta and delivered into the county through the State Water Project, and the federal Central Valley Project. The District's drinking water treatment plants deliver imported water to customers; imported water is also used to replenish groundwater basins. San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system is also a significant source of imported water for the county, delivered directly to six cities in the northern part of the county.

Recycled Water

An important and growing source of water is recycled water. Used primarily for non-potable uses by industry and agriculture, recycled water is wastewater that has been purified to meet strict standards set by the California Department of Health Services. Using recycled water helps conserve drinking water supplies, provides a dependable, drought-proof, locally-controlled water supply, reduces dependency on imported water and groundwater and helps preserve south San Francisco Bay saltwater and tidal habitat by reducing freshwater discharge to the bay. The District's new Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center is nearing completion. This state of the art facility will take treated wastewater and purify it for use in the City of San Jose's South Bay Water Recycling System.

Details on the District are available upon request and also at the District's website at <http://www.valleywater.org>. Links on the website include: the FY 2014-2018 Water Utility Enterprise Operations Plan, Water Supply Infrastructure Master Plan, Annual Water Rate Report, Ground Water Management Plan, and FY 2014 Budget.



The Assistant Operating Officer – Water Supply

Reporting to the Deputy Operating Officer for Water Supply, the Assistant Operating Officer will play a key role in the daily management and oversight of the Water Supply Division, including working closely with the various program and unit managers in the Division as well as with other key District management and staff and external stakeholders.

Typical duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Operating Officer include:

- Directing and participating in long and short term strategic projects and/or programs that warrant executive-level authority, accountability and decision making;
- Providing leadership in the development and implementation of division strategies, business plans, budgets, programs, ordinances, policies, procedures, decisions and other actions; prepares and recommends long-range plans for division services and programs;
- Planning, directing, organizing, authorizing and coordinating the work and resources of assigned functional units; evaluating performance of unit staff, subordinate managers and their units;
- Representing the District before external organizations, including other governmental and regulatory agencies, private entities, professional and community organizations, citizen boards and commissions, and the general public;
- Organizing and leading negotiation of key operational contracts, cost-sharing and partnership agreements, permits, State and federal administrative policies, legislation and other agreements that advance the District's interests;
- Managing and directing the preparation of a wide variety of periodic and special studies, projects and reports; collecting and researching information to identify and resolve operational and administrative problems and issues;

Specific program, project, budget and staff supervision responsibilities of the Assistant Operating Officer will vary depending on the background and expertise of the individual selected and may change and/or increase over time.

Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

Key Water Utility issues, opportunities, and challenges that the Assistant Operating Officer in the Water Supply Division will be helping to resolve include:

- Implementing the District's Water Supply and Infrastructure Master Plan water supply strategy. This strategy includes securing and optimizing existing supplies and facilities and expanding water conservation and water recycling.
- Strengthening communication and relationships with key suppliers, partners and customers, including state, federal and local agencies, other water districts, retail water agencies and neighborhood and community based organizations and the public.
- Supporting effective engagement in state-wide and regional water issues, including those related to the California State Water Project, federal Central Valley Project and Bay Delta Conservation Plan, as well as environmental, recycled water and other policy and operational issues.
- Supporting succession planning and staff development for the District and specifically the Water Utility Enterprise.
- Promoting the District's model of inclusive, collaborative management and its commitment to maintaining an ethnically diverse, family friendly working environment that is committed to public service.

The Ideal Candidate

Education and Experience

Any combination of experience and education that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying, such as:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree including major course work in business administration, public administration, civil engineering or related field or a field specifically related to the areas of responsibility. Directly related experience may be substituted for the college requirement on the basis of one and one-half years of experience for one year of education. A Masters degree or other advanced degree is highly desirable.
- Five years of increasingly responsible administrative, managerial or professional experience in a field related to areas of responsibility mentioned above. Experience in the public sector, water or related industry is preferred (especially within the past 10 years or less) as well as management and supervisory authority.
- The successful candidate must also have or be able to obtain a valid California Drivers License.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate must have strong management leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills. The ideal person should demonstrate significant expertise in:

- General administrative principles and practices including goal setting, objectives and procedures development and implementation, performance measurement and management; continuous quality improvement; program and budget development and implementation; and contract administration and evaluation.
- Principles and practices of effective leadership, staff selection, management, training, supervision and performance measurement and improvement.
- Innovating and developing good approaches and solutions in the functional units assigned and applicable laws, regulations, legal mandates, guidelines and standards, and funding sources affecting the administration of designated functional areas.
- Public relations, and have excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Building and maintaining productive, cordial relationships with local and regional supply and distribution partners, cities, counties, community groups, local agencies and the public, and an understanding of social, political and environmental issues influencing assigned functional areas.
- Working with and providing timely and relevant information and clear recommendations to direct and indirect management and executives to whom they report.

Management Style and Personal Traits

The ideal candidate should be facilitative rather than confrontational in nature, able to work well with peers and supervisors, and provide effective, energetic leadership and motivation to others.

She/he should be able to analyze complex technical and administrative problems, evaluate alternative solutions, and adopt effective courses of action while paying attention to both immediate needs and the bigger picture. Although high level planning experience is good, he/she should also have strong hands-on operations experience in one or more of the program areas similar to those outlined earlier.

This person should be able to work with difficult and sensitive employee, organizational, and community issues, and have a commitment to very high ethical standards and quality public services.

He/she should be someone who is an active listener, supportive team builder; communicates effectively in a variety of situations; and is able to resolve conflict and negotiate effectively with others.

This person should also be a leader who embraces challenge, is accountable, thinks collaboratively and is comfortable working in a complex public service organization and political environment.

Finally, the selected individual must be a creative leader and strategic thinker who is good at developing consensus, willing to think entrepreneurially, take an occasional calculated risk, is politically astute, and is able to establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with staff, a variety of representatives of public and private organizations, members of boards and commissions, local, state, and federal legislative representatives, and the public.

Compensation

The salary for this position is open within a range of approximately \$120,744 to \$172,037 per year and will be competitive and commensurate with experience. The District also offers an excellent benefits package including paid vacation, holidays, sick, personal and executive leave, medical, dental, disability and life insurance, a deferred compensation plan, and a PERS retirement plan. Details are available upon request.

How to Apply

This executive search will continue until a successful candidate is hired. It is, however, the intention of the Chief Operating Officer - Water Utility Enterprise to start screening leading candidates by mid October, 2013 and to hold initial interviews with the most qualified candidates as early as possible. If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please submit a detailed resume and salary history with a letter of interest and contact information as soon as possible to:

Robert Neher, President or
Rahn Sibley, Vice President

Neher & Associates
3790 Millerton Place, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Telephone: (916) 443-2421
Facsimile: (916) 443-5949

Applications are preferred electronically at:
robertneher@executivesearchneher.com

Should you have any questions with regard to your own interest, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact us at the numbers above.

Resumes received will be reviewed in accordance with the criteria outlined in this brochure and candidates with the most relevant qualifications and experience will be contacted for additional discussion and screening.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

