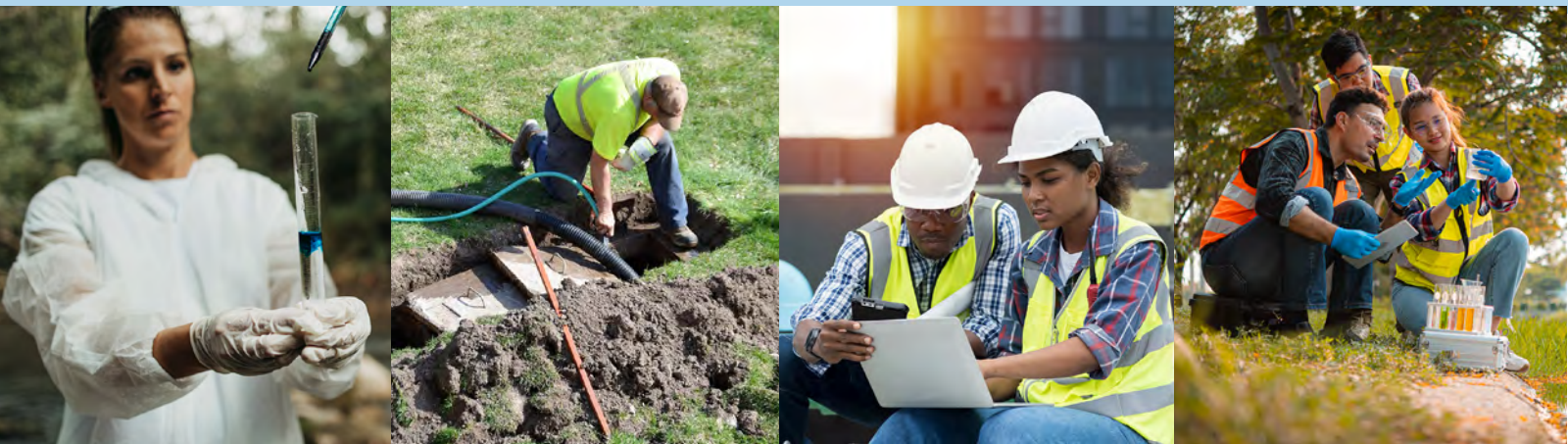


# Careers in the Decentralized Wastewater Industry



## WHAT COULD A CAREER IN THE DECENTRALIZED INDUSTRY LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

More than one in five households in the U.S. depend on individual septic (decentralized) systems or small community cluster systems to treat their wastewater. Jobs in the decentralized industry provide **competitive wages**, **reliable employment**, and a way to truly **make a difference** by protecting public health and the environment. The sector faces a labor shortage, creating ample opportunity for the next generation of workers.

## Career Pathways

### SKILLED TRADES (Private Sector)

A wide array of jobs focusing on the manufacturing, installation, and maintenance of decentralized wastewater systems. Occupations are often "customer facing," as they involve assisting homeowners, business owners, and developers with installing/replacing systems.

### PROFESSIONAL (Private Sector)

Typically university-educated individuals who have a bachelor's or graduate degree in environmental science, chemistry, or biology. Positions include engineers who design decentralized systems and experts on soil and groundwater.

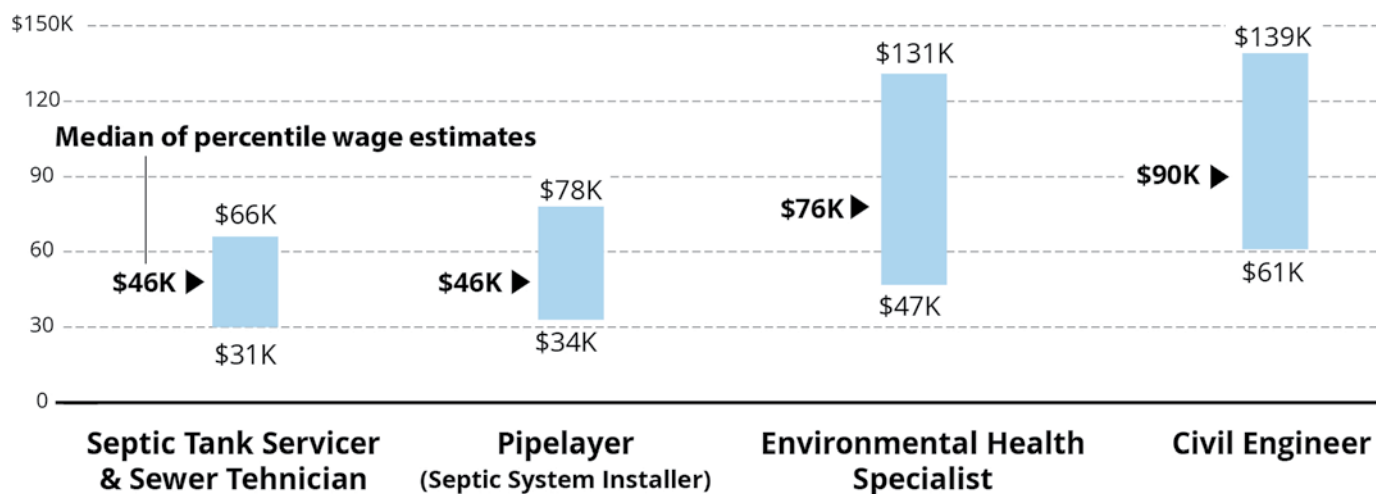
### REGULATORY (Public Sector)

Professionals who participate in public health and safety, including wastewater and sanitation oversight. Many of these positions reside in county and city health and environmental departments.

### ACADEMIC (Public/Private Sector)

A combination of jobs in academia and research in topics and technologies that support the decentralized industry. This important research and teaching exposes more students to the decentralized field.

## Annual Salary Ranges



Salary data sourced from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Career Benefits



### Work Outside

- Work in unique settings which vary from day to day
- Research shows those who regularly work outdoors report greater satisfaction and less anxiety than those who do not



### Be Your Own Boss

- Set your own work schedule
- Open-ended career progression
- Higher motivation and morale
- Possibility of an earlier retirement



### Flexible Hours

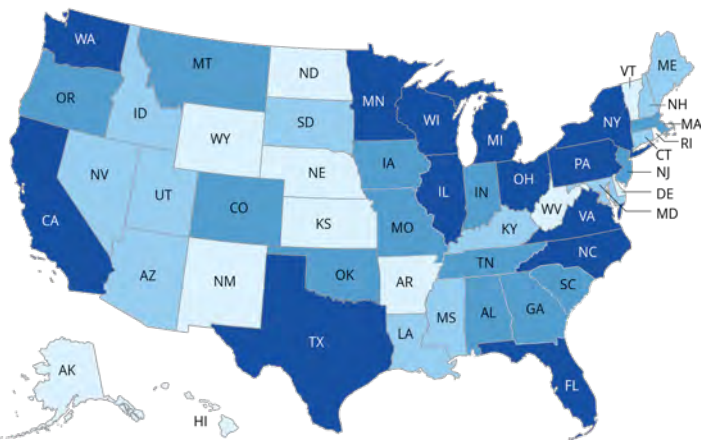
- Improved work-life balance
- Reduced travel costs
- Increased productivity and job satisfaction
- Reduced stress

## Decentralized Jobs Are Available Nationwide

With an increase in the number of systems installed annually and an aging decentralized workforce that is expected to retire in high numbers over the next several years, the need to recruit and train an adequate workforce is more critical now than ever.

Employment of Septic Tank Servicers by State

30-140 150-290 360-700 720-2,650



Map sourced from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



## Words From Professionals!

*"If you're looking for a rewarding career and think clean water is important, consider working in the decentralized onsite wastewater industry. You can help protect public health and the environment."*

— **Dave Cotton**,  
Environmental Engineer

*"Water and wastewater treatment is one of those professions where you can quickly rise from a low-level position to an expert in the field as it is highly specialized and will always be needed."*

— **Jared Willey**,  
Wastewater Operator

*"Having a job you both enjoy and know is making the world better? It's a great place to be!"*

— **Dr. Sara Heger**,  
Researcher and  
Instructor in Onsite  
Sewage Treatment



**For more information, scan here or visit [epa.gov/septic](http://epa.gov/septic).**

