

Industrial Process Operator Program*

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Career Cluster

AAS Degree

SAN JUAN COLLEGE

NATURE OF WORK

The process operator is the employee who uses process safety information, safe work practices, and operating procedures to operate and maintain process plant equipment in order to produce a quality product or service. Process operators monitor and control processes, troubleshoot and problem solve, perform with a focus on safety, health, environmental and production.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Working conditions could mean working inside a control room or as an outside operator, or a combination of both. You are usually stationed at a plant or facility during your work hours, and the type of work is dependent on the company and type of product or service they provide. You may be working around steam, water, chemicals, electricity, oil, gas, coal, heat, cold, elevations, during the daytime, evenings, or nights. Premium pay is given to those willing to work in these conditions, in addition to overtime, the pay is excellent for those willing to work these types of schedules.

TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

Industrial companies want employees with excellent technical knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the job. Interpersonal skills and good physical capabilities is very important as well. Today's employers seek out AAS Degreed students from Process Technology programs, which incorporates Math and Science, English, and Computer Applications in addition to the Core Curriculum of Process Technology. A process operator is said to be qualified (declared competent to perform the job) when the operator can demonstrate the ability to perform a job to a predetermined level of competence in accordance with operating procedures. The IPOP program is standardized and a industry sanctioned curriculum.

SJC Basic Program Information

The Industrial Process Operator Program has equipment worth over \$1.3 million for the student to obtain hands-on training with the following equipment: Boiler Turbine Generator, Cooling Tower, Distillation, Water Purification, Fixed Bed Reactor, Liquid Separation, pH-Waste Neutralization, Process Control, Distributed Control Systems using Bailey Infi 90 and Wonderware, Water Analysis Lab, Simulations, and maintenance activities.

CAREER OPTIONS

Power Plant Operator, Environmental Process Operator, Gas Plant Operator, Refinery Operator, Operations Technician, Operations Maintenance Technician, Field Technician

ESTIMATED SALARY RANGE

4 Corners Area starting pay — \$32,000 - \$50,000

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Optimizer, Production Technician, Manufacturing Technician, Water Treatment Analyst

JOB OUTLOOK

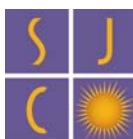
Employment opportunities have continued to increase with an abnormally high number of current operators retiring in the next seven to ten years in the various process sectors, including power generations, oil and gas productions, petroleum refining, pharmaceutical and chemical manufacturing and many more industries. Compounding this scenario is the current growth and construction of new process and production facilities, this will continue for the next twenty years.

POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

Arizona Public Service Company, BHP, BIA, BP, Intel, Public Service Company of New Mexico, Red Cedar Gathering, Salt River Project, Teppco, Tri-State Generation & Transmission, Williams, and many more in the 4 corners region and throughout the United States.



Reviewed as of February 11, 2010



*This information is provided by the Coordinator of the Industrial Process Operator Program at San Juan College.