

Item 14 -Employee Pay Scale Analysis at BCPUD and
Recommendation for Pay Increase for Shift Operators

August 20, 2025: BCPUD Meeting of Board of Directors
Presented by G. Woods

Current Pay Rate for BCPUD Employee

POSITION TITLE	hourly		annual (2080hrs)	
GM	\$ 65.54		\$ 136,323.20	
Assistant GM	\$ 47.97		\$ 99,777.60	
Admin Assistant	\$ 36.23		\$ 75,358.40	
Chief Operator	\$ 50.40	or \$ 55.67	\$ 104,832.00	or \$115,793.60
Shift Operator #1	\$ 28.09		\$ 58,427.20	
Shift Operator #2	\$ 27.87		\$ 57,969.60	

- **BOLD TEXT INDICATES SALARIED OR HOURLY EMPLOYEE. HOURLY EMPLOYEES ARE “NON-EXEMPT”**

Stinson Water vs. BCPUD

BCPUD			STINSON vs BCPUD		STINSON WATER		
	25/26					25/26	
Position Title	HOURLY	ANNUAL (2080 hrs)			Position Title	HOURLY	ANNUAL (2080 hrs)
OPERATORS			% Increase	% Difference	OPERATORS		
Operator In Training	\$24.00	\$49,920.00	-76%	55%	Utility Worker	\$42.27	\$87,921.60
Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$27.87	\$57,969.60	-84%	59%	Utility Operator I	\$51.29	\$106,683.20
Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$28.09	\$58,427.20	-97%	65%	Utility Operator I	\$55.31	\$115,044.80
					Utility Operator II	\$69.71	\$144,996.80
SUPERVISORY OPERATORS			% Increase	% Difference	SUPERVISORY OPERATORS		
Chief Operator w/out WW2	\$50.40	\$104,832.00	-46%	38%	Water Supervisor	\$73.82	\$153,545.60
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60	-58%	45%	Wastewater Supervisor	\$87.84	\$182,707.20
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60	-45%		Avg. of Water and WW	\$80.83	
ADMIN			% Increase	% Difference	ADMIN		
Adim Assistant	\$36.23	\$75,358.40	-33%	28%	Office Administrator	\$48.06	\$99,960.00
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60			Account Specialist	\$62.03	\$129,015.00
AGM	\$47.97	\$99,777.60	-83%	59%	Assistant GM	\$87.64	\$182,285.00
GM	\$65.54	\$136,323.20	-101%	67%	GM	\$131.49	\$273,491.00
Plus 100% of Benefits					Plus 100% of Benefits		

Inverness PUD vs. BCPUD

BCPUD			INVERNESS vs BCPUD		INVERNESS PUD		
	25/26					25/26	
Position Title	HOURLY	ANNUAL (2080 hrs)			Position Title	HOURLY	ANNUAL (2080 hrs)
OPERATORS			% Increase	% Difference	OPERATORS		
Operator In Training	\$24.00	\$49,920.00	-72%	53%	Water Operator Trainee	\$41.34	\$85,987.20
Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$27.87	\$57,969.60	-52%	41%	Water Operator 1	\$42.36	\$88,108.80
Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$28.09	\$58,427.20	-53%	42%	Water Operator 2	\$43.00	\$89,440.00
SUPERVISORY OPERATORS			% Increase	% Difference	SUPERVISORY OPERATORS		
Chief Operator w/out WW2	\$50.40	\$104,832.00	-6%	6%	Water Operator 3	\$53.27	\$110,801.60
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60	4%	-4%	Water Operator 3	\$53.27	\$110,801.60
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60					
ADMIN			% Increase	% Difference	ADMIN		
Adim Assistant	\$36.23	\$75,358.40	--				
Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	\$115,793.60	-12%	12%	Water Superintendent (with Water Certs)	\$62.50	\$130,000.00
AGM	\$47.97	\$99,777.60	-30%	26%	Water Superintendent (with Water Certs)	\$62.50	\$130,000.00
GM	\$65.54	\$136,323.20	-2%	2%	GM	\$66.59	\$138,507.20
Plus 100% of Benefits					Plus 85% of Benefits @ \$41.34/hr	\$3.24	
					Estimate of value of 15% of Benefits (\$40 Range)	\$2 - \$3.50/ hr	
					Family	\$3.51	
					Spouse	\$2.82	
					Single	\$1.96	
					Average	\$2.75	
					Adjusted to 100% Benefits	\$38.59	

Comparison of Pay Scales Across The 3 District

BOLD INDICATES HOURLY EMPLOYEE STATUS

Average % Increase Discrepancy	INVERNESS PUD		INVERNESS vs BCPUD	BCPUD		STINSON vs BCPUD	STINSON WATER	
		25/26			25/26			25/26
	Position Title	HOURLY		Position Title	HOURLY		Position Title	HOURLY
	OPERATORS		% Increase	OPERATORS			OPERATORS	
-74%	Water Operator Trainee	\$41.34	-72%	Operator In Training	\$24.00	-76%	Utility Worker	\$42.27
-68%	Water Operator 1	\$42.36	-52%	Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$27.87	-84%	Utility Operator I	\$51.29
-75%	Water Operator 2	\$43.00	-53%	Shift Operator with T1 & D1	\$28.09	-97%	Utility Operator I	\$55.31
					\$35.00		Utility Operator II	\$69.71
	SUPERVISORY OPERATORS		% Increase	SUPERVISORY OPERATORS			SUPERVISORY OPERATORS	
-26%	Water Operator 3	\$53.27	-6%	Chief Operator w/out WW2	\$50.40	-46%	Water Supervisor	\$73.82
-27%	Water Operator 3	\$53.27	4%	Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	-58%	Wastewater Supervisor	\$87.84
				Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67	-45%	Avg. of Water and WW	\$80.83
	ADMIN		% Increase	ADMIN			ADMIN	
			--	Adim Assistant	\$36.23	-33%	Office Administrator	\$48.06
-12%	Water Superintendent (with Water Certs)	\$62.50	-12%	Chief Operator with WWT2	\$55.67		Account Specialist	\$62.03
-56%	Water Superintendent (with Water Certs)	\$62.50	-30%	AGM	\$47.97	-83%	Assistant GM	\$87.64
-51%	GM	\$66.59	-2%	GM	\$65.54	-101%	GM	\$131.49
	Plus 85% of Benefits @ \$41.34/hr	\$3.24		Plus 100% of Benefits			Plus 100% of Benefits	
	Adjusted to 100% Benefits	\$38.59		Plus 100% of Benefits			Plus 100% of Benefits	

Average Entry Level Pay for Water Treatment Operators in the Bay Area

In the **San Francisco Bay Area**, the **typical starting salary for an entry-level Water Treatment Operator** (1–3 years of experience) is approximately **\$61,113 per year**, or about **\$29.38 per hour**.

Salary Snapshot

[Water Treatment Operator Salary in San Francisco, California, United States \(2025\) - SalaryExpert](#)

Experience Level	Annual Salary	Hourly Rate
Entry-Level (1–3 yrs)	~\$61,113	~\$29.38
Mid-Level (4–7 yrs)	~\$83,901	~\$40.34
Senior (8+ yrs)	~\$102,852	~\$49.45

These figures reflect compensation in high-cost areas like **San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Fremont**, where demand and cost of living drive wages above state averages. Entry-level operators may earn slightly less in smaller Bay Area communities like Bolinas or Mendocino, but union contracts, certifications, and shift differentials can boost pay.

Average Pay for Chief Plant Operator in the Bay Area

In the Bay Area, the **average salary for a Chief Water Plant Operator** is approximately **\$114,365 per year**, or about **\$54.98 per hour**. This figure reflects compensation in higher-paying jurisdictions like Imperial, CA, but salaries can vary significantly depending on:

System size and complexity (e.g., surface water vs. groundwater)

Certification level required (T3/T4 vs. T5)

Union agreements and public agency budgets

Cost of living adjustments in counties like Marin, San Francisco, or Alameda

For comparison:

In **San Francisco**, a standard Water Plant Operator (not Chief) earns around **\$75,925 annually**, with top earners reaching **\$94,829**.

[Chief Water Plant Operator Salary in California](#)

[Water Plant Operator Salary in San Francisco, California | Salary.com](#)

Prompt to AI: *Generate a pay scale for the 5 job titles using rural utility districts in coastal zone of California. Use at least 5 utility agencies as source data.*

	number of customers				
Inverness Public Utility District (IPUD)	500				
Stinson Beach County Water District (SBCWD)	700				
Cambria Community Services District (CCSD)	6000				
Mendocino City Community Services District (MCCSD)	600 water; 500 wastewater				
North Gualala Water Company (NGWC)	1100				
Proposed BCPUD Pay Scale (FY 2025–2026)					
<i>(Based on rural coastal California utility benchmarks)</i>					
Position	Monthly Salary Range	Annual Salary Range	BCPUD ANNUAL WAGE FY 25/26	<input type="checkbox"/> Check Box 1	% Increase From LOW Range
General Manager	\$15,500 – \$18,500	\$186,000 – \$222,000	\$136,323.20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check Box 1	-36%
Chief Operator	\$8,800 – \$10,500	\$105,600 – \$126,000	\$115,793.60		9%
Assistant GM	\$10,500 – \$13,000	\$126,000 – \$156,000	\$99,777.60	<input type="checkbox"/> Check Box 1	-26%
Admin Assistant	\$4,500 – \$5,800	\$54,000 – \$69,600	\$75,358.40	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check Box 1	28%
Shift Operator	\$6,200 – \$7,800	\$74,400 – \$93,600	\$57,969.60	<input type="checkbox"/> Check Box 1	-28%
🔑 Key Considerations					
These ranges reflect Step 1 to Step 5 salary progressions.					
Salaries are adjusted for cost of living and labor market competitiveness in rural coastal areas.					
General Manager salaries are slightly lower than urban districts but include broader responsibilities.					
Operators are assumed to hold at least Grade II or III certifications .					
Benefits (health, retirement, housing stipends) are not included but are typically offered.					

Starting Pay for Shift Operator is not Competitive at BCPUD

- BCPUD hired a Shift Operator in 2017 and in 2021 at a starting pay rate of \$22.15/hr.
- We hired a Shift Operator in 2024 at \$24.00/hr.
- Even with Associated Training Pay Increases, that take years to acquire, the top level is below \$30.00/hr.
- Shift Operators, as with all employees generally receive annual pay increases negotiated during the Staff/District MOU process to ensure that pay keeps pace with inflation

Operator in Training	\$24.00
T1	\$0.96
T1	\$24.96
T2	\$1.00
T2	\$25.96
T3	\$1.04
T3	\$27.00
W1	\$1.08
W1	\$28.08
W2	\$1.12
W2	\$29.20

Starting-Pay for Shift Operators hired in 2017 has not kept pace with Inflation

Google Gemini:

In the Bay Area, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has increased significantly since 2017, with a total inflation of 27.93% based on the [Chained CPI measurement](#). A \$22.15 per hour wage in 2017 would need to be increased to approximately \$28.33 per hour to maintain the same purchasing power today.

Microsoft Co-Pilot:

1. CPI data

2017 Bay Area CPI (annual average): 275.4

2025 Bay Area CPI (estimated annual average): 355.5

(Based on latest monthly data from June 2025)

2. CPI adjustment formula

Adjusted Wage = Original Wage × Inflation Factor

Where:

Original Wage is the hourly rate you're starting with (e.g., \$22.15 in 2017)

Inflation Factor is how much prices have increased between two years, calculated by:

“Inflation Factor” = “CPI in Target Year” / “CPI in Base Year”

So, in your example:

Base Year CPI (2017) = 275.4

Target Year CPI (2025) = 355.5

Inflation Factor = $355.5 \div 275.4 \approx 1.29$

Adjusted Wage = $\$22.15 \times 1.29 \approx \28.57

Result:

A **\$22.15/hour wage in 2017** is roughly equivalent to **\$28.57/hour in 2025** in terms of purchasing power in the Bay Area.

BCPUD's Current Starting Pay for Shift Operator is not likely providing a "living wage"

Consider that monthly take-home pay for a new hire (@\$24/hr), without any contribution to a 401K, but with mandatory contributions to CalPers etc. is \$3,130/mo. Also, consider some data on rents in Bolinas and the rest of West Marin.

 Town	 Average Rent	 Notes
Bolinas	\$3,300–\$5,500	Highly seasonal; summer spikes common
Stinson Beach	\$6,600–\$15,500	Dramatic seasonal variation; premium short-term rentals dominate
Inverness	~\$5,000	Limited inventory; prices vary by proximity to Tomales Bay
Woodacre	~\$2,700	Stable year-round; fewer vacation rentals
Point Reyes Station	~\$3,500	Modest inventory; prices up sharply from 2023

BCPUD's Current Starting Pay for Shift Operator is not likely providing a "living wage"

As of 2025, the **living wage in Marin County** varies significantly based on household size and composition. According to the MIT Living Wage Calculator:

These figures reflect the **minimum hourly rate needed to meet basic needs**—including housing, food, healthcare, transportation, and taxes—assuming full-time work (2,080 hours/year).

For comparison, Marin County's **minimum wage** is \$16.50/hour, and the **poverty wage** for a single adult is just \$7.52/hour. If you'd like a breakdown of typical expenses or want to model this for a specific household type, I can help with that too.

Household Type	Living Wage (Hourly)
1 Adult, No Children	\$32.72
1 Adult, 1 Child	\$64.67
2 Adults (1 Working), 2 Children	\$60.40
2 Adults (Both Working), No Children	\$22.90
2 Adults (Both Working), 2 Children	\$45.60

General Manager Recommendation:

- I recommend that the Board Approve the following:
 - Shift Operators be paid \$35/hr. starting immediately.
 - Shift Operators still be eligible to receive pay raises associated with obtaining certifications as set forth in approved MOU for FY 2025/2026.
- I also recommend that at this time we not hire the 4th Operator:
 - We will continue to assess the potential impact that short-staffing has on District Operations and Staff Morale
 - This way the pay raise that was negotiated with the Chief Operator, and new increase to Shift Operator-Pay can be absorbed into the 2025/2026 Fiscal Budget, which assumed a 3rd Shift Operator.
- I recommend that in the Fall, the Board take a comprehensive and deeper dive into our Pay Structure so that you can:
 1. Ensure that all positions receive compensation that is competitive and commensurate with responsibilities.
 2. Consider step-based increases, such as merit-based increases, so that years of dedication to the district and experience are justly compensated.
 3. Carefully consider impacts to the FY 2026/27 Budget, before any further pay raises are instituted.