Spotlight workers on the job.
Showing your workers repairing water and sewer lines, performing lab tests, or answering customer calls, not only provides a morale boost for your employees, but also shows your customers that there’s more to providing water and wastewater services than they imagined. Including their names and photos is a way to honor those individuals and humanize the work of the water sector. After all, it is people who run the systems that bring water to homes and collect and treat it before returning it to the environment. All of us depend on the thousands of water workers who show up every day to do their jobs.

We hope this round-up of tips and examples empowers water sector stakeholders to communicate and educate their communities on their essential work.
Say “Thank You.”
Unlike those in healthcare and grocery, water workers have gone without due attention. Their work is just as crucial, and they deserve gratitude for showing up and continuing their jobs in a more stressful and uncertain environment. Publicly saying thank you is a way to acknowledge their work and raise awareness among your customers. Also, think of ways to say thank you privately or internally. It doesn’t have to be complicated—sending a note or making a phone call is all it takes. Saying thank you is free and can be meaningful to your employees.

Connect with the mission.
The mission of your utility is the “why” and “how” of your work. Helping your employees feel connected to that mission is critical for employee engagement. Engaged employees are more likely to share ideas, comply with new safety standards, and express trust and support for their organization. When you highlight your workers, tie their work to the overall mission of delivering safe water, protecting public health, or safeguarding the environment.
Choose a good messenger.
A shout-out from your company’s twitter account will feel great, but a thank you directly from the general manager or CEO would feel more meaningful. Whether on social media or in internal communication channels, consider opportunities for your leadership to express gratitude directly. Some organizations are providing opportunities for employees to give shout-outs to each other through newsletters or on intranet pages. It’s a stressful time and promoting a culture of gratitude is one way to help ease some stress and boost morale.

Show all kinds of workers.
Not every water worker is an operator or wears a hard hat. Try to highlight diverse job functions, including office staff, customer service, education specialists, or lab workers. You bring attention to employees who may not have as much recognition while highlighting the incredible diversity of water jobs.
Amplify public support.

If your employees receive a public display of support, amplify it. While water workers deserve a thank you every time someone turns on the tap or flushes a toilet, they rarely receive one. It can feel great to get recognition from outside the organization.

Get creative.

Showing appreciation for and highlighting the work of your employees doesn’t have to be complicated. Whether saying thank you, making banners, yard signs, original songs, or videos, Value of Water Campaign supporters are getting creative. If you have a smartphone and a few good photos, you can make a simple video for your employees and share it online or in your next newsletter.

Additional Resources


About the Value of Water Campaign

The Value of Water Campaign educates and inspires the nation about how water is essential, invaluable, and in need of investment. Spearheaded by top leaders in the water industry, the Value of Water Campaign is building public and political will for investment in America’s water infrastructure. To learn more: www.thevalueofwater.org

If you would like to learn more, share ideas, or get involved with the Value of Water Campaign, please contact Katie Henderson, Program Manager: khenderson@uswateralliance.org.