

AUTHORIZING RECLASSIFICATION OF POWER GENERATION MECHANIC #2825 TO BIOGAS  
TECHNICIAN

Dane County's Department of Waste & Renewables (W&R) has been producing electricity with landfill biogas since 1995. The operations grew to consist of up to 9 engine generator sets at the closed and active landfill sites with annual revenue of over \$3.5 million from the sale of the electricity. Since bringing the generators online, the role of Power Generation Mechanic has been central to operation and maintenance (O&M) of the electrical generation equipment.

With the increase in value of renewable natural gas (RNG) due to the EPAs renewable fuel standards and the lower value of landfill gas derived electricity, the County made the decision to switch its landfill gas program from electric generation to RNG production. In 2019, W&R brought an RNG Plant online to process and inject the landfill biogas from the active Rodefild landfill into the high btu natural gas pipeline, and electrical generation ceased at that site. Electricity is however still being produced by two engine generator sets with landfill biogas at the closed site in Verona.

RNG Plant operations have been contracted to a third party since construction and commissioning were completed in April 2019. Since coming online, W&R has continued to assume tasks related to RNG Plant O&M and W&R continues to shift many of the roles of the Power Generation Mechanic to RNG Plant O&M. Although some of the tasks related to the electrical generation equipment will be maintained, the primary job duties of this role will not be related to "power generation" and the title is no longer relevant and W&R is requesting a title of Biogas Technician.

As the role shifts to RNG Plant O&M, there is also an additional level of responsibility required. The Biogas Technician will provide essential functions related to maximizing efficiencies and minimizing downtime at the Plant and offload station in addition to continued O&M of the electrical generation equipment at Verona and the landfill gas extraction system components. The role will require additional training and knowledge surrounding the highly technical and automated biological, chemical, and mechanical processes used to treat and compress the landfill biogas at the RNG Plant. Additionally, the employees filling this role will be required to monitor the RNG Plant on a 24-7 basis and be expected to promptly respond to operational issues on nights, weekends, and holidays in order to keep the RNG Plant running and maximize revenues.

This position is central to RNG Plant operations, which is budgeted to generate nearly \$8 million in revenue in 2020 through the sale of RNG. As W&R assumes additional O&M responsibilities, the vacant positions need to be filled. In addition, W&R needs to have the ability to attract and retain qualified and skilled individuals for these positions. Knowledgeable and qualified staff are in high demand in a growing biogas industry.

Due to increasing O&M responsibilities and changes in the scope of the duties at the site, the Department of W&R requested an audit of the position to reclassify #2825 to Biogas Technician (F18). This position is currently vacant and the Department of Administration – Employee Relations has recommended approval of this request.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors does hereby support and authorize reclassification of Position # 2825 Power Generation Mechanic (F16) in the Dane County Department of Waste & Renewables to Biogas Technician (F18), commensurate with the Department's request and approval of the Department of Administration – Employee Relations Division.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that that position #2825, which will have been vacant for more than six months on September 3, 2020, is authorized to be filled pursuant to Dane County Ordinance 55 29.52(15), which requires the Personnel and Finance Committee to approve filling positions that are vacant for more than six months.