

What is it like to work on CFPUA's Raw Water Line?



#1

For starters, you're probably wondering what exactly is a **raw water line**? Well, it's a large pipeline that transports untreated (raw) water from the Cape Fear River to the Sweeney Water Plant so it can be processed into safe, clean drinking water. The raw water line covers over **25 miles** and **spans through three counties** - most of it is located in wooded, swampy and other

hard-to-get-to areas. Look at photo #1...can you find the pipeline? You'll notice the area can get very overgrown - the pipeline is almost hidden. It looks like a jungle!

Meet the crew...

CFPUA's **Utility Construction Workers** are responsible for keeping a clear path along the raw water line. All different types of equipment including **tractors, backhoes, chainsaws, excavators, amphibious Argos, and weed eaters** are used to mow, cut and clear the area. Larger items like logs and tree limbs are loaded and hauled away in dump trucks. Often times, the construction crew has to make temporary roads in order to cross streams or swampy areas. Wooden mats are used to minimize damage and impact to the environment. In addition to mowing and clearing, construction workers also inspect the raw water line checking it for leaks and needed repairs. It takes the crew about **4 months** from start to finish to complete maintenance on the raw water line. When they're not working on the raw water line, the construction crew can be found **mowing** and maintaining **right-of-ways** and other areas of the utility system.



#2



#3

Workers performing this job are required to work outside all year long and in all kinds of conditions: rain, sleet, snow, extreme heat/humidity, and even hurricanes. Not only are they exposed to **extreme weather conditions** and **environmental hazards**, utility construction workers are also prone to **natural hazards** like snakes, mosquitoes, alligators, poison ivy and peat bogs. Other wildlife encounters have included: whitetail deer, beavers, turkeys, and even bears.



#4

Utility construction workers certainly don't have easy jobs and they are often found behind-the-scenes working in remote areas. But, the job they do is definitely an important one and helps ensure that water and wastewater keeps flowing to and from your house 24/7. Perhaps you might like to be a Utility Construction Worker when you grow up?

Each and every day, CFPUA treats, distributes and collects millions of gallons of water and wastewater throughout Wilmington & New Hanover County. CFPUA employs many dedicated, professional employees and each month we'll introduce a different job or group within the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority. Our employees strive to provide the safest and highest quality water and wastewater services while being environmentally responsible. Learn more about the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority and the services we provide by visiting our website: www.cfpua.org.