

# IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN



**Do you want to work in an exciting and creative industry that actively encourages women to participate and that provides the following opportunities?**

- learn to work with natural resources
- work outdoors while assisting to save water.
- potential to run your own business
- gain a broad range of transferable skills.
- continuing study options
- potential to make a substantial income



## OVERVIEW OF INDUSTRY

The irrigation industry works in conjunction with the horticultural and agricultural industries to provide cost effective water systems to increase production of crops, vegetables, livestock, orchards and vineyards. As well as this irrigation systems are installed in parks and gardens to provide a reliable water source all year round. Irrigation in Australia is growing substantially and encompasses the manufacture of irrigation systems, their installation, maintenance, services and use of technology to monitor water use. The industry is also embracing the use of alternative sources of energy such as wind and sun to run systems economically while meeting targets for reducing the impact on the environment. This is an exciting and constantly changing industry that provides the opportunity to work on interesting projects and to assist in securing the nation's food supplies .

## WHAT DOES AN IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN DO

An irrigation specialist is invaluable in a dry country where sustainable use of water in green spaces is really important, and this role can help guide garden, horticultural and agricultural projects to utilise water via efficient practices, whilst still getting the outcomes required. Different parts of the country will require different hydration, depending on soils, plants, time of year, desired outcomes or productivity and weather conditions. A specialist will be able to take these factors into consideration to create and install an irrigation plan that is customised to the location, plant species and features of each individual garden, landscape or crop being produced.

*"I LOVE WORKING AS AN IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN BECAUSE IM OUTDOORS USING MY PROBLEM- SOLVING SKILLS TO ASSIST THE COMMUNITY TO BE WATER WISE "*

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## IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN

### Selection Criteria:

The role of an irrigation technician can be quite diverse as the range of irrigation systems that can be used and the enterprises that require irrigation systems to be installed and maintained is extensive. The basic criteria that applies to this job is –

- \*Enjoy working outdoors
- \*Like working with their hands
- \*Good eye for detail and accuracy of work
- \*Physically fit
- \*Ability to follow written instructions and diagrams
- \*Able to use hand tools and specialised equipment
- \*Well-developed problem-solving skills
- \*Team player and good communicator.
- \*Ability to operate a range of machinery and equipment

### TASKS YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO DO

- \*Installation of a new irrigation systems.
- \*Servicing and troubleshooting of existing systems.
- \*Installation of drainage and water harvesting systems.
- \*Maintenance and repairs of pumps and pipes.
- \*Preparing and planning out irrigations system to meet specifics of enterprise.
- \*Calibrating and testing systems to ensure optimum plant growth and minimum water wastage.
- \*Submersible and centrifugal pump installations.
- \*Off-grid solar bore pumping systems installations.
- \*Standard bore services - pump maintenance

### Training Requirements and Pathways

#### Entry level:

**AHC21119 - Certificate II in Irrigation (currently not available) or AHC20116 - Certificate II in Agriculture**

This is the entry level qualification for school-based trainees or new entries to industry that are not sure that they want to commit to an apprenticeship.

#### Apprenticeship:

Apprenticeships in the irrigation industry usually take 3- 4 years which consist of completing the relevant VET qualification and time in industry gaining the level of skill to be signed off as a trades person.

**AHC32422 - Certificate III in Irrigation Technology – this is the trade qualification to be recognised as an irrigation technician.**

Individuals with this qualification perform tasks under broad supervision involving a broad range of skills that are applied in a wide variety of contexts, which will involve discretion and judgement in selecting and operating equipment, coordinating resources and applying contingency measures during work.

**AHC41119 - Certificate IV in Irrigation Management**

This qualification describes the skills and knowledge for supervisory and management job roles in the irrigation industry. Individuals with this qualification perform tasks involving technical skills, problem solving and supervisory skills to operate, monitor and improve performance of irrigation systems and supervise the installation of irrigation systems. Work must comply with work health and safety and environmental regulations and legislation that apply to the workplace.

#### Income/opportunities

The irrigation industry has seen an increase in growth due to the community becoming more aware of the need to conserve water and decrease costs. Farming, horticulture, landscapers and individuals are increasing demand for the services of irrigation technicians and planners.

The average irrigation technician earns \$55,000 to \$65,000 per year, with irrigation designers and industry specialists earning anywhere from \$90,000 and upwards per year depending on demand and client base.

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