



CEO / GENERAL MANAGER POSITION AVAILABLE

Reopened—Apply by March 20, 2020

Welcome to Des Moines, Iowa

Des Moines, where the Des Moines Water Works is located, is a regional hub for business, education, entertainment, and recreation. Area schools get very high marks, housing is reasonably priced, and the area is viewed as a great place to raise a family. Traffic is minimal, and the commute to work is usually less than 20 minutes. It is, in fact, the third largest insurance center in the world. So if you are looking for a great job and a great community, look no further.

For many years, Des Moines was an undiscovered jewel. It is not a secret any longer. In 2019, USNews named Des Moines the “#5 Best Place to Live in the U.S.” The City’s low cost of living earned it the #3 spot on USNews’ “Best Affordable Place to Live in the U.S.” It placed #6 on Yahoo Finance’s list of “Best American Cities to Work in Tech,” “#2 Top City for Young Home Buyers,” as the “7th Most Recession-Proof City in the U.S.” (Livability), and was one of the nation’s top eleven “Best Farmer’s Markets in America” (Livability).

In 2018, the City was praised as being one of friendliest and happiest cities in the country (Conde Nast Traveler) and one of the happiest (WalletHub), as well as the “#7 Best Place for Business and



Careers” (Forbes), and “#8 Best Job Market” (ZipRecruiter). Livability ranked it the #3 “Up and Coming Tech Hotspots.”

The reasons for its success are many. Des Moines hosts art and history museums, performing arts groups, and musical groups. The Des Moines Metro Opera, one of the largest performing arts organizations in the state, has been operating since 1973. It is joined by the Des Moines Symphony in providing incredible productions to the city. The Des Moines Art Center houses collections from the 19th century to the present, as well as a 1,250 seat theater. The Hoyt Sherman Place mansion and the Salisbury House and Gardens provide a stunning look at Des Moines’ rich history.

The Wells Fargo Arena, which opened in 2005, is Des Moines’ primary venue for sporting events and concerts. The arena can host almost 17,000 and frequently books large, national touring acts. It is the home of the Iowa Wolves (NBA G League), the Iowa Wild (AHL), and the Iowa Barnstormers (IFL).

Des Moines’ downtown was listed as the number one “up-and-coming downtown” in America by Fortune.com in 2014, and it has only gotten better as it is revitalized, and grows. With a wide area of open green space, the Riverwalk, many venues of music, art, and culture, and a number of unique, lively districts—each with its own personality, style, and culture—the downtown is surging. More and more, it is becoming a center for young professionals and economic growth.

The median home price in Des Moines is \$140,800. With lower than the national average prices for groceries, utilities, transportation, and housing, Des Moines offers an incredible value. The Des Moines Public School district consists of 63 schools and almost all are well regarded. The city is home to three four-year private colleges, a medical college, and satellite facilities for several other institutions.

What does this mean for the Water Works utility? Well, Forbes ranked Des Moines as #1 for having the cleanest tap water in 2008 and 2011, and Des Moines Water Works has worked to maintain that recognition as one of the nation’s premier water utilities. Its staff is outstanding, dedicated, and competent. Its facilities are well maintained and well run, and the utility is financially sound.

All in all, opportunity abounds in Des Moines, whether it is at home, at work, or at play. It would be hard to find a better job in a better place to live, work, play, and raise a family so we invite you to apply to be our CEO and experience one of the country’s best cities!

History

The Des Moines Water Company was formed in 1871 and within a year, it had laid 10 miles of pipe. Ten hydrants were placed along it so “water can be drawn by citizens or passersby for purposes of drinking for persons or animals.” Pumps could discharge about 2 million gallons per day (mgd) and the water came from a large filtering tank that was sunk in the sand and gravel on the south side of the Raccoon River. The tank was made of boiler iron—open at the bottom and closed at the top. The sides were perforated in numerous places to let water in. This work was the beginning of what is known today as the Fleur Drive Water Treatment Plant.

In 1884, the company began constructing a gallery system that would also use groundwater from the Raccoon River. It was the first of its kind in the U.S. and by 1885 the gallery extended 750 feet. It was constructed from wood and regularly lengthened. By 1910, a new gallery had been constructed with concrete rings (5 feet in diameter and 2 feet long) which were held slightly apart so water could trickle in. Later that year, ponds were constructed in the Utility’s park land to augment the water supply. In 1918, a permanent pumping station was built on the park grounds to pump water from the river into these ponds.

In the early years the Utility was privately owned, but the City Council received numerous complaints so they sought to purchase the Water Works. The Council succeeded in 1919, and the Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) was formed as a public utility under the Section 388 of the Code of Iowa. Under the statute, the utility is owned by the water rate payers and a Board of Trustees oversees operations. The Board has all of the powers of the City Council to operate the utility except for levying taxes. The Board hires a General Manager to direct the utility on a day-to-day basis. He/she produces an annual budget for the operations using revenue from the sale of water as the primary income source. This budget is reviewed, modified, and approved by the Board. The Board is the only body of the utility which can enter into contracts, and the utility must comply with State of Iowa public improvement bidding laws.



In 1923, the state legislature removed the DMWW Board from supervision by the City Council. It became law that the Mayor appoints Board members as vacancies occur and the City Council approves the appointments. Otherwise, the management of DMWW is the responsibility of the Board.

During the Depression, the Utility provided work to many men who could not pay their water bills. They laid water mains, graded park roads, inspected hydrants, and beautified the park land the Utility owned.

In 1942, DMWW paid \$400,000 for 650 acres of farmland southwest of Des Moines to build a reservoir to use during emergencies. It opened in 1948 and in 1955 was renamed the Dale Maffitt Reservoir. 1948 was also a notable year because it produced the first water rate increase in 50 years. In 1948, a softening plant was completed and in 1972, water meter reading equipment was installed on the outside of homes.

In 1993, the Raccoon River crested at 26.7 feet which was a record and measured 4.7 feet above flood stage. The Fleur Drive Treatment Plant flooded and was shut down. Des Moines residents were without water service for 11 days and potable water for 18 days.

In 2000 the Maffitt Treatment Plant (later renamed the L.D. McMullen Water Treatment Plant at Maffitt Reservoir) was completed.

In June 2008, another flood occurred. The Raccoon River crested at 24.5 feet at the Fleur Drive Treatment Plant, only 2.2 feet below the Flood of 1993 record. Due to extensive levee work and flood preparation, however, DMWW conducted normal treatment operations throughout the flood. In 2008 and 2011, Forbes recognized Des Moines as the Best City for Clean Drinking Water.

Table 1: Polk County Demographics

Estimated Population: 487,204			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	84.6%	0 to 15	21.2%
Black	6.5%	15 to 25	12.8%
Asian	4.3%	25 to 45	29.1%
Native American	0.3%	45 to 65	24.7%
Two or More Races	4.3%	65 to 85	10.6%
Total	100%	Over 85	1.6%
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	8.1%		

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
High School or Higher	91.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	35.3%

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
Median Age—Polk County	35.2
Median Age—U.S.	37.8
Median Household Income	\$63,530
Poverty Rate	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Saylorville Water Treatment Plant opened in 2011, and the DMWW has continued to look toward the future. In July 2012, a new record for daily pumpage of 96.64 million gallons was set. In July 2012, a new monthly record for pumpage was set of 2,544.12 million gallons.

Demographics

See Table 1(above) for Polk County Demographics.

Climate

Des Moines has a “humid continental” climate, with hot, humid summers and cold, snowy winters. Summers bring average high temperatures in the mid 80’s and lows in the mid 60’s. The average high temperatures in the winter tend to be in the 30’s, with

lows in the upper teens. The County gets an average annual precipitation of 35 inches, with the heaviest rainfall in the spring and summer months (averaging 4.0 inches/month) and the least precipitation in the winter months (averaging about 1.2 inches/month).

Geography

Des Moines has a total area of 90.65 square miles, of which 88.93 square miles is land and 1.73 square miles is water. It sits at the confluence of the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers.

Commerce

See Table 2 on page 5 for information on the Top Ten Employers of Polk County.

The Water Works

The Des Moines Water Works is operated by a Board of Trustees, who are appointed by the Mayor of the City of Des Moines and approved by the City Council. The Board sets policy, establishes rates, and exercises general oversight for the Utility. The Board is the only body of the utility which can enter into contracts, and the utility must comply with State of Iowa public improvement bidding and open meeting laws.

Board members serve six-year terms and are not term limited. The current Board is composed of one member who is in her third term, one in his second term, and two members who are in their first term. One position is currently vacant. The Board is collegial and respectful of each other’s opinions. That said, discussions can be spirited. The Board recognizes that the Water Works is an exceptional Utility with an outstanding staff.

The Board hires a Chief Executive Officer/General Manager to oversee the Utility’s day-to-day operations. The General Manager produces an annual budget which is reviewed, modified, and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) provides water directly or indirectly to 500,000 people in the Des Moines metro area. It has approximately 90,000 retail customers and 23 wholesale customers. It routinely pumps 47 mgd with its peak capacity considered to be 110 mgd. Slightly more than half its finished water is wholesaled to cities and other entities in central Iowa

Table 2: Principal Employers, Polk County, IA

Employer	Industry	Employees
Wells Fargo & Co.	Financial	14,000
Unity Point Health (Iowa Health Des Moines)	Medical	8,026
Principal Financial Group	Financial	6,527
Hy-Vee Food Corp.	Retail	6,400
Mercy Hospital Medical Center	Medical	4,536
Nationwide/Allied Insurance	Insurance	4,525
Vermeer Corporation	Manufacturing	2,500
Corteva Agriscience	Agriculture	2,500
JBS USA	Processing	2,300
Pella Corporation	Manufacturing	2,224

Source: City of Polk County, IA 2018 CAFR

(some 23 communities in all). The Utility reads almost all its meters remotely.

The Water Works has three water treatment plants. The largest is the Fleur Drive Plant with a capacity of approximately 75 mgd. Its water sources are the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers. The process involves collecting shallow ground water via an three mile long infiltration gallery. The L.D. McMullen Water Treatment Plant is a 25 mgd Water Treatment Plant, located at Maffitt Reservoir, and its main water source is shallow groundwater collected from wells along the Raccoon River.

Both the plants use a lime softening process to treat their water. The Fleur Drive Plant has to deal with unusually high nitrate levels as well. The Saylorville Water Treatment Plant is the newest treatment plant and was completed in 2011. Its main water source is shallow groundwater collected from wells along the Des Moines River and utilizes membrane technology to soften and purify the water. It has a capacity of 10 mgd and is designed to be expanded to 20 mgd.

The Water Works’ distribution system consists of more than 1,400 miles of pipe, 8,900 fire hydrants, 9,700 valves, 10 water storage tanks and 10 booster pumping stations.

Another notable feature is the Water Works Park. Located on utility property along Fleur Drive directly across from Gray’s

Lake, Water Works Park covers nearly 1,500 acres of open and wooded areas. It provides visitors with opportunities for biking, jogging, picnicking, fishing, and hiking. Picnic areas, complete with tables and grills, are located in several areas of the park. Large, open areas are available for team sports such as softball, tag football, and soccer.

The Utility has an AA+ bond rating from Standard and Poor’s and an Aa1 from Moody’s. Its water rates to customers are below the national average which is impressive given the relatively poor quality of the raw water

supply. The Utility is not responsible for wastewater collection or treatment.

In addition to water billing, the Water Works’ Customer Service division bills and answers calls for the city of Des Moines’ solid waste, stormwater utility and sanitary sewer services.

The Utility has approximately 220 employees and 2020 total operating revenue of \$72.7 million. The operating budget totals \$48.5 million, capital expenditures of \$27.5 million, and \$4.3 million in debt service. Approximately three quarters of the employees are represented by AFSCME, the Utility’s only union. Relations between the Union and the Water Works are extremely positive and both parties want to continue that relationship.

The Challenges and Opportunities

While the Des Moines Water Works is extremely well run and financially strong. The biggest challenge it faces right now is external—specifically, regionalization. Over the years, the utility’s wholesale customers have helped fund additional treatment capacity at the plants. They currently use over 50% of the water produced by Des Moines Water Works, and want a say in how the Water Works is governed. It is not a new issue but one that comes up every few years, and will likely continue

to arise until there is a resolution. The problem at the moment is, while many feel regionalization will ultimately occur, there is no shared vision for what the future governance structure might be. One possible outcome is several of DMWW's wholesale customers, West Des Moines, Urbandale and Waukee, may decide to create their own regional utility and expand their treatment plants. A feasibility study is underway for that plan. Ideally, the results will be known within the next 60 days. In the meantime, it is very difficult for the Water Works to plan. It is reaching its treatment capacity limits and a drought could test the Utility. On the other hand, if it should lose three of its larger customers, capacity will not be an issue until sometime in the future. The hope is regionalization will come to closure within the next three or four months.



The second issue the Water Works must deal with is raw water quality. Iowa is known for farming (primarily corn, soybeans, hogs and chickens) and that results in a very large amount of nutrients entering the raw water supply. The Utility has managed to raise awareness of the issue, but any resolution is not in the foreseeable future. A related issue is as testing improves and new treatment standards are introduced, the cost of production increases.



The third challenge is infrastructure. As it ages, it needs to be repaired, replaced, and/or upgraded. By and large, the Water Works has maintained its infrastructure well, but it needs to be ever vigilant and to continue to reinvest in it.

The fourth issue is staffing. Approximately 20% of the Utility's staff will be able to retire in February of 2021 with another 3% eligible in 2022. That could have a significant impact on the workforce, particularly in the managerial ranks. It should be noted that a significant exodus is not expected. Employees really enjoy

working at the Water Works, and tend to have lengthy tenures. At the other end of the spectrum, a new generation is entering the work force. In fact, the Water Works has hired 70 new employees since 2012. Blending and creating the right culture in the workplace will take time and effort.

The Ideal Candidate

We are seeking a seasoned professional who is both an outstanding manager and leader—someone with a track record of success and accomplishment. The CEO will work as a partner to the Board to guide the Water Works to a brighter future. While recognizing the Board makes the policy decisions, the individual will not be afraid to speak his/her mind diplomatically when he/she feels strongly about an issue. Not only will the individual work well and closely with members of the Board Members and staff, but he/she be adept at intergovernmental and media relations. The individual will create partnerships to achieve what is best for the Utility and the city but also for the region. The CEO will keep everyone informed, particularly the Board Members, and ensure there are no surprises.

Bringing the regionalization issue to closure will be the new CEO's most important task. As such, the ideal candidate will have outstanding communications and interpersonal skills. He/she will be collaborative and able to build consensus and teams. The CEO will help the Board establish a vision everyone (the City of Des Moines, the wholesale customers, staff, and the public) will buy into and that brings people together. Strong financial and negotiation skills will be important as the likely solution will lead to new structures and reallocation of assets. Having a mastery of the technical details—engineering, operational, and financial—will be critical. Being environmentally conscious is a plus.

The ideal candidate will a prominent spokesperson for the Utility. He/she will realize one of the CEO's duties is to interact with the public, the customers (both wholesale and retail), the employees, and the media. As such, excellent public relations skills are essential. The Utility has a great story to tell, and it needs to continue to be told.

The CEO will be achievement-oriented, a doer and a problem solver—someone with strategic focus. The individual will be

able to anticipate the future, envision the consequences of proposed actions, and position the Utility in a way that it can take advantage of opportunities while avoiding issues. He/she will listen to others, and respect the opinions of all. The CEO will always seek the best solution, even if innovative and non-traditional. The individual will respect process but have a hint of impatience and a bias for well thought through action.

The CEO will know how to lead and manage people. The individual will flexible and creative, and open to the ideas of others. He/she will work with others to establish goals and objectives. The individual will have high, but realistic, expectations and be supportive. The CEO will then step back and not micromanage. At the same time, the individual will expect to be kept informed and believe strongly in accountability.

The ideal candidate will be a mentor, helping staff members to grow and improve themselves. The Water Works is a very lean organization, and in many ways a family. Fostering the current positive environment where morale is high and union relations are excellent will be important. Having a sense of fairness as well as a sense of humor will be significant pluses.

Much of what the Water Works does is dependent on technology. Two of the treatment plants are operated remotely, meters are read remotely, etc. It will thus be important that the next CEO be technologically savvy, and appreciate what it can do to improve operations.

The ideal candidate will have at least ten years of progressive management experience including at least five in an executive management role preferably in a public or private sector utility. A Bachelor's and master's degree in public administration, business administration, engineering or a related field are required although two years of additional experience may be substituted for a master's degree. A PE is a plus but not a requirement. Finally, the best candidate will be someone who recognizes what a wonderful opportunity this is and intends to stay a long time.

Compensation

The salary range is \$ 175,000 to \$ 250,000. The actual salary will depend on qualifications. A longevity or other bonus is a

possibility. The Board is willing to pay at the top of the range for the right candidate.

Prior Chief Executive Officers/General Managers

The most recent CEO passed away in April 2019 after seven years with the Water Works. The prior CEO retired after five years as the CEO and over 25 years with the Water Works.

Internal Candidates

The current interim CEO has indicated he intends to apply.

How to Apply

Send your resume and cover letter to Recruit33@cb-asso.com by February 28, 2020. Questions should be addressed to Rick Conner at (915)227-7002 or Colin Baenziger at (561)707-3537.

Confidentiality

Candidates who wish confidentiality should indicate that desire in their cover e-mail, or in the heading of their resume. All documents can remain confidential until finalists are selected. At that time, we will verify that the selected finalists wish to remain in the process and release the names (and background materials) for those who do. The other applicants will not be released.

The Process

The top-rated candidates will undergo an extensive screening process right after the closing date. Finalists will be selected on April 2nd. Interviews will be held on April 20th and 21st with a selection made shortly thereafter.

Other Important Information

Des Moines Water Works is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages minorities and women to apply.

Additional Information

For additional information about the Water Works and the city, visit:

<http://www.dmww.com/>

<https://www.dsmpartnership.com>

<https://www.dsm.city v>

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