



Fairfax Water

Director of Transmission and Distribution





The Position

Fairfax Water is seeking a strategic and proactive Director of Transmission and Distribution to provide executive leadership for the operation and maintenance of a large and complex water system. Reporting directly to the Deputy General Manager of Operations, this Director-level position is responsible for planning, directing, and coordinating significant staff engaged in both office and field work. The role encompasses the overall strategic direction and coordination of the transmission and distribution systems, while also overseeing critical support functions such as after-hours dispatch and fleet Services. By evaluating and establishing best practices in predictive, preventive, and corrective maintenance, the Director works to optimize maintenance programs and ensure the continued reliability of the utility's infrastructure, which over two million people depend upon. The current Director is retiring in September after working for Fairfax Water since 1998, and in this Director role since 2021.

In this high-impact role, the Director oversees the transmission system, including managing large water main repairs, coordinating contractor support, and directing complex system shutdowns. While major capital projects for tank maintenance and water quality are led by the engineering division, the Director provides the essential operational leadership for pump station operations and maintenance and collaborates with engineering on other Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects affecting the division. The position requires a leader who can navigate complex interactions with external partners, such as coordinating with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) regarding pipes in roadways and maintaining strong, established relationships with wholesale customers for routine and emergency operations. A key upcoming priority for the Director is the integration of the Cross-Connection Control program, a regulatory function that is transitioning from Fairfax County to Fairfax Water. This regulatory initiative involves the recruitment and management of several inspectors plus administrative staff to ensure EPA-designated backflow prevention devices are properly tested and maintained.

The Director also serves as a pivotal representative for Fairfax Water, attending all board meetings and representing the organization at various conferences and high-level meetings. This leader is responsible for preparing the division's annual budget, appropriation requests, and long-term capital plans, as well as directing the preparation of technical studies for facility improvements and expansions. Resiliency is a cornerstone of the role, requiring the oversight of emergency operation plans for water shortages, equipment failures, or pressure-related system deficiencies, in close coordination with other divisions. Beyond technical and fiscal management, the Director is a champion of safety, integrating accident prevention practices into all division activities and supervising the recruitment, placement, and evaluation of staff to maintain a high-performing, well-rounded team.

The Director has two direct reports, the Manager of Transmission and the Manager of Distribution, and has a current total of 136 FTEs, including approximately 80 staff dedicated to performing in-house distribution water main repairs. The division oversees annual, recurring CIP projects of close to \$16M and operating line items of approximately \$35M, not including personnel.

Priorities

- Learn the operations of the division and build consistency and teamwork across the three operational yards.
- Build strong internal relationships with the GM, DGMs, and other directors. Get to know the priorities and needs of internal and external stakeholders.
- Launch the in-house cross-connection program.
- Focus on recruitment and retention of key staff and developing leaders internally.

The Successful Candidate

The ideal candidate for the next Director of Transmission and Distribution is a compassionate, people-first leader who prioritizes organizational health and staff morale as much as technical expertise. Fairfax Water is looking for an approachable and visible leader who is comfortable being on job sites during major repairs, and who regularly engages with staff in the field. This individual must be prepared to stand with their team during difficult situations, such as late-night main breaks in freezing temperatures, demonstrating empathy and a personal touch by knowing employees' names and their stories. The Director will be as comfortable with informal, direct communication as making a presentation to the Board of Directors. They will foster an environment of trust and mutual respect, where employees feel valued and have a connection to this important work.

As a proactive and firm leader, the successful candidate establishes clear direction and expectations while maintaining a sense of calm and stability under pressure. They are a decisive problem-solver who can make effective judgments during emergencies and provide positive and negative feedback constructively. A hallmark of their leadership style is empowerment, encouraging managers to take ownership of decisions, and enabling autonomy and independence of front-line staff and supervisors. This individual drives efficiency and reliability by leveraging data and technology to improve operations, ensuring staff are cross-trained and well-rounded across three separate worksites.

Professionally, the successful candidate brings significant experience in utility operations and possesses a strong technical aptitude with a deep understanding of utility operations and maintenance. They are proficient in utilizing advanced industry tools and data systems to manage infrastructure performance. The Director will bring a background in utilizing reporting and data to inform strategic decisions. They are a natural convener who collaborates effectively across all levels of the organization, building strong partnerships with senior leadership, the governing Board, and external stakeholders. Above all, the successful candidate is an honest, hardworking professional who is enthusiastic about the future of Fairfax Water and committed to inspiring their team to achieve operational excellence while maintaining the highest standards of safety and accountability.

Qualifications

Candidates are required to have a bachelor's degree and at least 10 years of progressively responsible experience in a complex operating and maintenance environment (public works, utility, construction). A minimum of three years of mid-management experience is also required, with a proven track record in staff development. Fairfax Water will also consider an equivalent combination of education in lieu of years of experience or experience in lieu of education.

Preferred qualifications include experience working at a complex water, wastewater, stormwater, or electric utility. Licensure as a Professional Engineer (PE) or Class 4 Waterworks Operator is preferred but not required. A demonstrated aptitude for mechanical systems, experience with ArcGIS, SAP, SCADA, data-informed decision-making, and motivational leadership in a field environment are also preferred. Experience leading emergency response activities and knowledge of water system hydraulics is also beneficial.



Inside Fairfax Water

Chartered in 1957 by the Virginia State Corporation Commission as a public, not-for-profit water utility, Fairfax Water has grown to become Virginia's largest drinking water provider and one of the 25 largest in the United States. The organization is governed by a 10-Member Board, composed of Fairfax County citizens appointed by the elected Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. A General Manager leads day-to-day operations, supported by a dedicated workforce of 513 water professionals.

Fairfax Water is a cornerstone of regional infrastructure, serving nearly two million people across Northern Virginia, including the communities of Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties. Its service area encompasses the towns and cities of Herndon, Vienna, Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax City, as well as critical hubs like Fort Belvoir and Dulles International Airport. This extensive reach means that Fairfax Water provides essential services to one out of every four Virginians who obtain their drinking water from a public utility.



To meet this significant demand, the organization draws raw water from two primary sources: the Potomac River and the Occoquan Reservoir. The raw water is treated at two of the largest water treatment facilities in Virginia, the James J. Corbalis Jr. plant and the Frederick P. Griffith Jr. plant, both owned and operated by Fairfax Water. Together, these facilities contribute to a combined maximum production capacity of 345 million gallons per day. This supply is further bolstered by the purchase of up to 31 million gallons per day from the Washington Aqueduct, owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

As the region continues to grow, Fairfax Water remains committed to planning ahead to ensure the delivery of reliable and abundant water. Following the completion of its previous five-year strategic plan, the organization is finalizing a comprehensive new strategic planning initiative. This updated five-year plan will provide a roadmap to guide Fairfax Water into the future, ensuring it continues to meet the evolving needs of its service area while maintaining its vision of excellence in public service.

The newly adopted Fairfax Water 2030 Strategic Plan may be found [here](#).

Mission:

To provide our customers with reliable and abundant water of exceptional quality and value.

Vision:

Providing exemplary water service and enhancing water resources for a thriving community.

Values:

Safe, Empowered, and Respectful Workforce: We invest in our people, fostering leadership, collaboration, and pride in public service.

Community Trust: We build lasting relationships with our employees, customers, and partners through transparency, accountability, and responsive service.

Organizational Resiliency: We meet evolving challenges and future needs.

Public Health Protection: We safeguard the health of our community by delivering clean, safe, and reliable drinking water every day.

Excellence in Operations: We strive for efficiency, stewardship, and continuous improvement in everything we do.

By the Numbers

- Virginia's largest drinking water utility
- Nearly 2,200,000 people get their water from Fairfax Water
- Over \$2.3 billion in infrastructure assets
- 2 primary water sources (the Potomac River and the Occoquan Reservoir)
- 2 Fairfax Water-owned treatment plants (the first and third largest in Virginia)
- 170 million gallons of water are produced daily on average
- 345 million gallons of maximum daily water production capacity
- 4,000+ miles of water mains
- 29,910 fire hydrants

The Community

Fairfax County, Virginia, is situated along the Potomac River within the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The river serves as a constant reminder of the essential role water plays in the region's economy and the daily lives of its residents. Formed in 1742, the County was originally home to Native American populations whose lives revolved around the river and its tributaries. Early English settlements were established along these banks, including historic sites like Mount Vernon and Belvoir Manor, the latter of which is now home to Fort Belvoir, one of Fairfax Water's critical customers. This U.S. Army installation remains a critical regional employer, supporting a workforce nearly twice the size of the Pentagon.

Following World War II, the expansion of the federal government sparked rapid growth, transforming Fairfax County from an agricultural community into a thriving suburban hub. Today, it stands as the most populous jurisdiction in the Washington, D.C. area, with an estimated population of 1,166,965. The County is a major economic engine, hosting the headquarters of multiple intelligence agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency, and eleven Fortune 500 firms such as Capital One and Hilton. This vibrant economy is further enriched by a strong minority business community, numerous innovative startups, and a diverse range of international companies. Professional, scientific, and technical services account for 28% of local employment, a sector characterized by a high level of education and a strong presence of young professionals. Approximately 61% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher—nearly double the national average—and one-third of tech-related jobs are held by adults aged 19 to 34.

The community maintains a high standard of living, with a median household income of \$153,637 and a median home value of \$732,800. While roughly 380,000 residents live and work in the County, its economic vitality also draws over 330,000 additional employees who commute an average of 46 minutes to work. Throughout this history of growth, the Potomac River has remained the lifeblood of the region. As the fourth-largest river on the Atlantic coast, it provides drinking water to more than five million people within its watershed. Ensuring the reliability of this water supply is vital as the region continues to grow and the demand on the Potomac River watershed increases.





Compensation and Benefits

The expected hiring range for the Director of Transmission and Distribution is \$225,000 - \$282,000, depending on qualifications, with a comprehensive benefits package.

Benefits offered include the following:

- Medical, dental, vision, and prescription drug insurance
- Participation in the Fairfax Water Retirement Plan
- 457(b) and 457 (Roth) supplemental retirement options
- Vacation, sick, and holiday leave, plus one discretionary holiday
- Paid Family and Medical Leave
- Basic life insurance and long-term disability insurance provided at no cost
- Flexible spending accounts for medical and dependent care
- Tuition reimbursement and professional development assistance



How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at raftelis.com. Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. The position will be open until filled, with a first review of applications beginning **July 7, 2026**.



Questions

Please direct questions to Catherine Tuck Parrish at ctuckparrish@raftelis.com and Robert Colichio at rcolichio@raftelis.com.