



# POOL BUILDER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

By Seth Ewing, PHTA Sr. Director of Member Programs and Services

**F**OR THE PAST SEVERAL years, apprenticeships have seen a surge in popularity as employers have recognized their value in attracting people to skilled trades. At the same time, apprenticeship programs are highly coveted by non-college-bound students, military veterans, and career-changers eager for on-the-job training in vocations that offer the potential for career advancement.

Responding to this opportunity to help build the national pool and spa workforce, PHTA launched its first apprenticeship program for the service and maintenance sector in 2021, and just this summer launched the new U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Registered

Pool Installer Technician Apprenticeship Program for the construction sector.

Not only do apprenticeship programs open doors for recruiting, but they also enhance training opportunities that are tailored to company needs and develop highly skilled employees committed to safety and excellence in their craft.

## WHAT IS THE POOL INSTALLER TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM EXACTLY?

A Pool Installer Technician performs a supporting role in the activities involving the construction of swimming pools, spas, water features, decks, and related

components such as piping, filtration, hydraulics, safety, electrical systems, pool equipment, and various pool structures.

Apprentices attain new competencies, both technical and behavioral, through 3,500 to 4,500 hours of on-the-job learning. Competency in the work processes outlined in the apprenticeship program can be demonstrated through a variety of venues including observation, proficiency demonstration/aptitude exam, questions and answers, learner's products, simulations, project work, mentor testimony, and/or evidence all was demonstrated on the job.

The employer can assess each



apprentice's prior experience to determine if credit for advanced standing can be awarded for the work processes schedule and related instruction. Prior experience can be assessed through resumes, interviews, job assignments, and/or demonstration of competencies. Assigned mentors will assess apprentices for credit for prior experience at any time during the probation.

## WHAT DO APPRENTICES LEARN THROUGH THE PROGRAM?

The Pool Installer Technician Apprenticeship Program supplies unparalleled teaching, mentoring, and learning connections. Through structured training, apprentices will learn to:

- ✓ Develop and practice worksite safety and maintain safe work environments.
- ✓ Determine proper transit use on a worksite and/or proper water level use as necessary.
- ✓ Read plans in relation to pool and spa construction.
- ✓ Calculate elevations and slopes.
- ✓ Read a tape measure and select the correct hand tools necessary to perform tasks related to pool construction.
- ✓ Apply the correct order of operations of pool construction.
- ✓ Properly maintain erosion control, including drainage for downspouts.
- ✓ Set up temporary site protection.
- ✓ Apply basic pool hydraulics principles during pool installations.
- ✓ Effectively apply equipotential bonding principles during pool construction to reduce the risk of equipment damage and personal injury.
- ✓ Demonstrate proper safety protocols with safety setbacks from overhead electrical lines, heater vents, or other hazardous locations.
- ✓ Contact the utility when needed to mark the area before digging.
- ✓ Determine if site documentation was completed before construction starts through resources such as easements.
- ✓ Comply with the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSA).

Not to mention professional and soft skills that are essential to employee growth and customer service!

## READY TO GET STARTED?

PHTA makes it easy for employers to enroll in the Pool Installer Technician Apprenticeship Program. There are three simple steps — and above and beyond that, the Association offers a "concierge" service supported by a team of consultants to ensure you have the support you need to engage in the program. Contact [workforce@phta.org](mailto:workforce@phta.org) or visit [apprenticeship.phta.org/register](http://apprenticeship.phta.org/register) to take the first step. ~

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### STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Publication title: AQUA
2. Publication no. 1041-388X
3. Filing date: 8/30/2023.
4. Issue frequency: Monthly
5. No. of issues published annually: 12
6. Annual subscription price: \$55.00.
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247 (Dane County).
8. Complete mailing address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: Athletic Business Media, Inc., 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247.
9. Full names and complete mailing address of Publisher and Editor:
  - Publisher: Shawn Gahagan, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247;
  - Editor: Scott Webb, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247;
  - Managing Editor: Abigail Carpenter, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247
10. Owner:
  - Athletic Business Media, Inc., 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247;
  - Gretchen Kelsey Brown, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247;
  - Peter Brown, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247;
  - Shawn Gahagan, 22 E. Mifflin St., Suite 910, Madison, WI 53703-4247
11. Known bondholders, mortgages and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: NONE
12. N/A
13. Publication name: AQUA
14. Issue date for circulation data below: September 2023

15. Extent and nature of circulation:	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
<b>A. Total no. copies</b>	15,921	15,782
<b>B. Paid and/or requested circulation:</b>		
1. Mail subscription	11,568	11,804
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	725	755
<b>C. Total paid and/or requested circulation</b>	12,293	12,559
<b>D. Nonrequested copies by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies</b>	3,272	2,965
Nonrequested copies distributed outside the mail	209	117
<b>E. Total nonrequested distribution</b>	3,481	3,082
<b>F. Total distribution</b>	15,774	15,641
<b>G. Copies not distributed:</b>		
1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	147	141
2. Return from news agents	0	0
<b>H. TOTAL</b>	15,921	15,782
<b>I. Percent paid and/or requested circulation</b>	77.93%	80.30%

16. Electronic Copy Circulation:	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
<b>A. Requested and Paid Electronic Copies</b>		
<b>B. Total Requested and Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)</b>	12,293	12,559
<b>C. Total Requested Copy Distribution (Line 15f) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)</b>	15,774	15,641
<b>D. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Both Print &amp; Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)</b>	77.93%	80.30%

16. This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2023 issue of this publication.

17. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Shawn Gahagan, Publisher 8/30/2023

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