

What is a Waterways Conservation Officer?

Waterways Conservation Officers are police officers certified by the PA State Police Municipal Police Officers Training Standards. They are employed by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and specially trained in all aspects of fisheries conservation and watercraft safety. Waterways Conservation Officers primarily enforce fishing, boating and environmental laws and regulations. They are also em-



powered to enforce wildlife, Bureau of State Parks and Bureau of Forestry, and PA Crimes Code statutes. Patrols are primarily accomplished on foot and in vehicles and boats. Waterways Conservation Officers are also certified boating safety instructors.

Why would someone want to be a Waterways Conservation Officer?

People become Waterways Conservation Officers for many reasons: They respect Pennsylvania's abundant but fragile natural resources and they desire to protect these assets. Waterways Conservation Officers are a link in a long chain of dedicated people, and by working together they help ensure clean water, abundant fisheries and safe boating. To them, this career is both a duty taken seriously and an honor to carry out. They love to work outdoors, and they welcome varying duties and work schedules. Waterways Conservation Officers have the opportunity to perform public relations work at sport shows and presentations, in contacts with anglers and boaters, and in boating safety and education functions. They work closely with law enforcement professionals in local, state and federal agencies.



What are the qualifications for employment as a Waterways Conservation Officer?

Each applicant must:

- Be at least 21 years of age by the date of hire.
- Be a United States citizen.
- Be a Pennsylvania resident in possession of a Pennsylvania motor vehicle operator's license.
- Meet all the requirements for certification as a Pennsylvania police officer under the Municipal Police Officers Education and Training Commission.

Applicants must also possess a high school diploma or equivalent certification. However, many applicants have earned advanced degrees in a wide variety of disciplines. Because there are fewer than 100 Waterways Conservation Officers, applicant competition is keen. Applicants must obtain a very high score on both the written Civil Service examination and oral interview. Under the current Civil Service hiring procedures, candidates for this position who are veterans will receive 10 additional points on their written test score and preferential hiring consideration. They must be willing to undergo thorough background and character investigations. Applicants must also meet medical, vision, hearing, physical strength and agility, and normal color vision standards. In addition, applicants must be able to swim continuously for 10 minutes or 250 yards. They also must test negative for use of illegal substances and pass a psychological examination.

What is the training program for a Waterways Conservation Officer trainee?

Waterways Conservation Officer trainees must successfully complete an extensive one-year training program. It includes about 20 weeks of training in law enforcement principles and practices required by the Municipal Police



Training Act (Act 120), conducted by a contracted, certified training institution. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission conducts an additional 32 weeks of training at its H.R. Stackhouse School of Fisheries Conservation and Watercraft Safety in Bellefonte, PA.

This curriculum includes:

- About 20 weeks of classroom training in fish and boat laws and regulations, watercraft safety, land and water management, fish propagation, fisheries biology and conservation. It also includes weapons use, physical training and public relations.
- About seven weeks of field training in various parts of the state under the direction of experienced Waterways Conservation Officers who serve as Field Training Officers.
- About five weeks of evaluated on-the-job training while assigned to a specific law enforcement regional office.



What is the duty assignment for a newly appointed Waterways Conservation Officer?

Newly commissioned Waterways Conservation Officers are assigned to vacant patrol districts wherever they may occur in the Commonwealth. They are required to establish a residence within their assigned district and maintain an office in their residence. Officers work independently, without daily supervision. They work in an assigned patrol area, where they look for and confront violators of laws they are empowered to enforce. Waterways Conservation Officers issue verbal warnings and citations, make physical arrests and file appropriate criminal charges. They serve warrants, present evidence at hearings and court proceedings, investigate water pollution incidents and stock fish. Officers investigate boating accidents and fatalities, and detect, apprehend and prosecute alcohol-impaired and drug-impaired watercraft operators. They also make public appearances to conduct classes or presentations on topics related to their employment. Waterways Conservation Officers are also responsible for managing a staff of volunteer Deputy Waterways Conservation Officers.



What is the compensation for Waterways Conservation Officers?

Established in 1866, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission continues to be a national leader in conservation. Waterways Conservation Officers are members of one of the premier conservation law enforcement organizations. They are paid at a rate determined by state contract and receive generous fringe benefits in addition to an assigned patrol vehicle. The Commission provides officers with uniforms and the necessary equipment to perform their duties. Voluntary transfer and promotional opportunities periodically arise.



LEARN MORE OR APPLY NOW!

If you believe you meet the criteria and are interested in becoming a Waterways Conservation Officer, learn more or begin the application process by contacting any of the following:

- The Commission's Harrisburg headquarters Human Resources Office at 717-705-7820, or email ra-pfbchr@state.pa.us.
- A Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission regional office:

Northwest	814-337-0444
Southwest	814-445-8974
Northcentral	814-359-5250
Southcentral	717-486-7087
Northeast	570-477-5717
Southeast	717-626-0228

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission contact information also appears on the Commission's web site, www.fish.state.pa.us.

- The Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission's web site address is www.scsc.state.pa.us. You can also contact the three state Civil Service Commission's regional offices:

Harrisburg	717-783-3058
Pittsburgh	412-565-7666
Philadelphia	215-560-2253

www.fish.state.pa.us



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A Career as a Waterways Conservation Officer

