Whether you’re at work or home, asleep or burning the midnight oil, EBMUD is there for you. Hours after the sun goes down, EBMUD employees are at work so you can start your day with water.

At the Walnut Creek Water Treatment Plant, Miguel, one of EBMUD’s 29 Senior Water Treatment Operators, monitors the characteristics of our water as he refills a reservoir after a day’s use. He watches weather predictions for how much water will be needed in the following days and stands ready to switch controls to manual if anything out of the ordinary occurs. During his shift, he samples water every three hours: 1 a.m., 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.

Meanwhile, at our Wastewater Treatment Plant at the base of the Bay Bridge in Oakland, plant operator Kory monitors the process that treats millions of gallons of sewage that arrives at the plant. When there’s rain, the amount of waste and storm water that enters the plant can be eight times as much as normal, so Kory also keeps an eye on the weather.

At the shoreline directly below the Bay Bridge, Rochelle runs a water sample from the dechlorination station to the lab for tests. Throughout the night, she verifies that the cleaned wastewater we put in the Bay is safe for the environment.

Elsewhere, plumbers, public information officers, environmental inspectors, water quality experts and many others sleep next to cell phones that will ring them awake if they’re needed to handle an emergency.

The business day begins at 8 a.m. In the Finance Department at our Administration Building in downtown Oakland, our Manager of Budget, Jeanne, is reviewing spending and staffing to ensure every project stays on budget. She watches water consumption, statewide water and wastewater rates, and how new technology is making finance more efficient.

On the floor below, Tom, an engineer, inspects the final maps of seismic improvements at Chabot Dam to certify that the project was built as designed. Rick, a management analyst, surveys a proposal by PG&E to purchase EBMUD conservation credits that help mitigate the environmental impacts of their construction. The purchase of those credits helps EBMUD pay for land management that protects the habitat for the endangered whipsnake.

Tara, another engineer, studies the structural differences between two types of plastic pipe. The first, she discovers, is stronger than the other, but the second might be more useful in hilly areas where flexible pipes fare better during earthquakes. Her information will inform a decision about...
what types of materials EBMUD should use.

In Pinole, Ranger Leatha lifts a large branch that’s fallen from a tree along Pinole Creek as a small steelhead fish passes by. EBMUD Biologist Bert has spent years working with partner agencies to restore that creek to allow native fish to populate our watershed. Ensuring healthy ecosystems and environmental stewardship is at the core of all we do.

In Emeryville, Kristin, a Water Conservation Representative, completes a site visit of a senior housing facility that is upgrading to new low-flow toilets. Kristin takes inventory and completes the math that shows this upgrade could save the complex 240,000 gallons of water each year.

Amy in Human Resources walks a new employee through hiring paperwork, making certain the new employee understands that civil service status means she is part of the teams that will restore our communities after a major disaster or emergency.

Indoors, 24 Customer Service Representatives who know a little about everything at EBMUD help more than 1,300 individual customers each day. That’s 55 customers per rep per shift who receive help with billing and service issues.

Elsewhere, 12 Meter Readers and 20 Meter Mechanics walk neighborhoods to collect water use data and resolve concerns. Each of them can read up to 450 meters per day.

As the regular business day winds down, the swing shift kicks into gear. Most of our work to install new pipes occurs during regular business hours. However our maintenance work continues around the clock.

In Dispatch, Tracie juggles multiple phone calls about a main break in Berkeley and dispatches a plumbing crew. They will work until the main is fixed and water is turned back on. Tracie continues taking reports of low water pressure and any other water emergency.

While crews work into the sunset, Kathryn, a Community Affairs Representative, and Dave, an engineer, update the Lafayette City Council about our work. EBMUD is upgrading our Diablo Vista Pumping Plant to improve efficiency and provide critical water delivery to the communities of Lafayette, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek. Kathryn provides an update to the city council while Dave is prepared to answer technical questions.

And in Orinda, Doug, a Water System Inspector, takes samples of foam that fire crews used to extinguish a car fire. The foam is near a creek and Doug must ensure that it’s nontoxic and won’t affect any wildlife or fish in the EBMUD watershed.

The evening winds down, but EBMUD is still at work. We’re at water and wastewater treatment plants, and in public streets 24 hours a day, so that you always have reliable water of the highest quality and your environment remains a treasure.