

Thousands of people work in Chicago's government. You probably see the mayor on television. And you see other government workers in your community. If you see a police officer or a crossing guard, they are government workers. They are safety workers, responsible for the security of many people.

There are other safety workers you don't see, but they keep you safe and secure. There are food inspectors. They go to restaurants, not to eat, but to check for problems. They make sure the restaurant is clean so that customers won't get sick. You may have seen a sign on a restaurant that it was closed by the health department. That means the inspectors have found serious problems when they checked the kitchen and dining areas. The restaurant will be inspected again before it is allowed to open. Sometimes a person gets sick because of food at a restaurant. That person usually takes a day to recover, and it can be more serious. Some people even have to go to the hospital after they get food poisoning.

There are many workers who help run the city's systems. One of the systems you don't see is mostly underground. It is the sewer system, the system that carries the dirty water from homes and businesses. The water goes to a sewage treatment site where it is cleaned. There are many jobs at that site, including some workers to check every hour to make sure that the water is clean enough, using chemistry to analyze the water. Workers have to make sure the sewers are working; they check on the flow and they need to check for leaks. They may need to replace a part of the system. If you have ever seen a hole in the road and workers digging deep underground, you know they're probably fixing a sewer. When a sewer breaks, it is urgent to fix it. If they don't fix it right away, it could become a health problem.

There's another system that involves water. It is the water system. People in Chicago have very clean water. The water you drink comes from the lake. About fifty years ago, it would come right from the lake and go into people's homes. Pipes carried it to the homes. People might turn on the faucet and get water and a little fish. Yes, a fish could come into the home from the pipes. It would have traveled from the lake to the home.

Pipes still carry water to the homes, but now it is filtered first. There is a very big filtration plant along the lakeshore. Water is pumped into the plant, where there are big pipes and containers where it is cleaned. Then it is pumped to homes and businesses through the system of pipes under the city.

There are some other systems that are part of the city but not part of government. Businesses run those systems. One system that a business runs is the electrical system. You pay for the electricity you get, and that payment pays for the cost of running that system. You don't pay a company for the inspectors who work in the health system. You pay the government. You pay for that service when you pay taxes. All the systems fit together, and each part is important to everyone in Chicago.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What would happen if someone got sick because she ate bad food at a restaurant?
- a. She would go back to eat there soon.
 - b. A health inspector would go there.
 - c. She would get better right away.
 - d. The restaurant would have more customers.

2. What would happen if the pipe carrying water to your community broke?
- a. The sewer would crack.
 - b. People would move.
 - c. The city would send workers to repair it.
 - d. The neighbors would fix it.

3. What would happen if people did not pay taxes?
- a. There would be many problems.
 - b. Businesses would take over the services.
 - c. The city would stop fixing sewers.
 - d. The government would close.

4. What skill do you think the managers of the sewer system need?
- a. How to get a job.
 - b. How to test water.
 - c. How to drive.
 - d. How to fix a street.

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

How do you think customers would feel after a restaurant is closed by the health department?

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

| Item | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--------|---|---|---|---|
| Answer | b | c | a | b |

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. Worried.

I am someone you don't know but who ensures your safety. I have a position at the Department of Streets and Sanitation. We take care of the streets and the sewers, too. I go to work at midnight, and that's a hard time to work, when most people are asleep. I work 8 hours. It took me a while to get accustomed to working at night. Now I'm used to it, although I would prefer a daytime work schedule.

Most people work during the day--that's a normal schedule for working. Their workplace closes at night, and that's what people call a 9 to 5 job, it's called business hours. They don't have to be there to take care of things during the night. Sewer workers have to be available 24 hours a day. You can't close our office, it's a system everyone counts on all the time, so someone has to be on duty. If a sewer breaks in the middle of the night, we have to fix it immediately. If we don't fix it right away, the problem will get worse.

One night I was on duty, and there was a problem in a community. I got a call from a homeowner who was very concerned. She was calling to report that the sewer was broken and it was a severe problem. I asked her how she knew it was severe, and she said there was dirty water coming back up into their street. I replied that it sounded like a serious problem and we would respond right away.

I didn't go to fix the problem because that's not my job. My job is to identify a problem and then figure out how to solve it. She informed me of the problem, and I dispatched workers to fix it. I looked at the map on the computer, and it showed that she was correct, there was a leak. We have sensors under the street that tell us when there is a leak and its exact location. Technology has made my job easier.

I sent a team to fix the problem. Some of them were on duty. Others were off duty. I called them at home and asked them to meet the team at her street. They had to close the street for several hours while they repaired it. First they dug a hole to get to the sewer and located the leak, which they plugged temporarily so that the water stopped flowing onto the street. Then they had to replace a part of the pipeline. That took a lot of effort, but they got it done.

Most nights it is not that difficult to do my job. Often it is very calm, no problems occur. When we do have a problem, we have to get it solved right away. So that's why I'm on night duty.

My wife is a police officer, and she works nights, too. She and I both know it's important to have people on duty 24 hours every day. We make sure that when you wake up in the morning, the city is safe and healthy.

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

6. What could happen if the sewer department had business hours?

- a. A problem at night would be worse.
- b. The workers would make less money.
- c. The city would have more taxes.
- d. Drivers would have to be careful.

7. What is a skill that the sewer manager needs?

- a. How to measure.
- b. How to communicate.
- c. How to drive.
- d. How to repair pipes.

8. What is a skill that the sewer repair team needs?

- a. How to use a drill.
- b. How to talk with homeowners.
- c. How to work together.
- d. How to clean water.

9. What would happen if the manager did not have a computer?

- a. He would have to guess where the problem is.
- b. He would ask his team to look for water.
- c. He would call the homeowner.
- d. He would use a paper map.

10. *Write your own answer to this question. How do you make a prediction?*

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

| | | | | |
|--------|---|---|---|---|
| Item | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Answer | a | b | c | d |

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. You look at the information. You think what could happen.