Dairy Utilities Engineer

Engineering and maintenance

Job title	Dairy Utilities Engineer
Department	Engineering and maintenance
Reports to	Engineering Manager
Direct reports	None (may direct contractors and utilities operators)
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Keeps the services that every dairy process depends on running safely and efficiently: steam boilers, refrigeration and chilled water, compressed air, water treatment and supply, hot water and CIP supply, effluent plant and site electrical distribution. Plans maintenance, manages statutory inspections and contractors, and drives down energy and water use.

Key responsibilities

Running and maintaining the services

- Run and maintain the steam boilers, including water treatment, blowdown and daily water tests
- Keep the refrigeration plant, often ammonia, and the glycol or ice-water systems at the temperatures production needs
- Maintain the compressed air system, including dryers and filtration, to the food-grade standard the site sets
- Look after water treatment, softening and reverse osmosis where used, and the site water supply
- Keep steam, hot water and chemical dosing available so CIP can run on time
- Run the effluent treatment plant and keep discharges within the consent limits
- Carry out planned preventive maintenance and keep spares and job records in the maintenance system

Safety, inspections and compliance

- Arrange statutory inspections of pressure systems, lifting equipment and electrical installations by a competent person, as required where the job is based, and close out the findings
- Apply permit to work, isolation and lock-out rules to all work on utilities plant, including confined spaces and hot work
- Follow the site rules for ammonia and other refrigerants, and act on leak alarms straight away
- Carry out legionella controls on cooling towers, evaporative condensers and hot and cold water systems, and record the results
- Treat any boiler water, effluent or other test result outside its limit as a failure and act on it at once
- Report accidents, near misses and unsafe conditions straight away

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Energy, water and improvement

- Read the energy and water meters and report use per litre of milk
- Find and deliver savings such as heat recovery, boiler economisers, variable speed drives and condensate return
- Cut steam, compressed air and water losses by finding and fixing leaks
- Match the utilities plant to production demand, including 24-hour running and milk intake
- Suggest changes that make the services more reliable or cheaper to run

Contractors, records and teamwork

- Brief, supervise and sign off contractors working under permit
- Direct utilities operators where the site has them
- Keep inspection reports, test records, drawings and maintenance history complete and up to date
- Work with the production and CIP teams to plan shutdowns and keep services available when needed
- Take part in the on-call rota and respond to utilities failures out of hours
- Give a clear handover of plant status and open faults

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Time-served engineer or an engineering qualification (Level 3 or above, or equivalent) in mechanical, electrical or building services
- Experience of boilers, refrigeration or compressed air in a food, dairy or process site
- Working knowledge of permit to work, isolation and pressure systems safety
- Able to read engineering drawings and fault-find on plant
- Willingness to provide on-call cover as part of a rota
- Good record keeping

Desirable

- Refrigeration qualification and ammonia safety training
- Boiler operation certificate
- Refrigerant handling certificate, as required where the job is based
- Electrical qualification
- Water treatment or legionella training
- Energy management training
- Experience of effluent plants
- IOSH or similar safety training

Skills and attributes

- Methodical fault-finding
- Planning and organising work
- Safety discipline
- Clear communication with production and contractors
- Cost awareness
- Practical problem solving

Measures of success

- Utilities available when production needs them
- Statutory inspections completed on time with no overdue actions
- No safety incidents on utilities plant
- Energy and water use per litre of milk falling
- Planned maintenance completed to schedule

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- Contractor work supervised and signed off
- Records complete and up to date

Working conditions and safety

Site based, with on-call cover as part of a rota. The work takes place in plant rooms, boiler houses, on roofs and in confined spaces, in hot, cold and noisy areas, with ammonia and chemical hazards and work at height; PPE and training are provided.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow food safety, hygiene, HACCP and quality procedures at all times
- Report hazards, accidents, near misses and concerns promptly

This job description outlines the main duties of the role. It is not a complete list, and the employer may update it as the business changes, in consultation with the jobholder.

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