

Coe Center starts water technology training

By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News/ September 27, 2013

Training to begin a career with initial earning potential ranging from nearly \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year is now being offered in Valley Springs.

The Coe Trade & technology Center in Valley Springs, in cooperation with Calaveras Unified School District of Madera County has started a “water school” with online, video conferencing, hands-on and classroom instruction at Jenny Lind Elementary School.

Several local residents have enrolled and are actively involved in receiving water technology instruction. The course can be taken online, and while participating in the classroom instruction Saturday mornings at Jenny Lind Elementary is not mandatory, it is encouraged.

The water school is just the beginning and will serve as the nucleus of what founder Tom Coe envisions as a larger program and learning center for the Valley Springs area.

“The instructional leadership of the water school and our center has created a unique plan of action to reverse the existing conditions and focus on worthwhile programs to meet the needs of foothill residents desiring to elevate their skill and educational levels without the commute,” Coe said.

He has several hundred acres off Paloma Road he would like to develop as the learning center.

“Plans are being developed to build a water technology park on the Coe campus, attracting all types of water-related manufacturers and entities to the region to not only enhance education, economic development and job opportunities,” said Steve Christianson, the water school instructor. “We anticipate working with the county to utilize the many talents and resources available for the benefit of the region. These cooperative assets, working in unison are vital to bringing much needed economic development.”

The cost to enroll in the 11-month program is nearly \$7,500 and successful completion of the water technology course qualifies applicants to take the state certification tests that are administered through the California Department of Health Services twice a year.

Students who pass the testing may qualify for job with benefits and starting salaries from \$18 to \$28 per hour, said Dr. William Troost, vice chancellor of education at the Coe Center.

The need for people certified in water treatment technology is great, Christianson said. The industry is facing 40 percent retirement and ever tightening public safety regulation.

The state has 8,300 registered water systems and that number will continue to grow, he added.

Those interested in learning more about the program can contact Jan@Water-School.com, or visit water-school.com.