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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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SEATTLE - Amidst engineers who regulate Washington dams during flood emergencies, are an unusually high concentration of women hydraulic engineers and dam regulators in a progressive U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's district.

Half of Seattle District's Reservoir Control Center (RCC), which will likely be activated to 24-hour shifts this afternoon, is directed by women with master's degrees and high levels of technical skill to analyze forecasts and balance river levels by controlling dams.

Marian Valentine, the senior water manager attributes the diverse workforce to the progressive culture of the district. Every member of the team is extremely talented, men and women, but it is still rare to find such a balance of women in this field compared to men.

Women compose of only 9 percent of all civil engineers according to a 2004 fact sheet published by the Department of Professional Employees. Less than one in ten engineers, 9.48 percent are women. That's up slightly from 1993 when it was 7.85 percent according to the National Science Foundation.

There are 12 engineers who regularly staff the RCC and 6 hydrological technicians who assist them.

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