

Employee Spotlight: David Uhrbrock



Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm married, and my wife has been with Spectrum Health for over 22 years, working closely with dementia patients. We have two children - Tiffani and Josani. Josani resides in Ann Arbor and Tiffani works in the Kent County Sheriff's Office. I got my start as an electrician in the construction industry back in the late 1980s, during a time when jobs weren't always stable. In the 1990s, I was fortunate to be hired by Kent County, where I've had steady work ever since. Kent County is the best employer that I know of. The County provides stable employment which has allowed me to provide for my family. I overcame obstacles in the early years but have maintained a positive attitude and strong work ethic, which I hope my co-workers have come to rely on.

What is your position at Kent County and what individuals do you work with?

I'm a Master Electrician for Kent County. My main responsibility is supporting the Sheriff's Office, along with taking on a range of other county projects.

What are two or three things that staff should know about your role?

One key part of my job is performing a power outage test once a month. This is a state requirement to ensure our facilities remain secure and all backup systems are functioning properly.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? What is the most challenging?

The most rewarding part is tackling the unique challenges that come up, especially during outages, and getting everything back up and running smoothly.

Reflecting on my career, the crane collapse was probably the biggest challenge I have had to overcome. There was a lot of strenuous work that it took to get the building electricity restored while running the facility on generators and backup batteries.

Do you have any interesting/fun stories about working in Kent County?

One of the first stories that comes to mind was back in 1995. I was just about to enter a room when I had a strange feeling and decided to step away. A few moments later, I heard an explosion. When I went back to check, smoke was pouring out of the door.

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We later found that a switch had blown off the wall due to a generator and utility power conflict.

Another time, I was asked to change an outdoor light using a lift, with the help of a trustee. A strong gust of wind came through and nearly knocked the lift over, but the trustee held onto it, keeping us safe until the wind passed.

One of my proudest accomplishments was in 2000 when two co-workers and I built a mobile generator backup system for the courts from the ground up. We put together the trailer, transformers, and switches to create a fully functional mobile unit. It was a big project, and to this day, it's a highlight of my career.

