

ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST

This class specification indicates, in general terms, the type and level of work performed as well as the responsibilities of employees in this classification. The job functions described are not to be interpreted as being all-inclusive to any specific employee.

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of professional, technical, and analytical duties and responsibilities in support of OC San's environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance programs such as conducting routine to moderately complex environmental analyses and studies, collecting and analyzing wastewater, marine, air, ocean sediment, fish tissue, and industrial waste samples, and conducting field work; troubleshoots and repairs equipment and instrumentation; assists in preparing, compiling, and analyzing data for the generation, submission, and distribution of reports and related documentation; and performs duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the assigned supervisory and/or managerial staff. Exercises no direct supervision of staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This classification is the second of four levels within the environmental job series. The focus at this level is both a technical and analytical role, with work involving conducting analyses, studies, sampling, and field work. Positions at this level are not expected to function with the same amount of program knowledge or skill level as positions allocated to the senior-level and exercise less independent judgment and initiative in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. This class is distinguished from the Senior Environmental Specialist in that the latter performs the full range of journey-level duties and is responsible for the more complex programs and projects that require a higher level of knowledge and skill and that, in collaboration with other staff, may have OC San-wide impact.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

The following essential job functions are typical for this classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed job functions and/or may be required to perform additional or different job functions from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.

- Participates in routine to moderately complex sampling, extraction, testing, and analyses in support of various environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance programs and OC San and division goals, such as toxicity testing on OC San discharges, invertebrate taxonomy identification, ocean monitoring sampling, stormwater, biosolids, water quality sampling, industrial waste samples using manual and automated method, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) sampling and analyses.
- Performs basic statistical calculations and data input and analyses using specialized computer software; performs graphical analysis of data; assists in interpreting test results and troubleshooting causes of

discharge or other water quality problems; maintains required documentation and prepares reports on testing and analyses.

- Learns to analyze and provide data for the preparation and review of designated sections of the annual report to ensure accuracy, completeness, and adherence to regulatory requirements; reviews and comments on data; participates in performing quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) review of the annual report for accuracy, format, and consistency of data; performs similar activities for monthly and quarterly reports.
- Performs routine and non-complex fieldwork for sampling efforts; learns to set up, operate, calibrate, maintain, and troubleshoot sampling and monitoring equipment and instrumentation; collects, organizes, prepares, extracts, and processes a wide variety of samples for permit compliance and regional or special projects and studies; receives and/or preserves samples and documents in sample preservation log and in Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) database according to established procedures.
- Learns to use and perform regular and preventative maintenance on basic equipment and instruments; cleans and prepares glassware; maintains quality assurance logs for equipment.
- Assists in coordinating sampling and data submissions from OC San laboratories and contractors; monitors and tracks data handling activities and transfer of samples or data to ensure contract compliance and adherence to OC San policies and procedures as well as regulatory requirements; performs monitoring activities and on-site inspections; coordinates data review with department staff; participates in performing QA/QC review on contractors sampling and monitoring data and regulatory submissions to evaluate procedures and ensure accuracy, completeness, and adherence to prescribed format.
- Assists in working with outside research facilities on cooperative ventures; assists in preparation of comprehensive reports and may present findings to superiors, other agencies, and the general public.
- Participates in public relations programs including education and outreach programs and activities.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of environmental protection, compliance, and monitoring; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to OC San needs.
- When assigned to Ocean Monitoring, may require field work on OC San's marine vessel.
- Ensures safety and health procedures and precautions are adhered to, corrects unsafe work conditions/practices, and/or reports unsafe work conditions/practices to assigned supervisory or managerial staff.
- Performs duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic practices and methods of environmental and/or laboratory testing and analysis.
- Basic principles and techniques of sampling procedures, statistical sampling, and analysis.
- Basic principles and applications of critical thinking and analysis.
- Basic principles and practices of QA/QC related to environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance.
- Regulatory framework for NPDES permitting.
- Principles and procedures of record keeping and reporting.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and ordinances relevant to area(s) of responsibility.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Current equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Collect samples from a variety of sites/sources and in varying conditions; analyze data and samples and interpret results.
- Apply critical thinking and analysis in completing assignments.
- Troubleshoot, maintain, and repair equipment and instrumentation; clean and wash lab equipment correctly and safely.
- Operate a variety of sampling and testing equipment and instrumentation in the field and laboratory.
- Learn and apply basic principles and operations of wastewater collection systems and wastewater processing, including pretreatment methods, system design, wastewater engineering, industrial operations, wet processes and categorization, odor control, and wastewater flows and characteristics.
- Learn and apply principles and practices of toxic and hazardous waste management and disposal.
- Collect, chart, and compile data and participate in the preparation of clear and concise reports.
- Operate a vehicle and travel to field and OC San sites, projects, and/or meetings.
- Maintain accurate logs, records and basic written records of work performed.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical calculations.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, legal, and procedural guidelines.
- Comply with safe work practices and procedures in the workplace.
- Provide a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and OC San staff.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Employment Standards:

Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be qualifying as determined by OC San.

1. Bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by the U.S. Department of Education, with major coursework in biology, chemistry, microbiology, environmental science, marine biology, statistics, and/or quality assurance, or a related field.

Licenses and/or Certifications:

- Must possess a valid California Class C Driver's License.

Disaster Service Workers:

All Orange County Sanitation District employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through state law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with the Orange County Sanitation District requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are required to complete all related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- Mobility to work in a laboratory and standard office setting and use laboratory and standard office equipment, including a computer; standing in work areas and walking between work areas is required;

occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.

- Mobility to work in the field and to take samples and conduct inspections at various OC San sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary access points; ability to operate a motor vehicle to travel to various OC San sites, projects and/or meetings.
- When assigned to work on OC San's marine vessel, must be capable of working in wet, unstable conditions, at times while the vessel is under way to the next sampling location.
- Perform medium to heavy physical work; standing in work areas and walking between work areas, within treatment plants, and in the field and to conduct inspections and take samples is required.
- Lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 51 pounds.
- Lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 200 pounds, or heavier weights up to 300 pounds on an occasional basis, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; color vision to identify chemical and biological solvents and substances.
- Vision to inspect and operate equipment.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate laboratory and standard office equipment.
- Finger dexterity to operate and repair tools and equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

- Office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.
- Field work with exposure to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, hazardous physical substances and fumes, dust, and air contaminants.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- May be required to work extended hours, including nights, weekends, and holidays when necessary.
- Probationary Period: All OC San employees, except classifications considered "at-will", are subject to the probationary period provisions as specified in the applicable Memorandum of Understanding, policies, and/or resolutions. Employees who have not yet successfully completed their initial probationary period serve "at-will" and may be released from employment without cause or recourse to any appeal or grievance procedures.
- Pre-Employment: All employment offers are contingent upon successful completion of OC San's pre-employment process, which includes a background investigation, a physical examination, and a drug screen.
- Work Location Assignment: Employees will be assigned to a work location based on business needs which may be located at any/all of OC San locations; this work location may be changed at any time.