

## PRINCIPAL 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 direction, develops, implements, and manages the most complex programs, environmental studies, and field work activities in support of OC San's environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance programs; performs methods development, improvement, and validation; coordinates preparation of and writes regulatory and technical reports; develops, recommends, and implements division policies and procedures; serves as program/project lead; formulates and implements changes to OC San's ordinances and assigned programs, projects, and activities; and performs duties as assigned.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general direction from assigned supervisory and/or managerial staff. Exercises no direct supervision of staff. May exercise functional and technical leadership in assigned workgroups or teams and coach and/or mentor less experienced staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This classification is the fourth of four levels within the environmental job series responsible for performing the most difficult and responsible assignments, projects, analyses, and programs assigned requiring advanced knowledge of the concepts, practices, procedures, and policies of environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance programs. Positions at this level provide technical and functional direction and leadership to assigned staff. Assignments at this level have significant impact on OC San programs and operations. Completed work is reviewed only from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other work, and/or effectiveness in meeting requirements and expected results. This class is distinguished from the Regulatory Specialist in that the latter performs duties related to regulatory review, analysis, and advocacy requiring advanced-level knowledge and expertise in assigned areas.

### **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.*

- Serves as an expert and/or internal consultant to management regarding environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance programs and studies in support of water quality, process control, ocean monitoring, resource protection, biosolids, air quality, and related programs and studies to ensure compliance with quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) plans and practices and regulatory requirements; conducts audits and evaluations of assigned programs; develops reports on findings and verifies that corrective action has been taken to mitigate and/or resolve deficiencies.
- Develops and coordinates projects requiring field and scientific studies, investigations, testing, and analysis; develops methods and schedules; serves as project manager and provides direct oversight of

- project team members; meets and adheres to permit and regulatory requirements; prepares all required reports and position papers ensuring document quality control.
- Performs methods development, improvement, and validation; recommends and implements improved methods; advises management on best methods for analysis; participates in and oversees new procedure setups and experimentation; writes, reviews, and updates laboratory operating procedures.
  - Coordinates and oversees the work of external contractors; writes requests for proposals, organizes meetings, reviews invoices and work performed, and reviews and approves work products.
  - Oversees and participates in the ordering, monitoring, and inventory of chemicals, supplies, equipment, instrumentation, and materials; recommends purchase of new and/or replacement equipment.
  - Develops schedules for and coordinates the preparation of all major reports including annual and quarterly reports, in accordance with OC San's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit; performs various statistical calculations; prepares technical text and tables for reports; reviews and edits sections of the reports.
  - Plans, formulates, recommends, and implements approved division policies and procedures for establishing program, project, and/or operational parameters; implements changes to policies, procedures, and parameters in concert with ordinance and regulatory changes.
  - Develops and maintains database management systems; interfaces with appropriate staff in support of programming activities; designs and generates reports for use in quarterly and annual reports ensuring document quality control.
  - Reviews and analyzes regulations and reports on the impact on OC San's programs; recommends changes to OC San ordinances; evaluates and responds to comments on ordinance revisions; participates in meetings with regulatory and partner agencies to discuss and coordinate permitting, monitoring, and enforcement requirements, regulatory changes, program modifications, and ordinance revisions.
  - Conducts advanced and highly complex testing and analyses of wastewater, ocean water, and industrial waste samples; prepares laboratory equipment for test sequences; collects and analyzes data and prepares concise and understandable reports and summaries; manages laboratory accreditation.
  - Performs advanced and highly complex field work for sampling efforts; operates, calibrates, maintains, and troubleshoots sampling and environmental monitoring equipment and instrumentation; collects, processes, and analyzes a wide variety of samples for permit compliance and overall environmental compliance efforts.
  - Attends and participates in professional group meetings; serves on various technical advisory or professional organization committees; makes presentations to regulatory agencies and professional groups; stays abreast of new trends, innovations, and legislative changes in the field of environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to OC San needs.
  - Provides leadership and guidance to others on programs and/or projects; as a program and/or project leader, may direct, assign, train, monitor, and review the work activities of team members; determines work priorities; oversees quality and quantity of work performed and ensures adherence to established procedures by instructing employees accordingly; is a resource to employees by possessing specialized skills; and develops and implements work improvements.
  - 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:**

- Advanced principles, practices, and methods of environmental and/or laboratory testing and analysis.

- Advanced principles, practices, and methods related to the care, maintenance, troubleshooting and repair of environmental and/or laboratory equipment and instrumentation.
- Advanced principles and techniques of environmental monitoring, including sample collection, constituent preservation, chain of custody procedures, and approved analytical methods, statistical sampling, and analysis.
- Principles and practices of program and project management.
- Advanced principles and operations of wastewater collection systems and wastewater processing, including pretreatment methods, source control, system design, wastewater engineering, industrial operations, wet processes, and categorization, and wastewater flows and characteristics.
- Advanced principles and applications of critical thinking and analysis.
- Principles and practices of QA/QC and auditing related to environmental protection, monitoring, and compliance.
- Principles and procedures of record keeping and reporting.
- Techniques for effectively representing OC San in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- 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:**

- Plan, schedule, assign, and oversee activities of assigned workgroups or teams on a project and/or ongoing basis and promote the individual professional growth and development of less experienced staff; train others on work procedures; identify and implement effective course of action to complete assigned work; inspect the work of others and maintain established quality control standards.
- Resolve conflict through workable solutions and alternative approaches.
- Apply critical thinking and analysis to a broad range of situations and in making decisions and problem solving.
- Identify problems, research and analyze relevant information, and develop and present recommendations and justification for solution.
- Evaluate and recommend improvements in operations, procedures, policies, or methods.
- Develop, plan, and conduct complex research projects on a wide variety of environmental compliance topics; independently provide guidance, document review, and general oversight for projects; design information gathering tools; analyze problems, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical reports.
- Write scientific and technical papers that are understandable to non-technical readers.
- Collect samples from a variety of sites/sources and in varying conditions; analyze data and samples and interpret results.
- Conduct inspections or audits to gather information and determine compliance with permitting, monitoring, and enforcement requirements; document findings and implement follow up action.
- Troubleshoot, maintain, and repair equipment and instrumentation.
- Read, analyze, and interpret technical documents such as engineering drawings, process flow schematics, and site plans.
- Operate a motor vehicle and travel to various OC San sites, projects, and/or meetings.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical calculations.
- Maintain accurate logs, records and basic written records of work performed.
- Effectively represent the department and OC San in meetings with governmental agencies, contractors, vendors, and various businesses, professional, regulatory, and legislative organizations.

- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; 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.
2. Five (5) years of work experience in a testing laboratory, field collection environment, and/or related environmental compliance 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 light to medium 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 35 pounds.
- Lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 51 pounds, or heavier weights 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.