

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST I

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

This is an entry level professional classification and is under the direction of a supervisor or lead. Positions of this class are responsible for protecting the health of citizens by enforcing environmental health rules and regulations in the County's service area. Employees in this class work within well-defined directives, regulations and procedures. Environmental Health Specialist IIs are available for consultation, and work results may be reviewed for soundness of technical judgment and quality of recommendations. Unusual problems or situations are discussed with a lead or supervisor. Employees are usually assigned to one of the following specialized areas: subsurface sewage disposal, retail food establishment, solid and hazardous waste, or water quality. Assists in other environmental health programs as assigned.

CLASSIFICATION DISTINCTIONS

The Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) I classification is the entry level in the alternately staffed Environmental Health Specialist job family. Incumbents work under the guidance and direction of an EHS II or Lead performing the more routine case work in assigned area(s). Incumbents hired in the EHS I classification are expected to progress to the EHS II level.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Sewage Disposal:

- Gathers scientific information from the site to determine whether or not site is suitable for a septic system.
- Operates auger to drill test holes, obtains soil sample, analyses soil sample, and determines if soil characteristics, slope, surface water, and potential ground water sources meet current standards.
- Issues or denied on-site sewage disposal permits based on physical data, records, previous site approvals or denials, and other information.
- Inspects septic systems during construction and upon completion to determine if construction meets standards.
- Consults with the general public to provide advice or explain conditions regarding the site.
- Consults with professionals regarding site characteristics and proper septic system installation.
- Reviews plans and specifications of onsite sewage systems for compliance with health standards.

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- Investigates complaints received from the public concerning sewage disposal and prepares reports.

Retail Food:

- Resolves complaints concerning food borne illnesses by interviewing affected individuals, obtaining clinical specimens, collecting food samples, interviewing employees, tracing possible sources of contamination, consulting with state epidemiologist, evaluating findings and writing reports.
- Conducts inspections of schools, restaurants, grocery stores, taverns, bakeries, meat markets and other retail food establishments according to assigned schedule.
- Records violations found during inspections, evaluates findings, discusses with owner or manager, and determines correction priorities.
- Makes follow-up evaluations and initiates enforcement procedures, if necessary.
- Provides information on building requirements for new and remodeled food establishments and answers questions from the public regarding public health requirements for food service establishments.
- Reviews submitted plans for food establishments and conducts pre-opening inspections to see that requirements are met.
- Gives presentations to food service workers and other groups regarding the prevention of food borne illnesses and proper food handling procedures.

Solid and Hazardous Waste:

- Conducts inspections around landfills and other solid waste handling and processing sites to monitor ground water, surface water and methane gas.
- Collect samples for testing as necessary
- Conduct field testing as appropriate
- Conducts routine and complaint inspections of solid waste disposal, recycling, transfer station and other solid waste processing facilities.
- Develops compliance schedules and issues permits for limited purpose landfills and other solid waste disposal and processing sites.
- Reviews and comments on operating, monitoring and closure/post-closure plans for permitted solid waste handling facilities.
- Writes reports and letters of compliance determination to landfill and other solid waste facility owner/operators.
- Attends meetings to explain or receive information regarding the program.
- Makes presentations to community organizations regarding solid and hazardous waste issues.

Water Quality:

- Reviews plans and specifications of small public water systems for compliance with health standards.
- Conducts on-site inspections to ensure proper materials/equipment are used for the installation and decommissioning of water wells..
- Collects water samples and submits to laboratory for analysis.
- Evaluates water sources for compliance with health standards for adequacy of proposed uses.
- Reviews all plans and specifications for new swimming pools to ensure compliance with health standards.
- Conducts inspections of limited use and general use swimming pools, wading pools, and spas according to assigned schedule.
- Evaluates natural bathing beaches to assure that water quality and bather safety meet health standards.

Miscellaneous:

- Follows up on nuisance complaints.
- Conducts field inspections, writes reports and obtains compliance with regulations.
- Works with medical personnel and veterinarians on communicable disease investigations, and packages and ships specimens for analysis.
- Provides information and direction to the general public in the event of a natural disaster, bioterrorism event or other public health emergency.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience: Bachelor of Science degree in environmental health or a closely related area. Positions assigned to onsite sewage inspection may require an Inspector Certificate of Competency.

Knowledge of

- Standard methods and techniques of inspectional work in environmental sanitation and public health.
- Applicable rules and regulations for the specialized areas assigned.
- Public relations techniques.
- Effective communication techniques, verbally or in writing.

Ability to

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with the public, supervisors, co-workers and business establishments.
- Work independently with limited supervision.
- Work outdoors for extended periods under a wide variety of weather conditions.
- Interpret and apply applicable rule and regulations in the specialty area assigned.
- Obtain a valid driver's license.

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