



**JULY 2012**  
**FLSA: EXEMPT**

## **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 fieldwork activities; performs highly advanced technical and administrative responsibilities related to environmental studies and fieldwork; coordinates preparation of and writes major reports; develops, recommends, and implements division policies and procedures; develops, coordinates, and manages projects; as assigned, serves as project lead; formulates and implements changes to the District's ordinances and environmental management compliance activities; and performs related work as required.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general direction from assigned management or supervisory 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 is the advanced journey-level class within the Environmental Specialist series. Employees perform the most difficult and responsible assignments, projects, analyses, and programs assigned to classes within this series requiring advanced knowledge of the concepts, practices, procedures, and policies of environmental programs. Employees at this level are required to be fully trained in all procedures related to assigned area of responsibility and provide leadership to less experienced staff. Responsibilities may include the oversight of programs and/or projects and leads by example. Assignments at this level have significant impact on environmental operations and require broad knowledge of compliance programs and in-depth knowledge relative to a specific technical area. 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. The most significant differentiator between the two classes is that the Regulatory Specialist builds relationships with regulators and, through committees, task forces, regulatory working groups, comment letters, and regulatory advocacy, affects regulatory development in protecting the District's interests.

### **EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS** (Illustrative Only)

*Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.*

- Serves as an expert and/or internal consultant to management regarding the larger and most complex activities in support of water quality, ocean monitoring, source control, and other environmental compliance programs and related regulatory requirements to ensure that quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) plans and practices are established and adhered to and that regulatory requirements have been met; develops and maintains computerized tracking systems; conducts audits and

- evaluations of compliance programs; develops reports on findings and verifies that corrective action has been taken to resolve deficiencies.
- Develops and coordinates special projects often requiring complex field and scientific studies and investigations; develops methods and schedules; provides direct oversight of project team members; performs document quality control; prepares all required reports.
  - Manages assigned aspects of environmental management programs and projects including ensuring permit requirements are met and tracking and overseeing implementation of new regulations; acts as primary liaison with regulatory agencies for regulatory compliance and inspections; creates and submits monthly compliance and administrative reports including spill reports, reports to Board of Directors, and regulatory reports.
  - Manages studies involving the use of outside services; coordinates contractors' work including writing requests for proposals, organizing meetings, overseeing field operations, and reviewing draft reports and data.
  - Oversees assigned laboratory projects; coordinates logistical and technical meetings with staff; prepares laboratory equipment for test sequences, conducts appropriate testing, collects data, processes reports and data, and prepares concise and understandable summaries.
  - Develops schedules for and coordinates the preparation of all major reports including annual and quarterly reports, in accordance with the District's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit; performs various statistical calculations of data; 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 certain parameters such as industrial wastewater flow rate determinations and for computer operations and applications; develops and maintains database management systems; implements changes in concert with ordinance and regulatory changes; designs and prepares computer reports for use in quarterly and annual reports; performs document quality control; interfaces with appropriate staff in support of programming activities.
  - Reviews and analyzes Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and reports on the impact on the District's pretreatment programs; recommends approved changes to District ordinances; evaluates and prepares responses to comments on ordinance revisions submitted by industries; participates in meetings with various agencies that have inter-jurisdictional agreements with the District to discuss and coordinate program requirements including permitting, monitoring and enforcement, and regulatory changes; participates in meetings with the EPA and Regional Water Quality Control Board on regulatory changes, program modifications, and ordinance revisions.
  - May perform advanced and highly complex fieldwork for sampling efforts; operates, calibrates, maintains, and troubleshoots sampling and environmental monitoring equipment and instrumentation; serves as lead of sampling vessel and/or sampling operation; collects and processes a wide variety of routine to highly unique and unusual samples for permit compliance, regional projects, and/or special studies; studies a wide variety of complex samples and species for purposes of overall environmental compliance efforts; operates sophisticated data collection and analysis computer equipment.
  - Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of environmental compliance; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to District needs.
  - Serves on various technical advisory or professional organization committees; makes presentations to regulatory agencies and professional groups; reviews pending legislation for Federal, State, and local jurisdiction.
  - Conducts special research assignments and projects, gathers data, and prepares reports and position papers for consideration by management.
  - Participates in public relations programs including public education and public outreach programs and activities.
  - When assigned to programs and/or projects, provides leadership and guidance to others. 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 reference to employees by possessing specialized skills; develops and implements work improvements.

- Performs related duties as required.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Advanced scientific principles related to area of assignment such as chemistry, biology, oceanography, and/or marine biology.
- 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 quality assurance/quality control.
- Principles and practices of toxic and hazardous waste management and disposal.
- Techniques of odor control in a wastewater collection system and treatment plant.
- Use and capabilities of computers, automated equipment, and standard applications software.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Principles and procedures of record-keeping and reporting.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work, including word processing, database, laboratory information systems, and spreadsheet applications.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Basic principles and practices of employee supervision.
- Techniques for effectively representing the District in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

### **Ability to:**

- Plan, schedule, assign, and oversee activities of assigned workgroups or teams.
- Oversee programs and/or projects and by example promote the individual professional growth and development of less experienced staff.
- Resolve conflict through workable solutions and alternative approaches.
- Inspect the work of others and maintain established quality control standards.
- Train others on proper work procedures and lead by example.
- Demonstrate safe work practices and procedures in the workplace.
- Apply critical thinking and analysis to a broad range of situations.
- Identify and implement effective course of action to complete assigned work.
- Perform work of a highly specialized nature requiring the ability to use independent judgment and personal initiative.
- Identify problems, research and analyze relevant information, 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; analyze problems, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical reports.
- Independently provide guidance, document review, and general oversight for projects.
- Maintain confidentiality and be discreet in handling and processing confidential information and data.

- Write scientific and technical papers that are understandable to non-technical readers.
- Collect, chart, and compile data and participate in the preparation of clear and concise reports.
- Collect samples at a variety of sites and in varying conditions.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, rules, and regulations.
- 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 critical thinking techniques and advanced methods in reaching independent decisions.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious 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 OCSD.

1. Possession of a bachelor's degree from a college or university which is accredited by the US Department of Education, with major coursework in biological, physical, environmental science, or a related field; AND,
2. Five (5) years of increasingly responsible experience in a testing laboratory, field collection environment, and/or related environmental compliance.

**Licenses and Certifications:**

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment.

**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**

Must possess mobility to work partially in a standard office setting and laboratory and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to inspect various sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary or construction access points; to attend meetings and to operate a motor vehicle; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen and make inspections; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is partially a sedentary office and partially a field operations classification; frequent standing in work areas and walking between work areas is required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment and laboratory and sampling equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 50 pounds.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

Employees work primarily indoors but are occasionally exposed to loud noise levels, vibration, confining workspace, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, and hazardous physical substances, odors,

and fumes. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives and contractors in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.