

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND  
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**Class Code: 002236  
Grade: 20  
FLSA: N**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST I**

**DEFINITION OF SERIES:**

An employee in the Environmental Health Specialist Series performs inspections and investigations of public facilities, insect and rodent problem areas or complaints, new or existing well and septic systems or air, water, noise, or hazardous waste pollution incidents or complaints on a regular basis in an assigned area of the County, or in response to requests for permit approvals.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

This is entry level technical, investigative, and regulatory work involving the enforcement of various codes and regulations designed to protect public health, safety, and the environment.

**MAJOR DUTIES:**

Performs inspections of facilities and writes detailed reports in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Investigates and prepares reports on complaints involving environmental health issues.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)**

All Position Assignments:

- Notifies owners/operators of code violations; advises on methods of correcting deficiencies; prepares timetable for compliance; conducts follow-up investigations to monitor compliance.
- Maintains records of all investigations and enforcement actions. Drafts documentation for cases being referred for revocation hearings or other legal action.
- Issues notices of violation or summonses, prepares cases for prosecution.
- May testify in hearings and court proceedings.
- Investigates complaints; determines whether further action is required and initiates methods to resolve problems; corresponds with complainant as necessary.
- Writes reports documenting inspections, investigations, and enforcement actions, writes correspondence to all concerned parties as necessary.
- Assists in drafting public information materials and provides information concerning compliance with regulations to the public as requested.
- Draws maps and sketches as necessary to document field investigation findings.
- With the assistance of a higher-level employee, assist clients and the public by telephone or in person with their requests for information.

Public Facilities Assignments:

- In assigned area of the County, schedules and conducts on-site inspections and investigations of construction and operating standards in facilities and institutions, such as restaurants; markets; bakeries; nursing homes; group residential homes; public and private schools (including review of immunization records for students in private schools and enforcing requirements for immunizations); tanning salons; and massage establishments and swimming pools, for the purpose of identifying public health and safety hazards.

- Conducts on-site hazard analysis for food preparation and handling. Reviews menus and recipes to determine the critical food preparation steps and the proper methods to protect the food during these preparation steps. Evaluates layout, cleanliness, and condition of facility; observes procedures for display, storage, preparation, serving, and disposing of food. Conducts temperature monitoring of food and equipment and inspects and/or tests equipment; reviews records to insure all necessary records and certificates are maintained; takes samples of food, beverages and potable water as required.
- Inspects seasonal itinerant food vendors, entertainment permits, and special food service events for compliance with applicable regulations.
- May exercise authority to temporarily close a facility that does not meet minimum safety and health standards or presents an imminent health hazard.
- Recommends license revocation proceedings or other enforcement action if facility continues to fail to meet minimum standards.
- May conduct and mediate, under the direction of the supervisor, informal conferences with licensees and their legal representatives to obtain additional information and review compliance agreements; negotiates with both parties to reach a voluntary settlement.
- Under the direction of the supervisor or higher-level employees, reviews and approves architectural plans for remodeling and initial construction of food service facilities and swimming pools. Conducts on-site compliance inspections of new facilities prior to licensing to ensure that the work has been done according to the approved plans and complies with codes/regulations.
- Investigates facilities and institutions alleged to be operating without a license. Determines nature of activity and recommends appropriate legal action.
- Evaluates adulterated food and damaged equipment due to fire, electrical or water shuts-offs, sewage backups or other emergencies; with the assistance of higher level specialists or the supervisor, exercises authority to embargo and dispose food of questionable quality. May be called after normal working hours to assist higher level employees in such investigations.
- Participates in investigations of alleged food-borne illnesses; interviews victims, witnesses, owners, and operators as necessary; takes samples of food, beverages, etc.; with the assistance of higher level specialists, identifies environmental factors contributing to spoilage and contamination of food and directs owners/operators to implement control measures to prevent further illness.
- Conducts inspections of video games, massage parlors, and tanning salons, and investigates violations of smoking regulations. Participates in bioterrorism preparedness planning and operations, as requested.
- Performs related duties as required.

**Vector Control Assignments:**

- Conducts inspections and investigations to enforce codes related to removal and prevention of infestation of rodents, insects, and other possible disease vectors; advises citizens and business owners having infestation problems of proper methods of eradication based upon technical knowledge of control techniques.
- Ensures that rodenticides/pesticides are properly applied and that chemicals do not adversely affect the public, animals, or the environment.
- Assists higher level staff in the investigation of cases of chemical poisoning resulting from the application of rodenticides/pesticides; obtains chemical samples and evaluates laboratory results.
- Assists higher level staff in the coordination and administration of the County's mosquito control program and West Nile Virus control response.

- Works with higher level employees to conduct inspections and investigations of food service facilities and swimming pools on a routine basis in a small area of the County or in response to citizen complaints. Under direction, reviews plans and architectural drawings for new food service facilities and swimming pools for compliance with regulations. Inspects swimming pools prior to opening and during seasonal operation for compliance with local codes concerning operation and safety. Under direction of higher level staff, investigates food borne disease outbreaks, interviewing involved parties, obtaining and transporting samples, and directing owners and managers to implement control measures.
- Performs related work as required.

Pollution Control Assignments:

- With the assistance of higher level employees, enforces laws and regulations related to waste disposal, water quality, hazardous waste and hospital waste, air pollution, and noise control.
- Investigates complaints of noise pollution from such sources as early morning or evening construction work, musical bands, stereos, air conditioners, etc.
- Measures noise levels by using sound level meter, recorder, noise analyzer, pure tone generator, amplification and related equipment. Evaluates results of testing.
- Investigates air pollution complaints including refuse fires, construction fires, smoking stacks (i.e., manufacturing/industrial), incinerators, etc.; determines whether toxic materials are being burned and whether appropriate and effective pollution control methods are being used.
- Conducts air pollution source sampling, both indoor and outdoor, using sampling equipment. Responds to complaints and may provide technical assistance on interior air quality issues.
- Investigates requests for open burning permits; checks for safety precautions, distance from other buildings, toxic materials or chemicals; recommends issuance of permits when appropriate.
- With guidance of more experienced program personnel, evaluates applications for Air Quality Control Construction and Operating permits for technical and regulatory requirements. Conducts inspections to ensure compliance with permit requirements and regulations. Conducts smoke evaluations as part of permit inspections or in response to complaints.
- With guidance, conducts premise audits at facilities registered or permitted for Air Quality or Hazardous Materials purposes for compliance with all laws and regulations previously mentioned.
- Participates in water quality investigations and enforcement activities with higher level staff and/or State officials; identifies cause and effect of contamination of storm water, well and groundwater; surveys streams, conducts dye tests, takes water samples; drafts reports of findings.
- Performs monthly water quality sampling and monitoring at observation wells and stream locations at Montgomery County landfill sites, including field measurements with properly maintained and calibrated equipment. Obtains monthly water quality samples at various domestic (potable water) wells in the vicinity of the landfill sites.
- Participates in the investigation of hazardous waste disposal and spills; identifies nature and source of hazardous materials; recommends methods for proper disposal or removal of hazardous materials; coordinates such investigations with Fire and Police Departments and other appropriate agencies.
- Maintains and calibrates equipment and instruments.
- Performs related duties as required.

Well and Septic Assignments:

- Inspects construction of new or existing primarily potable water wells or septic systems to determine compliance with County and State codes and regulations and to ensure protection of the groundwater resource.
- Conducts percolation tests and water table observations, examining plans in the field to confirm the

accuracy of the plans provided and the proper location of test holes. Evaluates soil and rock conditions to determine suitability for septic system installation. Accurately records test data and observations and consolidate data for the plan review process. Conducts specialized testing and soil evaluation for innovative and alternative on-site sewage disposal systems.

- Collects and delivers well water samples for laboratory analysis, accurately recording pertinent data.
- With assistance, advises homeowners/sellers regarding well water quality analysis and treatment options to mitigate undesirable or unsafe water quality.
- Responds to homes with failing septic systems. Under direction, evaluates soil, sets up and conducts percolation tests, evaluates results and writes permit for reconstruction. Works with installer to expedite reconstruction.
- Under the supervision of higher level employees, may conduct review of record plats and building addition, single lot and subdivision plans concerning wells and septic systems. May assist customers at a walk-up counter and answer questions from engineers, surveyors and the public regarding well and septic permits, percolation tests and septic system design. With the assistance of higher-level personnel, designs septic systems and determines placement of wells on lots; writes and revises well and septic permits for installation of systems for single family homes or commercial properties; may provide advice to developers and landowners regarding siting of percolation tests and subdivision and permit requirements.
- Participates in sanitary survey investigations in various areas of the County to determine if groundwater contamination or sewage system failures exist. Collects data to support abatement of health hazards determined in surveys. Interviews and advises homeowners regarding survey and problem resolution.
- With assistance, inspects well water treatment devices for proper installation and function.
- Inspects scavenger vehicles annually and as necessary to ensure safe disposal of sewage.
- Posts vacant houses with septic system failures as unfit for occupancy.
- Performs related duties as required.

**SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:**

This work is performed under the close supervision of higher-level Environmental Health Specialists and/or the supervisor.

**SUPERVISION EXERCISED:** Employees in this classification do not supervise other positions.

**GUIDELINES:**

Guidelines consist of federal, state, and local codes and regulations and agency policy and procedures. An employee uses judgment to locate and select appropriate guides, referring significant deviations to the supervisor for assistance.

**COMPLEXITY:**

The complexity of the work is characterized by the analysis required to determine the interrelationship of construction or operation methods or procedures observed during inspections, investigations, or surveys which may have an adverse effect on the health or safety of the public and to make effective recommendations for the most practical settlement of adverse effects/practices in order to establish/maintain compliance with codes and regulations.

**SCOPE AND EFFECT:**

This work directly affects the accomplishment of the program goal of protecting the public's health and the environment.

**CONTACTS:**

Contacts include owners, managers, designers and builders of licensed facilities, contractors, business owners, other county, state, or federal employees and the public for the purpose of exchanging information, explaining procedures, and provide instructions to facilitate a process.

**PUBLIC SERVICE /ASSISTANCE:**

Assistance is provided on demand to the public and clients.

**HAZARDS:**

An employee may occasionally be exposed to hostile or abusive behavior from licensees or contractors.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Education:** Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in one of the physical, environmental health or biological sciences, engineering, or agriculture,

**Experience:** One (1) year of experience in environmental health investigatory work.

**Substitution:** Registration as a Professional Environmental Health Specialist in the State of Maryland may be substituted for the Education requirement.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

*Basic Knowledge of:*

- Principles, practices, and concepts of environmental and/or public health.
- Applying methods and techniques of fact finding, analysis, and resolution of complex problems.
- Technical specialty related to the field of assignment may be required.
- The use of computers and applications sufficient to perform the work required of the position.

*Skill In:*

- Proper sampling techniques and in operating equipment necessary in area of specialty (i. e., water and food sampling, velometer, sound level meter (Type II or better), air sampling equipment, etc.).

*Ability to:*

- Effectively communicate and handle communications and negotiations with tact, resourcefulness, and good judgment, even in confrontational situations.
- Distinguish differences in white and black smoke plumes sufficient to obtain approved certification in plume evaluation (when position requires).
- Read architectural plans or topographic plats or plans and evaluate compliance with environmental health standards (when position requires).
- Distinguish color differences in the soil profile and use the Munsell color chart (when position requires).
- Obtain significant knowledge of the business/operating practices of the businesses/industries covered by the laws being enforced.
- Respond to urgent or emergency situations at other than normal working hours.
- Analyze and interpret data and write comprehensive reports

**Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements:**

There will be no substitutions for this section.

Positions in this classification may be assigned duties which require the operation of a motor vehicle:

- Employees assigned such duties will be required to possess and maintain a motor vehicle operator's license valid Class “C” (or equivalent) from the applicant’s state of residence.

Positions in this classification assigned to the Department of Permitting Services :

- Current registration as a Professional Environmental Health Specialist in the State of Maryland or possession of a Certificate of Eligibility or Health Specialist In-Training Certificate for such registration is required at the time of application. Incumbent must maintain a current registration, which may include continuing education requirements throughout the course of employment.

**Work Environment:**

The field environment of the work involves recurring exposure to dirt, grease, various chemicals, cold, heat and adverse weather conditions which may require the occasional use of special or protective clothing or equipment.

**Physical Demands:**

The work requires long periods of standing and/or walking, sometimes over rough or uneven surfaces; repeated bending, stooping or crouching; and some lifting of objects up to 50 pounds.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD:**

Individuals appointed or promoted to this class will be required to serve a probationary period of six (6) months, during which time performance will be carefully evaluated. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

**BARGAINING STATUS:**

Positions assigned to this class are normally in the Office, Professional, and Technical (OPT) bargaining unit.

**MEDICAL PROTOCOL:**

Core II Exam. Some positions may require Core I Exam if required to have confined space entry training.

**PROMOTION POTENTIAL:**

This is the entry level of the Environmental Health Specialist series. At the discretion of the appointing authority, employees assigned to positions in this classification may be non-competitively promoted to the next higher level of the series. Appointment to Environmental Health Specialist II requires that the employee perform the full range of duties of that class and meet the minimum qualification standards for the Environmental Health Specialist II.

**CLASS SPECIFICATION HISTORY:**

**Class Established:** March, 1989

**Revised:** August, 1989

May, 1991

June, 1995 (M)

August, 2002 (M)

May, 2004

August, 2013

October, 2014

**Revised:**(format and Licenses, Registrations, Certifications, or Special Requirements: August, 2018