

SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is responsible managerial and professional work involving the planning, organizing and implementation of policies and procedures for various environmental health programs administered by the Department of Health such as mosquito-control initiatives and surveillance, rabies prevention and private well testing. The position also includes oversight of a broad range of related environmental health issues. The work is performed under the direction of a higher-level public health administrator and in accordance with applicable government regulations. Supervision is exercised over professional, technical and clerical staff. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Develops and implements policies and procedures for the administration of various environmental health programs and ensures the enforcement of laws and regulations governing these programs;
Supervises staff involved in environmental health protection programs;
Coordinates and administers training and educational programs for environmental health personnel and business operators;
Reviews and evaluates existing programs and makes effective recommendations for improvement when needed;
Analyzes and interprets government regulations to determine appropriate compliance procedures;
Oversees the investigation and resolution of issues and complaints related to public health hazards;
Oversees and participates in mosquito control and surveillance initiatives related to environmental vector-borne disease monitoring and the implementation of public health control strategies to prevent disease transmission and reduce other environmental health nuisances;
Manages the Rabies Program to ensure that appropriate protocols are followed to prevent fatal disease in humans;
Responds to all animal bite reports in the county, obtains and reviews pet vaccination records and determines whether post-exposure prophylaxis is indicated;
Manages the Private Well Testing Program, as mandated by County law, to ensure that required water quality testing is conducted during property transfers and on a routine basis for rental properties;
Reviews and responds to all water quality test results reported to the County;
Collaborates with property owners, tenants and the public to resolve water quality issues that may impact public health;
Reports chemical contamination findings to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and ensures appropriate public notifications are issued to affected residents;
Administers pesticide licensing and complex permitting requirements with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and reviews and approves Mosquito Breeding Suppression Plans for Rockland County Communities;
Serves as a hearing officer and prepares recommendations for resolution of Sanitary Code violations;
Serves as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) coordinator for the department responsible for maintaining GIS licensing, training staff and acting as the liaison to the Planning Department to coordinate and contribute to GIS data systems;
Assists in managing procurement and requisition processes for the Center for Environmental Health, including overseeing operational budget purchases, providing support and training to staff and resolving complex procurement issues;
Prepares complex technical reports;
Provides advice and guidance to local officials and the public on environmental health issues.

(over)

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of principles and practices of environmental health programs; thorough knowledge of Public Health Law and State Sanitary Code as they relate to environmental health protection; thorough knowledge of environmental health program operations, particularly those related to mosquito control; thorough knowledge of New York State Department of Environmental Control (NYSDEC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pesticide regulations; ability to develop and administer environmental health programs; ability to supervise the work of others; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with government agencies, public officials, professional and technical staff and the general public; ability to analyze and interpret complex government regulations; ability to act as a hearing officer; ability to understand and implement basic legal processes necessary to conduct hearings; ability to prepare complex technical reports; ability to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software to update and maintain program data.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. A Bachelor's degree in Physical or Biological Sciences, Environmental Health, Environmental Science or comparable degree and four (4) years of paid post-degree work experience in environmental health*, two (2) years of which involved the supervision of staff; or
2. A Master's degree or higher in Physical or Biological Sciences, Environmental Health, Environmental Science or comparable degree and two (2) years of paid post-degree work experience in environmental health*, which involved the supervision of staff.

PROMOTION: Two (2) years of permanent status as an Environmental Health Specialist.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Possession of a valid driver's license at the time of appointment and throughout the duration of employment in this title. The appointing authority shall have the responsibility for the verification of the driver's license which may be checked throughout the course of employment in this title.
2. Possession of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Pesticide Applicator certification within one (1) year of appointment and must be maintained throughout the course of employment in this title.

Definitions, guidelines, restrictions, etc. are specifically defined in Part 325, Application of Pesticides, Rules and Regulations, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

*Environmental health shall be defined as protection against and the provision of services related to, environmental factors that may impact human health (e.g., diseases, environmental agents such as chemicals and elements of the natural environment). Environmental health experience may include the regulation and enforcement of public health and environmental matters in accordance with local laws and regulations, as well as applicable state laws and Environmental Conservation laws. Environmental health programs may address areas such as housing, food and recreation, water supply, mosquito control and related public health concerns. Examples of environmental health experience include work performed by Public Health Inspectors, Environmental Health Specialists, Sanitarians and Engineers.