

# **CAREER GUIDE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE INSPECTOR**

SOC Code: 13-1041.01

Pay Band(s): 4 and 5 ([Salary Structure](#))

**Standard Occupational Description:** Inspect and investigate sources of pollution to protect the public and environment and ensure conformance with Federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances.

**Environmental Compliance Inspector positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Environmental Services Career Group](#):**

[Environmental Specialist I](#)

[Environmental Specialist II](#)

While Environmental Compliance Inspectors within the Commonwealth are all located within the Environmental Services Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Engineering Technology](#)

[Laboratory and Research Technicians and Specialists](#)

[Life and Physical Science](#)

[Public Safety Compliance](#)

[Forensic Science](#)

## **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS**

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

### **Skills**

**Note:** *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Environmental Compliance Inspectors commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
2. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
3. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
4. Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
5. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
6. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
7. Using mathematics to solve problems.
8. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

9. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
10. Determining how a system should work and how changes in conditions, operations, and the environment will affect outcomes.

### **Knowledge**

**Note:** *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Environmental Compliance Inspectors commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

#### **The Knowledge of:**

1. Chemical composition, structure, and properties of substances and of the chemical processes and transformations that they undergo. This includes uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.
2. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
3. Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
4. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
5. Raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.
6. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
7. And prediction of physical principles, laws, their interrelationships, and applications to understanding fluid, material, and atmospheric dynamics, and mechanical, electrical, atomic and sub-atomic structures and processes.
8. Plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.

### **Abilities**

**Note:** *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Environmental Compliance Inspectors commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

#### **The Ability to:**

1. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
2. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
3. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
4. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
5. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
6. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
7. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
8. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.

9. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
10. Generate or use different sets of rules for combining or grouping things in different ways.

### **Tasks**

**Note:** *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Environmental Compliance Inspectors. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Inspects solid waste disposal and treatment facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, or other water courses or sites for conformance with regulations.
2. Inspects establishments to ensure that handling, storage, and disposal of fertilizers, pesticides, and other hazardous chemicals conform with regulations.
3. Conducts field tests and collects samples for laboratory analysis.
4. Examines permits, licenses, applications, and records to ensure compliance with licensing requirements.
5. Reviews and evaluates applications for registration of products containing dangerous materials or pollution control discharge permits.
6. Assists in development of spill prevention programs and hazardous waste rules and regulations, and recommends corrective action in event of hazardous spill.
7. Prepares, organizes, and maintains records to document activities, recommend action, provide reference materials, and prepare technical and evidentiary reports.
8. Evaluates label information for accuracy and conformance to regulatory requirements.
9. Studies laws and statutes to determine nature of code violation and type of action to be taken.
10. Advises individuals and groups concerning pollution control regulations, inspection and investigation findings, and encourages voluntary action to correct problems or issues citations for violations.

### **INTERESTED?**

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The occupation of Environmental Compliance Inspector has **Investigative, Conventional** and **Realistic** characteristics as described below:

**Investigative** — Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

**Conventional** — Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

**Realistic** — Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

## **LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Generally this is not required for Environmental Compliance Inspector positions in state government. However there are some positions that do require certification specific to environmental jobs such as the Visible Emission Evaluation Certification for environmental inspectors. The Eastern Technical Association, [www.eta-is-opacity.com](http://www.eta-is-opacity.com), performs Smoke School certification for the Department of Environmental Quality's Air Compliance Inspectors.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation may require certification for inspectors. These certifications include the Nutrient Management Certification and Erosion and Sediment Control Certification. The Department of Conservation and Recreation's web site is: <http://www.dcr.state.va.us/index.htm>;

Some environmental inspector positions may require various OSHA certifications.

Other certifying organizations follow:

Certifying organization for Environmental Professionals is the National Registry of Environmental Professionals web site: <http://www.nrep.org/index.html>

The Certifying Organization for Environmental Specialist/Sanitarian is the National Environmental Health Association web site: <http://www.neha.org>

Certification enhances professional growth and career progression.

## **EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

An environmental compliance inspector typically is responsible for investigation and inspection of allegations of violations of environmental laws. These inspections assure that registered sources are in compliance with all applicable state and federal standards.

Environmental Compliance Investigators are required to graduate from an accredited college or university with course work in the environmental science, natural or biological sciences or a related field.

A bachelor's degree is adequate for entry-level positions. Experience in environmental investigative and/or compliance auditing work, use of scientific instrumentation and field sampling experience is required.

Many environmental specialists earn degrees in life science, chemistry, geology, geophysics, atmospheric science, or physics and then, either through further education or through their research interests and work experience, apply their education to environmental areas. Others earn a degree in environmental science. A bachelor's degree in environmental science offers an interdisciplinary approach to the natural sciences, with an emphasis on biology, chemistry, and geology.

Agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia offer additional training for Environmental Inspectors. As an example, the Department of Environmental Quality offers the following training programs for their environmental inspectors:

Other training/educational opportunities offered for Air Compliance Inspectors:

Principles and Practices of Air Pollution  
Continuous Emission Monitoring  
Introduction of Baseline Source Inspection Techniques  
Inspection Techniques Procedures and Safety  
Source Sampling for Pollutants  
Advanced Inspection Techniques  
Control of Gaseous Emissions

For Waste Inspectors:

Inspection Techniques – Basic  
Compliance and Enforcement Principles  
Environmental Statute Review  
Inspection Techniques – Intermediate  
Sound Enforcement Case Development  
SW Disposal Facility Operation/Design  
Erosion and Sedimentation for Inspectors  
Ground Water monitoring  
Financial Responsibility

For more information on the Department of Environmental Quality's career opportunities and training programs visit their web site: <http://www.deq.state.va.us/>

The State Council of Higher Education lists several Virginia educational institutions that offer programs in environmental science. This information is found on the web site: [http://research.schev.edu/degreeinventory/inventory\\_2.asp?from=k12](http://research.schev.edu/degreeinventory/inventory_2.asp?from=k12)

## **COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES**

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

**The Commonwealth Competencies are:**

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: [http://jobs.state.va.us/cc\\_planningctr.htm](http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm). For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

## **COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH**

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Environmental Compliance Inspectors**

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES
4	Environmental Specialist I
5	Environmental Specialist II

PAY BAND	MANAGER ROLES
5	Environmental Manager I
6	Environmental Manager II
7	Environmental Manager III

### **Sample Career Path**

#### **Environmental Specialist I**

The Environmental Specialist I role provides career tracks for environmental compliance inspectors who are responsible for those inspecting and ensuring compliance with federal and state environmental laws to prevent or reduce negative impact on the environment, public health and citizen safety. Level of expertise ranges from entry-level specialist to supervisor of specialized inspection activities to include planning and development for the assigned program or territory.

### **Environmental Specialist II**

The Environmental Specialist II role provides career tracks for environmental compliance inspectors who serve as program experts in the conduct of environmental management and public health and safety and/or consumer protection activities or have supervisory and/or program coordination responsibilities.

### **Environmental Manager I**

The Environmental Manager I role provides career tracks for managers of an environmental program(s) and staff within a geographic or other designated area. The assigned programs impact the environment and/or public safety and health. Responsibilities include planning, administering, and generating policies, specifications and standards to promote program goals and objectives.

### **Environmental Manager II**

The Environmental Manager II role provides career tracks for mid-level managers, district managers or statewide program directors responsible for managing environmental program areas and staff. Employees manage a major agency program directly tied to the mission of the agency or multiple programs. Oversight of operational activities include: inspections, compliance, enforcement, conservation, analysis, licensing and certification, and public education, technical services or control activities having an impact on public health and the environment.

### **Environmental Manager III**

The Environmental Manager III role provides career tracks for executive managers having responsibilities ranging from managing a geographic region of an agency, or, statewide responsibility for directing multiple programs within a discipline to responsible for all environmental management programs statewide.

## **ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

O\*NET (Occupational Information Network)

[http://online.onetcenter.org/gen\\_search\\_page](http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page)

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network

<http://www.vacrn.net/>