

## Is an Environmental Career Right for You?

- Would you like a challenging, rewarding, and fun career?
- Are you interested in the natural world and how it works?
- Do you like science, but don't necessarily want to work in a lab?
- Would you like to help protect Idaho's environment?
- Would you like to make a difference in the world around you?

### Then a career in the environmental field may be for you!

The best way to find out if an environmental career is right for you is to get involved in an environmental activity. Here are some ways to do that:

- ✓ **Focus on the environment in a school project.** When you can, use class assignments to explore environmental careers and issues in-depth.
- ✓ **Find a mentor.** A mentor can provide insight and advice into college, careers, and more.
- ✓ **Job shadow.** Find someone whose career sounds interesting and follow him or her around for a day.
- ✓ **Volunteer or become an intern.** Nothing will tell you if you like something more than if you do it. Paid or unpaid, internships offer valuable opportunities to learn what you love (or dislike).



## For More Information

### Contact DEQ:

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
Human Resource Office  
1410 N. Hilton  
Boise, ID 83706  
Phone: (208) 373-0243  
Email: [DEQ.recruitment@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:DEQ.recruitment@deq.idaho.gov)

### DEQ Web Resources

#### What Does DEQ Do?

[www.deq.idaho.gov/about-deq](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/about-deq)

#### Job Openings and Job Descriptions

[www.deq.idaho.gov/working-at-deq](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/working-at-deq)

#### Benefits Overview

<https://employee.idaho.gov/>

## Plan for an Environmental Career



## Go Green!



Idaho Department of  
Environmental Quality  
[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)



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## Types of Environmental Jobs

People who work in the environmental field may be scientists, analysts, engineers, technicians, researchers, policymakers, planners, writers, and more.

Green jobs can be found in nearly every field, including engineering, construction, energy production, farming, waste management, and a host of others.

Government, too, is a big employer of environmental professionals. At the federal level, for example, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) employs more than 17,000 people nationwide. Various state agencies, including the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), also focus on environmental protection.

### Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

DEQ is the state department responsible for protecting the quality of Idaho's air, water, and land. The agency employs a wide variety of analysts, scientists, engineers, and technicians. Depending on your job and interests, you might work outdoors or in an office, collect and analyze data, give presentations, write reports, or conduct public outreach.

Professional staff positions range from Level 1 (entry-level) to Level 5 (statewide program manager). Qualifications include a college degree and/or equivalent work experience.



## Required Educational Background

### In high school...

Take a broad range of science, math, social studies, and communication classes. These will not only prepare you for college, but will also help you learn where your interests and strengths lie. In addition to focusing on math and science, work on developing an understanding of environmental policy issues and being a good communicator.

### In college...

Typical college majors include biology, botany, chemistry, ecology, engineering, entomology, environmental science, fisheries, forestry, geology, toxicology, and wildlife biology. Many of your classes will be dictated by your major. For example, a typical environmental science degree will require coursework in biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, economics, and environmental science. Courses in statistics, research methodology, and environmental modeling may also be required. Electives may focus on such areas as environmental anthropology, natural resources and environmental ecology, environmental law, and communications.

*Take care of the earth and she will take care of you. - Anonymous*

## Job Outlook for Environmental Careers

Potential for job growth is a key factor in selecting a career. Many labor market experts predict that careers in the environmental field will be a major source of new jobs in the next decade. Environmental professionals will be needed to monitor the quality of the environment, to interpret the impact of human actions on ecosystems, and to develop strategies for restoring ecosystems.

Growth in the environmental field will be spurred largely by the increasing demands placed on the environment and water resources by population growth. Further demand should result from the need to comply with complex environmental laws and regulations.

Employment of environmental scientists and hydrogeologists, for example, is expected to increase by 25 percent between 2006 and 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment of environmental engineers is expected to increase 7-13 percent over the 2006-16 decade. Job growth prospects for scientific research analysts through 2016 look good, too, as do those for scientific technicians.

Opportunities will be best for workers with strong communication and business management skills combined with expertise in a technical field.

