

Earth Day 2012



Career Profile

Name: Anna Barrick, P.E.
Job Title: Environmental Engineer
Location: Northcentral Regional Office
Years with DEP: 18

What kinds of activities do you perform on a daily basis?

I am responsible for reviewing construction permit applications for public drinking water systems that include sources of supply, treatment processes, storage tanks, booster pump stations and distribution facilities. Following completion of construction, I perform operation permit inspections to verify that construction has been completed in accordance with approved plans and specifications. I compose operating permits and recommend permit issuance when a project is deemed acceptable. I am also responsible for updating and maintaining the DEP databases. I also work with field sanitarians and operators to troubleshoot problems at public water systems.

What kind of educational background do you have?

I have a bachelor's and master's degree in civil engineering from Villanova University and Drexel University, respectively.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

It is challenging to implement stringent regulations when many public water supplies are struggling to comply with existing requirements. I would like more grant programs become available to assist smaller systems finance the design and construction of necessary upgrades and laboratory costs associated with ever-increasing monitoring requirements.

What got you interested in working in an environmental field?

I have always enjoyed hiking, camping, biking, swimming and many other outdoor activities. As a child, I did well in math and science. In high school, guidance counselors encouraged me to pursue a career in engineering. Combining both my interests and areas of expertise, I decided to become an environmental engineer.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

It is rewarding to work with the small water systems and their operators. Most small water systems have very tight budgets. I enjoy helping to find inexpensive but effective solutions to their problems. The operators truly appreciate when a DEP employee takes time to explain new regulations and technical issues "one-on-one".

What advice do you have for someone thinking about a career in environmental science?

When considering a career, research is the key to satisfaction. I recommend that high school students spend time "job shadowing" professionals in their potential areas of interest. This will help the student to make a better choice when selecting a course of study in college. I encourage college students to participate in summer internships. Within the environmental science field, there are many branches, including drinking water, wastewater, air, waste, oil and gas, mining, etc. An internship will provide valuable hands-on experience, as well as broaden a student's knowledge of the various specialties within a discipline. This enables students to focus on more desirable topics in their advanced coursework. I agree with Confucius when he said, "Choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life".