

Earth Day 2012



Career Profile

Name: Lynne Scheetz
Job Title: Sanitarian Supervisor
Location: Lancaster District Office, Southcentral Region
Years with DEP: 19

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

My staff and I enforce the Safe Drinking Water Act by regulating approximately 600 public water suppliers in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. We inspect water treatment facilities, monitor required sampling of drinking water, respond to drinking water quality complaints and help water operators to comply with a variety of regulations related to operation of drinking water treatment facilities. I am also the office manager for the Lancaster District Office.

What kind of educational background do you have?

I have a bachelor's degree in environmental resource management from Penn State. I am also a Pennsylvania Class A Certified Water Operator, licensed for all water treatment technologies.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

In the past several years there have been some major changes to the Safe Drinking Water Regulations. It can be difficult to learn all of the parts of these new regulations and be able to explain them to water suppliers or facility owners, especially those that are not as familiar with water treatment and sampling requirements. Whenever possible, I try to help owners and operators use the most cost-effective options to remain in compliance with the regulations.

What got you interested in working in an environmental field?

I have always been interested in outdoor activities such as camping, running, hiking and kayaking. I wanted a career where I could spend part of my time outdoors, helping to protect the environment for everyone to enjoy and keeping people healthy by reducing exposure to contamination.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Protecting public health is the most important aspect of my job. When a public water system is providing water that does not meet public health requirements, it's important that users are notified promptly and the problem corrected quickly. When systems with problems install treatment or correct deficiencies, it's good to know that my work may have prevented someone from getting sick.

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

I would recommend that you be flexible by applying and interviewing for any available opening in the environmental field that you find, even if it's not in your area of interest or at your preferred location. I began my work with DEP as an air quality inspector and was able to transfer to Drinking Water at a later date. Although Air Quality was not my primary interest, I learned a lot and gained a lot of good experience. I also worked in four different DEP offices until I settled into the Lancaster Office.