

Earth Day 2012



Career Profile

Name: Mark Johnson
Job Title: Environmental Group Manager
Location: Southeast Regional Office
Years with DEP: 33

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

As group manager I am responsible for the operations section within the Safe Drinking Water Program. I review the compliance status of regulated facilities and direct staff to follow-up as needed. That follow-up might be in the form of compliance assistance or more formal enforcement. In consultation with the compliance specialists, a course of action is decided upon. Additionally, I meet with each of my supervisors to review current field activities, determine what problems might have arisen, and jointly decide on the best course of action in response to those problems.

What kind of educational background do you have?

I have a bachelor's degree in forestry and environmental resources management. I also have a master's degree in environmental health.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

In the last few years the Safe Drinking Water Program has expanded tremendously, both in terms of workload and the complexity of the regulations. This change has really challenged everyone to meet those increasing demands in a time of budgetary austerity.

What got you interested in working in an environmental field?

I am a child of the seventies; the first Earth Day in 1970 had a huge impact on how I viewed Man's stewardship (or lack thereof) of the planet.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

The Safe Drinking Water Program is really about protecting the public's health. In the 25 plus years that the department has been responsible for the Safe Drinking Water Act, we have made tremendous strides in the effort to assure that everyone is afforded the same level of protection.

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

You won't get rich, but you will end up in a career that allows you to see the benefit of your efforts.