

Earth Day 2012



Career Profile

Name: Sunil Desai
Job Title: Environmental Engineer
Location: Southcentral Regional Office
Years with DEP: 31

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

I coordinate and oversee wastewater projects from facility planning through construction as well as review and approval of Act 537 Plans (Official Sewage Facilities Plan). I am responsible for review and approval of design of wastewater facilities and issuing permits (Water Quality Management Part II Permit for construction and operation of Wastewater Facilities). I also conduct construction inspections including review of change orders of Pennvest funded wastewater facilities. After construction, I evaluate project progress to determine whether the Certification of Performance may be approved. I manage many Chesapeake Bay upgrade projects and difficult compliance cases.

What kind of educational background do you have?

I have a bachelor's and master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Bombay, India and the University of Pittsburgh, respectively.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

It is challenging to work with a variety of different circumstances and project innovation particular to the site, stream and community requirements. Allocating proper time and still completing the review of all projects can be difficult, too.

What got you interested in working in an environmental field?

Respect for clean water and environmental health motivated me to work in this field. I have seen this need close up in many areas of my life and am constantly rewarded when needed projects are completed.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

I feel proud every day knowing that our actions improve water quality and public health of all people in the commonwealth. We work and succeed as a team and knowing that a belief in protecting the environment is shared within our office is most rewarding.

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

Pick a career path you like and find the place best suited for you to contribute to a common goal.