

Environmental Engineer

EDUCATION AND TRAINING^{1,3}

- At least a bachelor's degree in engineering or a closely related field, with an advanced degree in environmental engineering preferred
- Practical experience working on environmental issues in the field

SALARY RANGE

- \$82,990–\$110,250

WHO ARE THEY?¹

Environmental engineers are creative, problem-solving, collaborative professionals who improve waste management, recycling, pollution control, and water distribution systems to solve environmental problems. They are knowledgeable in multiple fields of science and mathematics, including chemistry, biology, physics, algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. Environmental engineers are able to collaborate with colleagues and clients representing diverse areas of expertise. They are approachable and easy to work with, but always willing to raise difficult questions to resolve issues. Environmental engineers are comfortable in both office and outdoor work sites. They can present information effectively, but also listen carefully. Successful environmental engineers play an important role in ensuring human activities at home and in the workplace are environmentally sustainable. They help reduce the impact of global problems such as climate change and pollution.

WHAT DO THEY DO?^{1,2}

Environmental engineers use specialized understanding of science and mathematics to address environmental problems such as pollution, climate change, the spread of disease, and threats to wildlife species. They plan and conduct investigations of environmental issues and draft reports on their findings. They design improvements to waste disposal, recycling, and water distribution systems, and closely monitor these systems for signs of trouble. Environmental engineers help businesses adhere to government regulations and obtain permits. Finally, environmental engineers give corporations and government agencies advice on how to clean up places that have been contaminated with pollutants.

JOB OUTLOOK

Over the next 10 years, overall employment of environmental engineers is projected to grow at about the average rate for all occupations. Water scarcity in the United States and abroad is contributing to increased efforts

by state and local governments to design and install more efficient water distribution systems. Continued federal efforts to clean up contaminated industrial sites will also contribute to demand for environmental engineers. Finally, environmental engineers will continue to be needed to help private companies, such as factories and power plants, to comply with government regulations.

HOW DO I BECOME ONE?¹

Environmental engineers will need at least a bachelor's degree in environmental, civil, chemical, or general engineering. They also will need practical experience in the field, such as through college programs that offer credits for field work. A master's degree in environmental engineering makes candidates more desirable, and some universities offer 5-year programs that offer both undergraduate and master's degrees. Environmental engineers also need strong interpersonal skills for collaborating with colleagues representing different areas of expertise, creativity and problem-solving skills for identifying and correcting issues, decision-making skills for balancing conflicting information and data, and communication skills for drafting well-written reports and presenting information.

¹ "Environmental Engineers," Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/environmental-engineers.htm>

² Position Announcement, Environmental Engineer, Nevada Gold Mines <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/view/2560913240/>