

# **POSITION CLASSIFICATION STANDARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SPECIALIST SERIES, GS-0028**

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## SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions that involve advising on, managing, supervising, or performing administrative or program work relating to environmental protection programs (e.g., programs to protect or improve environmental quality, control pollution, remedy environmental damage, or ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations). These positions require specialized knowledge of the principles and methods of administering environmental protection programs and the laws and regulations related to environmental protection activities.

## EXCLUSIONS

1. Classify positions that require professional knowledge and competence in the broad, multi-disciplinary field of environmental science, which encompasses chemistry, biology, toxicology, health, physics, safety, and related areas, in the [General Physical Science Series, GS-1301](#).
2. Classify positions that primarily require professional knowledge and competence in one or more specialized disciplines of environmental science in the appropriate professional series, e.g., [Ecology Series, GS-0408](#); [Chemistry Series, GS-1360](#).
3. Classify positions that involve professional engineering work concerned with eliminating or controlling environmental hazards or conditions in the appropriate engineering series, e.g., [Civil Engineering Series, GS-0810](#); [Environmental Engineering Series, GS-0819](#).
4. Classify positions that involve professional legal work concerned with enforcing environmental laws and regulations in the [General Attorney Series, GS-0905](#).
5. Classify positions that involve preventing or controlling environmentally related diseases and health problems/hazards (when the emphasis is on the health and welfare aspects of the work, i.e., sanitation or hygiene) or assuring compliance with health and safety laws and regulations in the appropriate environmental health series, e.g., [Safety and Occupational Health Management Series, GS-0018](#); [Sanitarian Series, GS-0688](#); [Industrial Hygiene Series, GS-0690](#).
6. Classify positions that require professional knowledge and competence in the conservation or management of soil, water, plant, animal, or related natural resources for particular purposes or uses in the appropriate scientific/conservation series, e.g., [Rangeland Management Series, GS-0454](#); [Wildlife Biology Series, GS-0486](#).
7. Classify positions that involve professional work concerned with identifying, evaluating, and protecting archeological, historical, and cultural resources (artifacts, structures, sites, etc.) in the appropriate professional series, e.g., [Archeology Series, GS-0193](#); [Architecture Series, GS-0808](#).

8. Classify positions that primarily require specialized knowledge related to the administration of programs to preserve and protect natural or cultural resources in the [Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, GS-0301](#).
9. Classify positions involving program management or direction that do not require specialized knowledge of environmental programs in the [Program Management Series, GS-0340](#).
10. Classify positions concerned with analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of program operations and management that do not require specialized knowledge of environmental programs in the [Management and Program Analysis Series, GS-0343](#).
11. Classify positions that primarily require specialized knowledge of financial or business and trade practices and processes in the appropriate administrative or management series, e.g., [Contracting Series, GS-1102](#); [Property Disposal Series, GS-1104](#); [Realty Series, GS-1170](#).
12. Classify positions involving compliance work that do not require specialized knowledge of environmental programs in an appropriate compliance series, e.g., [General Inspection, Investigation, and Compliance Series, GS-1801](#); [General Investigating Series, GS-1810](#).
13. Classify positions concerned with public information and involvement work that do not require in-depth knowledge of environmental protection programs and processes in the [Public Affairs Series, GS-1035](#).
14. Classify positions that primarily involve performing support work requiring a practical knowledge of program requirements and procedures and/or basic environmental concepts and techniques in the appropriate technical series, e.g., [Environmental Protection Assistant Series, GS-029](#); [Physical Science Technician Series, GS-1311](#).
15. Classify positions that primarily involve hazardous materials handling in an appropriate [Federal Wage System](#) occupation.

## OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The Congress has enacted a national charter for the protection of the environment. It establishes policy, sets goals, and provides means for carrying out the policy. In addition, Congress has passed numerous other statutes and amendments to address requirements for environmental protection and improvement.

All Federal agencies are required to comply with Federal, State, local, and host nation environmental laws and regulations, and relevant Executive Orders. To achieve and maintain compliance, agencies must integrate environmental considerations into their decision-making processes, prepare detailed environmental documentation regarding proposed actions, maintain ongoing programs to protect and restore environmental resources, fulfill numerous

environmental reporting requirements, etc. Regulatory agencies, principal among which is the Environmental Protection Agency, are responsible for rulemaking, monitoring, compliance, and enforcement activities affecting both public and private organizations and for managing and overseeing programs conducted by States and other entities through program delegations (contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc.).

Environmental protection programs deal with such areas as air and water quality, hazardous waste and materials management, underground storage tanks containing regulated substances (petroleum products, chemicals, and wastes), oil and hazardous substance spills planning, nonhazardous waste management, waste minimization and recycling, and site restoration and remediation. Many programs focus on specific pollutants (e.g., noise, radon, asbestos, pesticides, medical waste, acid rain) or on protecting a specific medium (land, air, water, wetlands).

As it has become recognized that program areas are not always discrete (i.e., that pollutants pass from air to water, from land to groundwater and back, freely), the focus has begun to shift to more integrated approaches. Consequently, many environmental protection programs are adopting strategies that deal with the environment in a more coordinated way, e.g., addressing overall environmental quality objectives, comparing environmental risks across programs, considering total pollutant loads and exposures, preventing pollution instead of controlling or transferring it to other parts of the environment, recognizing the worldwide and long-range character of many environmental problems, and reflecting environmental priorities in policies for other sectors such as energy, transportation, and agriculture.

Environmental protection specialists play a central role in planning and administering environmental programs. Generally, they perform a variety of functions related to one or more of the following areas:

*Rulemaking and regulation*, which involves developing, reviewing, and implementing legislative proposals, regulations, standards, policies, and operating guidance.

*Compliance and enforcement*, which involves evaluating and securing compliance with environmental laws and programs through permitting, self-assessments, audits, inspections, investigations, and enforcement and corrective action activities.

*Environmental considerations and documentation*, which involves (1) reviewing proposed actions (construction, leasing, land transactions, mission activities, etc.) and ensuring that environmental effects are considered in planning and decision-making, that these considerations are documented, and that provision is made for public involvement; (2) complying with environmental reporting requirements; and/or (3) analyzing and managing environmental information or information systems.

*Program administration and oversight*, which involves (1) managing, administering, and coordinating programs or projects to achieve and maintain environmental compliance of ongoing operations or remediate past environmental violations or compliance problems; or (2) administering, evaluating, and overseeing environmental programs and/or activities funded by a program of grants, cooperative agreements, or other similar arrangements.

## RELATED POSITIONS

Because environmental protection specialist work usually involves circumstances that demand multiple, coordinated responses, it frequently overlaps with work performed by persons in related fields. Environmental protection specialists often use data and information collected and developed by scientists (e.g., biologists, chemists, hydrologists) and engineers. They work closely with and receive support from safety and occupational health personnel, legal advisors, land managers, natural resource managers, community planners, public affairs specialists, and others involved with environmental plans and programs.

Where positions have responsibilities for closely associated activities, it may be necessary to make series distinctions on the basis of factors other than the specific kind of work, such as the primary knowledge requirements, the sources of recruitment or lines of progression where the position is located, the training and experience of the employee or candidates, or the overall purpose of the work and how it is to be done as determined by management officials.

## DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SPECIALIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST POSITIONS

*Environmental protection specialist* positions require specialized knowledge of the principles, practices, and methods of program or administrative work relating to environmental protection programs. This entails (1) an understanding of the philosophy underlying environmental regulation; (2) knowledge of environmental laws and regulations; (3) knowledge of the planning, funding, organization, administration, and evaluation of environmental programs; (4) practical knowledge of environmental sciences and related disciplines, the effects of actions and technology on the environment, the means of preventing or reducing pollution, and the relationship between environmental factors and human health and well-being; and (5) practical knowledge of important historic, cultural, and natural resources (including land, vegetation, fish, wildlife, endangered species, forests) and the relationship between the preservation and management of these resources and environmental protection. Environmental protection specialists apply specialized knowledge of one or more program or functional areas of environmental protection work, but do not require full professional competence in environmental engineering or science.

In comparison with environmental protection specialists, *environmental engineers and scientists* (environmental scientists, biologists, chemists, etc.) perform work requiring the application of professional knowledge and skill to environmentally related areas. Environmental engineers and scientists perform such duties as:

- planning and designing environmental systems to provide clean water and air;
- identifying and analyzing substances or organisms that are responsible for the deterioration of the aquatic and soil environment;
- measuring, analyzing, and describing air and water resources.

Although a manager may change the duties and responsibilities assigned to a particular position so it can be reclassified from environmental protection specialist to environmental scientist, or vice versa, depending upon the needs of the organization, environmental protection specialist positions may not be classified as interdisciplinary. (See the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#).)

## **DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SPECIALIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSISTANT POSITIONS**

*Environmental protection specialists* are concerned with developing, analyzing, evaluating, and modifying environmental programs, policies, and procedures. They exercise judgment and broad perspective in applying a thorough knowledge of the principles, concepts, and practices relating to environmental protection programs as they concern problems of organizing, planning, funding, and controlling environmental activities.

In comparison with specialists, *environmental protection assistants* perform support work in the environmental protection and improvement field. The work involves extensive practical knowledge gained through experience and/or specific training. Assistants carry out tasks, procedures, and/or computations that can be performed by (1) application and adaptation of standardized techniques and methods and (2) use of practical judgment with only an elementary grasp of the basic principles of environmental protection work. Environmental protection assistants perform duties such as:

- reviewing files and records and summarizing relevant factual information in connection with compliance reviews;
- providing information to the regulated community on procedural requirements and formats for filing permits, grant applications, compliance-related forms, etc;
- collecting, tracking, computing, and summarizing statistical data in chart and narrative form.

## TITLES

*Environmental Protection Specialist* is the title for nonsupervisory positions in this series.

Use *Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist* for positions that meet the requirements for application of the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

## EVALUATING POSITIONS

Evaluate positions using the factor level descriptions and assigned point values in this standard. Use the primary standard and related FES standards to assist in evaluating positions that may warrant higher or lower factor levels than those described. See [The Classifier's Handbook](#) and the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#) for more information.

Apply the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) to positions that meet the criteria for coverage by the guide.

## GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Total points on all evaluation factors are converted to GS grades as follows:

GS Grade	Point Range
9	1855-2100
10	2105-2350
11	2355-2750
12	2755-3150
13	3155-3600
14	3605-4050

## FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

### FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

#### *Level 1-6 – 950 Points*

The work requires knowledge of the established principles, concepts, and methods of environmental protection program work, and skill in applying this knowledge in performing a variety of duties involving the management, coordination, monitoring, oversight, or evaluation of routine programs, projects, or activities. These are activities for which (1) the regulatory framework is well established and defined and (2) there are standard/conventional procedures and techniques (reviewing documents, analyzing evidence, writing supporting documents) that apply to most situations encountered and that can be carried out with minor modification or adaptation.

The work requires knowledge and understanding of recognized reference standards, regulatory requirements, and pertinent statutes sufficient to assure environmental compliance and provide routine technical assistance to operating personnel and managers.

The work requires knowledge of the policies, organization, operations, work practices, and environmental parameters of regulated industries, agricultural or commercial establishments, Federal agencies, States, or other entities sufficient to obtain information, evaluate compliance, and recommend necessary changes, control measures, best management practices, etc.

The work requires practical knowledge and understanding of one or more environmental sciences or related fields (e.g., biology, ecology, chemistry, hydrology, radiation physics, environmental law, real property functions, or statistics) sufficient to assess and correlate environmental data, verify results, and discuss technical aspects of work with scientists, engineers, and other environmental experts.

The work requires skill in using standard data gathering and analysis techniques to collect and review technical information on environmental activities or quality and to identify and solve problems of a procedural or factual nature.

The work requires ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing to prepare and conduct briefings or training programs, lead group conferences, and write reports and letters.

Some positions require knowledge of contracting or grants management procedures sufficient to oversee and/or monitor contracts or program grants; some require knowledge of regulatory development and implementation procedures to assist in developing regulations or other guidance.

## Illustrations:

- At a field office that receives and disposes of excess items from several military installations, the specialist ensures that hazardous property is received, handled, stored, inspected, documented, and manifested/disposed of in compliance with applicable environmental regulations and safety requirements. The specialist inspects storage areas; provides technical guidance to personnel involved in the handling and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes (e.g., paints, varnishes, lacquers, solvents, fuels, and pesticides); and prepares required reports. Where items are disposed of through commercial contractors, the specialist may act as the contracting officer's representative.
- The specialist evaluates and recommends action on permit applications for projects that involve routine changes (placement of structures or dredging or filling) to waterway or shoreline use. He/she conducts site inspections to make wetland determinations and gather information on conditions and potential mitigation measures; conducts public interest reviews (prepares public notices, responds to questions, coordinates public hearings); coordinates activities with other Federal and State agencies; and recommends issuance or denial of permits.
- The specialist performs site inspections at hazardous waste disposal, transport, or storage facilities where the problems typically are easy to identify and conventional in nature. He/she evaluates work practices, determines compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and recommends changes to control or eliminate potential or existing hazards or violations.
- The specialist investigates routine violations of pesticide laws and prepares enforcement actions. He/she gathers and examines evidence of violations; prepares warning letters, civil complaints, administrative orders, etc; and assembles case files for civil and criminal actions.
- The specialist negotiates and monitors State assistance grants and oversees program activities for a well-established State program to regulate underground storage tanks (USTs). He/she identifies basic program needs; provides assistance to State and local agencies on routine matters pertaining to the development, establishment, and continuance of program activities; participates in the development of project plans and specifications; analyzes documentation for conformance to requirements; and conducts portions of on-site assessment visits.
- The specialist performs a variety of activities involved in the development and implementation of relatively routine changes to regulations restricting the land disposal of hazardous wastes. He/she evaluates the feasibility and probable effects of proposed regulations; develops position papers, issue papers, workgroup materials, and briefing papers for higher-level managers; develops preamble language for proposed and final rules; and assists in developing policy guidance to implement the various provisions of environmental standards.

### *Level 1-7 – 1250 Points*

In addition to the knowledge described at Level 1-6, the work at this level requires knowledge of program principles and procedures applicable to a wide range of duties in one or more program and/or functional areas, and a high level of skill in applying this knowledge in solving complex problems involving diverse aspects of environmental protection (e.g., performing investigations, inspections, or oversight activities of greater than average difficulty, as in a new program or a program that is being redefined, where procedures require frequent modification and change in order to incorporate revised theories and techniques); modifying or adapting established methods and procedures or making significant departures from previous approaches to solve similar problems; revising standard methods to improve or extend environmental administration and/or management systems; and evaluating, modifying, or adapting new methods to meet the requirements of particular situations.

The work requires knowledge of statutes, regulations, licensing/permitting requirements, and precedent decisions governing environmental operations sufficient to use in planning, implementing, or monitoring environmental programs and services (e.g., determining needs, evaluating program effectiveness, assuring compliance with regulations).

The work requires management, administrative, or coordinative knowledge and skill sufficient to provide advisory, reviewing, evaluating, educating and/or training, negotiating, or problem-solving services (as a "troubleshooter," specialist, or coordinator) on specific problems, projects, programs, or functions (e.g., developing, coordinating, reviewing, and evaluating the implementation of work plans, including estimates of staffing needs, equipment, and supplies, and detailed instructions necessary to carry out the plans, for complex long-term toxic waste cleanup projects).

#### Illustrations:

- The specialist manages the asbestos abatement, underground storage tank, solid waste management, and water and air quality management programs for a complex, multi mission military installation located in a rapidly expanding urban area that is beginning to legislate environmental issues. He/she develops and implements plans to accomplish program goals, modifies policies and procedures to comply with frequent changes to applicable laws and regulations, provides technical advice and assistance to installation managers, conducts studies and surveys to identify problems and recommends modifications to operations or obtains and oversees outside contractors to complete projects, and develops and/or reviews all environmental documentation relating to assigned program areas.
- The specialist serves as an environmental auditor and audit team leader to accomplish on-site surveillance of disposal contractors, purchasers of hazardous property, and facilities for the temporary storage of hazardous property throughout a multi state area. He/she obtains information on contractor, sales, and storage facility operations and processes; determines compliance with environmental regulations and policies, permit requirements, contract

clauses; evaluates the effectiveness of hazardous property management systems; and identifies practices that may subject the Government to potential for liability.

- The specialist coordinates the preparation of environmental impact documents for complex water and land projects (e.g., large dams, roads, aqueducts) in operation or under construction, on Government-owned land. He/she assembles and evaluates environmental and planning data (including biological and cultural resource studies prepared by subject-matter experts); prepares or coordinates the preparation of planning and environmental documents (environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, executive summaries, public involvement documents, and working papers); participates in public meetings, workshops, and hearings; and conducts inspections of construction, operations, and maintenance activities to insure compliance with applicable environmental documents.
- The specialist coordinates Clean Water Act compliance activities for all projects associated with a major agency water resource development project. He/she determines when permits are required, prepares or coordinates the preparation of the applications, resolves any problems to assure that permits are obtained at the right time, represents the agency in negotiations involving mitigation plans, and provides expert advice on Clean Water Act and related compliance issues.
- The specialist plans, coordinates, directs, and evaluates an environmental quality program to protect and conserve tribal resources in a multi state area. He/she provides technical oversight to environmental coordinators in field agencies that administer to the tribes and/or pueblos in the area; reviews or coordinates preparation of environmental documents for any project or activity that may impact on trust resources (e.g., new road or dam, waste incinerator, landfill, agricultural development, irrigation project, housing development, timber sales on land adjacent to the reservation, sand/gravel pit restoration, fertilizer plant, bingo hall, commercial development); develops procedural manuals and in-service training programs for agency and area personnel; advises agency and tribal officials on complex environmental issues; and monitors compliance activities.
- The specialist administers State pesticide enforcement and applicator certification grants in accordance with statutory requirements, national guidance, and regional priorities. He/she provides technical assistance to assigned States, reviews grant applications, negotiates work outputs with State officials, and provides program/compliance oversight and guidance. Assignments may include conducting investigations, inspections, and laboratory data audits.
- The specialist investigates and prepares complex cases of environmental violations and negotiates settlements or pursues enforcement actions. He/she conducts investigations; analyzes findings; proposes appropriate enforcement actions and settlements; coordinates with scientists/engineers, management officials, and others; and prepares necessary documentation.
- The specialist assists in developing complex regulations and operating guidance to implement Superfund programs (e.g., remediation standards and procedures, guidance on health/environmental risk assessment and remedial and removal management techniques).

He/she writes portions of regulations, advises regional offices and others on implementation policies and procedures, evaluates effectiveness of regional programs, and prepares reports identifying management problems and recommending substantial changes.

### *Level 1-8 – 1550 Points*

In addition to the knowledge described at Level 1-7, the work requires mastery of program principles, concepts, practices, methods, and techniques to apply new developments and theories to major problems not susceptible to treatment by accepted methods. Typically, the environmental protection specialist at this level is recognized as an authority in a particular program or function.

The work requires expert knowledge of Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, documentation and reporting requirements, and lawmaking or rulemaking processes sufficient to make decisions or recommendations significantly changing, interpreting, or expanding important agency/national policies and programs (e.g., developing agency options for a regulatory framework and strategy for a new national program; drafting complex rulemaking notices and securing concurrence of affected Federal agencies and offices; evaluating regulatory implementation by regions, State and local agencies, and the private sector).

The work requires comprehensive knowledge of management practices and procedures to resolve problems of major significance to agency environmental programs (e.g., developing and maintaining an agency wide environmental management information system, developing agency guidelines governing environmental operations, analyzing major programs and proposing legislation with respect to the agency's program goals and objectives, advising agency officials and personnel at all levels on various aspects of environmental program management).

### Illustrations:

- The specialist serves as environmental coordinator for a large military installation with an invasive mission (i.e., research, test, and development activities involving pilot plants and other test facilities and unique and untried combat systems, materials, and chemicals) located in an environmentally sensitive area. He/she manages/coordinates the hazardous materials and solid and hazardous waste management programs, environmental restoration, and other environmental programs to assure the installation is in compliance with all environmental requirements; develops an environmental master plan to document the status of existing projects and identify funding requirements for future projects; plans and implements a waste minimization program to reduce the volume and toxicity of wastes generated by testing activities; and resolves intractable disposal problems involving chemical agents, munitions, and ordnance-related materials about which little is known.
- The specialist secures environmental permits and permit modifications for the construction and operation of prototypical chemical demilitarization facilities. He/she coordinates the preparation, review, and approval of various permit applications, working with other offices and commands, other agencies, Federal and State regulators, and local health and emergency

response officials; participates in public meetings and hearings, and responds to public comments; conducts environmental audits and evaluates contractor performance; prepares reports, opinion papers, briefings, etc; and develops solutions to problems that are without precedent and that will be used as the basis for decisions as the program progresses.

- The specialist serves as a staff advisor in an agency headquarters office. He/she reviews environmental documentation prepared by regional offices; manages the preparation of environmental documentation for programs that are highly visible or politically sensitive; monitors implementation of major agency programs such as the Chesapeake Bay cleanup initiative; prepares and reviews policy recommendations and technical proposals on environmental issues that are unusually controversial, precedent-setting, or very costly; and, as an authority in the area of environmental assessment and audit, formulates policies and guidelines relating to the agency's environmental audit program and coordinates reviews of reports by departmental auditors, regulatory agencies, etc.
- The specialist develops a regulatory framework and strategy for a national program to control exposure to pesticides on farms. He/she drafts advance notices of complex rules that involve facets of several major programs (including programs of other agencies), initiates and chairs workgroups to resolve identified problems, and secures concurrence or approval on final documents; evaluates progress in implementing the program by regions, State agencies, local jurisdictions, and the private sector; identifies program deficiencies, imbalances, etc., and develops proposals to ensure agency objectives are met; reviews pending legislation for impact on the program; and prepares briefings and position papers for key agency officials.

## **FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

### *Level 2-3 – 275 Points*

The supervisor outlines assignment objectives, priorities, and deadlines and provides advice on how to proceed when unusual problems are encountered that cannot be resolved by application of clear precedents.

Work assignments typically involve continuing responsibility for specific activities in a program and/or functional area (e.g., inspecting hazardous waste sites, reviewing cases of pesticide violations). The environmental protection specialist plans and carries out the procedures to complete the work and handles problems in accordance with established policies, applicable precedents, and previous training. When there is a need to deviate from or modify procedures to resolve a problem, the specialist researches the issue or consults with technical authorities and implements changes provided they are consistent with accepted practices.

Completed work is evaluated for conformity to policy and requirements, technical soundness, appropriateness, and practicality of recommendations prior to release or discussion with management officials. The methods used in arriving at the end results are not usually reviewed in detail.

### *Level 2-4 – 450 Points*

The supervisor sets the overall assignment objectives, program emphasis, and resources available. The environmental protection specialist and supervisor, in consultation, develop the deadlines, projects, and work to be done.

The environmental protection specialist, having developed expertise in a particular program or functional area (e.g., municipal solid waste, land disposal, environmental information management) has continuing responsibility for independently planning and carrying out important environmental protection programs or projects; determining the approach to be taken and the methods to be used; resolving most of the conflicts that arise; coordinating the work with others as necessary; and interpreting policy in terms of established objectives. The specialist keeps the supervisor informed of progress, potentially controversial matters, and problems with far-reaching implications.

Completed work is reviewed for conformance to overall requirements, compatibility with other work, and effectiveness in meeting objectives.

### *Level 2-5 – 650 Points*

The supervisor makes assignments in terms of broadly defined missions or functions and provides only administrative and policy direction.

As a recognized authority in a program or functional area, the environmental protection specialist has complete responsibility and authority to plan, design, schedule, and carry out major programs, projects, studies, or other work independently. The specialist typically exercises discretion and judgment in determining whether to broaden or narrow the scope of projects or studies. Completed work is reviewed by management officials only for potential influence on broad agency policy and program goals, fulfillment of program objectives, or contribution to advancement of knowledge in the field, and is normally accepted without significant change. Recommendations for new projects or program objectives are usually evaluated for such considerations as availability of funds and other resources, broad program goals, or national priorities.

## FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES

### *Level 3-3 – 275 Points*

Guidelines are available, including technical and procedural manuals (e.g., agency inspection procedures, case preparation manuals), handbooks, and textbooks; Federal, State, and local environmental regulations; and agency regulations and directives. Guidelines are not always completely applicable to specific work assignments, but precedent materials are available for reference (e.g., environmental reports, plans, and records illustrative of similar projects or assignments).

The environmental protection specialist uses judgment in choosing, interpreting, and adapting guidelines and precedents to specific issues or problems in accordance with established policies and accepted practice; researching regulations and determining the relationship between the guidelines and State and Federal needs and requirements; and in recommending changes to procedures to improve the reliability of data, enhance services, correct deficiencies, etc.

### *Level 3-4 – 450 Points*

Administrative policies and precedents, laws, regional or area directives, agency regulations, and scientific and technical references are usually applicable, but are stated in general terms. For example, operating guidance provides a broad overview of program goals and strategies as well as priorities, but does not detail how the identified priorities and activities will be accomplished.

The environmental protection specialist uses initiative and resourcefulness in deviating from, refining, or extending traditional methods and practices, or in developing and recommending new or substantially modified methods, criteria, or policies.

### *Level 3-5 – 650 Points*

Guidelines consist of broadly stated/nonspecific policy statements, statutes, court decisions, etc., that require extensive interpretation.

The environmental protection specialist uses judgment and discretion in determining the intent, and in interpreting and revising existing policy and regulatory guidance for use by others within or outside the employing agency (e.g., technical experts, line managers, or contractors in other offices or agencies, State and local governments, or private industry). Some specialists review proposed legislation or regulations that would significantly change the basic character of agency programs or the way it conducts its business with other agencies or with the public or private industry. Other specialists develop major program guidance for use by others at subordinate echelons in the organization. At this level, the environmental protection specialist is recognized as an authority in the development and/or interpretation of guidance on environmental planning and administration in one or more national programs or functional areas (e.g., underground storage tank management, municipal solid waste, chemical emergency preparedness).

## FACTOR 4, COMPLEXITY

### *Level 4-3 – 150 Points*

The work includes a variety of duties involving different and unrelated processes and methods (e.g., performing site inspections, collecting data, reviewing documents, analyzing evidence, evaluating results, writing reports, recommending corrective action or procedures for compliance, coordinating with installation officials and customers). These duties characteristically involve well-established and clearly defined aspects of environmental programs, projects, studies, etc.

Decisions regarding what needs to be done depend upon the analysis and evaluation of the issues or conditions (e.g., item characteristics as related to different classification systems, program requirements, legal authorities, permit status, operational practices, results of monitoring procedures, conditions of noncompliance, extent of violations, degree of hazard, timeliness of action, cost effectiveness, applicability of regulations) involved in each assignment. A course of action may have to be selected from many acceptable alternatives, as, for example, when recommending improved management practices to facility operators or selecting the preferred alternative for disposal of hazardous property.

The work involves conditions and elements that must be identified and analyzed to discern interrelationships, as, for example, in evaluating industrial practices and conditions to identify instances of noncompliance with regulations, determine extent of violations, and make recommendations for possible enforcement and/or corrective actions. Judgment is required to apply a range of established approaches to identifying and resolving problems.

### Illustrations:

- The specialist ensures that hazardous property is managed according to applicable environmental laws; inspects storage areas; oversees removal by commercial contractors (acting as the contracting officer's representative); prepares environmental reports, plans, and records; and coordinates environmental policies and directives with installation officials, customers, generating activities, etc. The specialist considers such matters as category and location of property, potential for fire or explosion or degree of compatibility of chemicals, results of inspections, and applicability of regulations in providing technical guidance to personnel involved in the receipt, storage, handling, coding, accounting, and disposal of hazardous property. He/she uses judgment in assessing the conformity of turn-in procedures, container storage and labeling, safety and emergency responses, hazard communications, etc., to established requirements.

- The specialist reviews case files of inspected firms for evidence of pesticide violations and works with senior staff to determine level of enforcement action, establish priority of action, schedule case preparation, calculate proposed penalty, participate in settlement conferences, develop Consent Agreement and Final Orders, and close cases. He/she considers the factual evidence of noncompliance in each case, the hazards of the various chemicals involved, the limits of available technology, and availability of other resources when recommending corrective action or procedures for compliance. The specialist uses judgment in evaluating noncompliance reports and determining approaches to use to gain compliance with rules and regulations.

#### *Level 4-4 – 225 Points*

The work typically involves full responsibility for well-established aspects of one or more programs and/or functional areas and includes a wide variety of duties involving diverse and complex technical and/or program or administrative problems and considerations (e.g., inspecting or leading a team in inspecting various types of hazardous waste treatment and disposal facilities, evaluating operating practices, recommending improved procedures and cost effective alternative technologies, identifying violations, preparing reports of findings, developing and negotiating mitigation projects).

Decisions regarding what needs to be done depend on the assessment of unusual facts or conditions (e.g., practical economic or operating problems such as changing technology or program priorities, inadequate controls, unacceptable management practices, abatement plans that are expensive to implement); variations in approach depending upon the environmental and political setting, available resources, impact on populations, involvement of State and local organizations, etc; and incomplete or conflicting data (e.g., discrepant claims as to the toxicity of substances, inadequate program information from contractors or grant applicants, new methodologies or new programs for which only a minimum of information is available).

The work requires making many decisions concerning such things as interpreting considerable data, planning the work, refining existing criteria, or extending or modifying conventional methods and techniques.

#### **Illustrations:**

- The specialist manages the hazardous material/waste, solid waste management, and resource recovery programs at a large military installation with a variety of industrial activities involving the maintenance, modification, and repair of aircraft. He/she identifies and tracks waste streams, determines regulatory violations and recommends corrective action, and develops and implements resource recovery programs. The specialist considers many different factors (e.g., the chemical and physical properties of hundreds of different materials and wastes generated in production areas, the nature of any contaminants, and the best methods of receiving, storing, handling, processing, and transporting hazardous materials and/or wastes to facilitate resource recovery efforts); alternative technologies for recycling,

reclaiming, altering to a useful byproduct that can be sold or used internally, and treating for safe disposal; constantly changing conditions in production operations; and changes in Federal, State, local, and agency policies and regulations. He/she uses judgment in identifying opportunities for resource recovery that can offset handling/disposal costs, assessing and adapting new technologies, and responding to intensive monitoring by regulatory agencies.

- The specialist reviews inspection reports and self-monitoring reports from regulated facilities, conducts preliminary investigations of noncompliance cases, and notifies facilities or State of steps to be taken to correct violations and time frames within which to report. He/she considers diverse factors (e.g., more than one regulatory program involved, significant impact on the violator's costs or workers or ability to meet obligations, unexpected developments); questions of fact or interpretation of law; or alternative approaches to resolving hazardous situations, negotiating settlements, or pursuing enforcement actions. The specialist uses judgment in interpreting laws, precedent decisions, and extensive compliance information; determining ways to extend or modify conventional techniques to gain relevant facts; and developing new approaches to overcome reluctance to cooperate.
- The specialist serves as State coordinator for assigned hazardous waste grant activities. He/she tracks progress of State plans to assure compliance with agency requirements, reviews State status reports and selected facility permits, evaluates program accomplishments against planned outputs, and recommends adjustment or changes. The specialist considers agency operating guidance and priorities, program commitments, program goals and objectives, strategies, milestones, etc; adjustments in approach depending on the locations and settings of specific programs and the operations of State agencies; and in some cases incomplete or conflicting data pertaining to program status. The work requires considering different courses of action and extending or modifying conventional techniques to meet program objectives.
- The specialist conducts studies of diverse issues affecting the authorities and coverage of Superfund and related statutes, recommends changes or additions to regulations, writes substantial portions of regulations, provides guidance to regional offices on implementation, evaluates effectiveness of regional programs, and prepares reports on management problems. He/she considers a wide range of unusual issues (e.g., public health/risk assessment, total loadings of pollutants deposited through different media, cleanup of unconventional hazardous substance releases including mining waste, radioactive materials, pesticides, asbestos, and other releases); variations in industry practices, effects of regulatory implementation, new methodologies, etc; and the absence of directly applicable data in some instances. The specialist uses judgment in planning study research and recommending solutions to management problems and revisions to regulations.

#### *Level 4-5 – 325 Points*

The work includes a wide variety of duties requiring many different and unrelated processes and methods applied to a broad range of activities involving a number of facilities, sites, programs,

etc. (e.g., planning and conducting/coordinating inspections to identify and evaluate violations in a variety of complex industrial and commercial establishments throughout a multi state area) or intensive analysis and problem solving (as a recognized expert) in a program or functional area.

Decisions regarding what needs to be done depend on assessment of very complex, diverse circumstances that involve major areas of uncertainty in approach, methodology, or interpretation resulting from such elements as continuing program changes, technological developments, new or unconventional methods, unique or controversial aspects of environmental protection, or conflicting interests or ideas (as between operational or mission requirements and environmental requirements or between State needs and Federal needs).

The work requires devising new methods and techniques to produce effective results or implement advances in such areas as pollution prevention, resource allocation, risk assessment, or quality assurance; establishing criteria for administering or evaluating environmental programs; or developing policy guidance and procedural material for use by operating personnel.

### Illustrations:

- The specialist manages and/or coordinates the hazardous waste and materials management programs at a large military installation where the mission (test and evaluation of vehicles and artillery) and the range of program activities (involving several hundred waste generating/storage sites, numerous laboratories that develop and/or use unique chemicals, several designated cleanup sites, a large wetlands inventory, etc.) result in problems that are unprecedented or exceptionally broad and complex. He/she considers such diverse factors as frequent changes in Federal/State regulations and continuing technological developments in combat systems testing and hazardous waste management operations. The work requires devising new ways to implement program requirements (e.g., promoting waste minimization by finding uses for chemicals that would otherwise have to be disposed of) and maximize contract services; developing criteria for automating hazardous waste tracking systems; and resolving very unusual problems of hazardous waste disposal and management.
- The specialist manages complex national database and data support systems for reporting permit, enforcement, and compliance activity under the Clean Water Act within a multi state region. He/she advises agency personnel and the public on interpretation and use of data, provides technical assistance to State and local agencies and contractors in the collection and analysis of data, develops formats to meet specialized information needs, trains regional and State staff in system design and operation, oversees State performance and achievement of policy goals, and reconciles national requirements with regional and State needs. Decisions are complicated by elements such as system ambiguities, changing program requirements, and varying weaknesses and strengths of State and local programs in the region. The work requires designing quality assurance systems and measures; developing new approaches to providing training, utilizing systems, and evaluating needs; designing customized reports; developing new and unique data support systems; and developing solutions to very unusual and/or novel information management problems.

- The specialist oversees and evaluates regional and field activities of a national enforcement program. He/she solves very complex operational problems concerned with systemic issues such as case work quality, compliance practices, availability of resources, program changes, etc. The work requires innovation and resourcefulness in developing procedures to identify and/or correct management deficiencies and devising new methods to improve the administration of the program.

## **FACTOR 5, SCOPE AND EFFECT**

### *Level 5-3 – 150 Points*

The purpose of the work is to plan and carry out a variety of routine project or program activities to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations or to improve the administration of environmental protection programs. The work involves identifying, analyzing, and making recommendations to resolve conventional environmental or compliance problems and situations that are covered by established precedents and procedures. Assignments may include portions of broader activities or complete projects of limited scope.

The work affects the operation of Federal, State, or local environmental protection programs; the adequacy of such activities as emergency or planned removal actions, compliance reviews, enforcement actions and settlements, or research/study conclusions; or, through the elimination of actual or potential environmental hazards, the well-being of persons in surrounding work areas or communities.

### *Level 5-4 – 225 Points*

The purpose of the work is to plan and carry out a variety of important project or program activities. The work involves establishing criteria (e.g., developing operating guidance or procedural manuals for major agency activities); formulating projects; assessing program effectiveness; investigating or analyzing a variety of unusual conditions or questions; or providing advisory or oversight services to regional and operating personnel, State and local officials, industry representatives, and others on specific functions or programs. Assignments typically involve problems that are particularly difficult, widespread, or persistent; or that are systemic in nature involving major systems or processes.

The work directly influences the effectiveness and acceptability of total environmental protection systems and/or programs affecting a wide range of agency activities, major activities of industrial or commercial concerns, or the operation of other agencies.

### *Level 5-5 – 325 Points*

The purpose of the work is to plan and carry out major environmental projects and/or programs. The work involves determining the soundness of agency wide programs and plans; developing and establishing new approaches and methods for use of operating personnel; resolving problems

that are critical to accomplishment of important agency objectives; providing authoritative advice and technical assistance to Federal, State, and local environmental protection officials; or developing or revising regulations or standards that affect a large segment of the regulated community.

The work affects the development of major aspects of the agency's environmental protection programs and policies; the work of State and local officials, top-level managers of the agency/department, private industry executives, or other environmental protection experts; important national goals and programs (e.g., removal activities at cleanup sites where there are extremely difficult and complex problems, as where treatment technologies may be inadequate, and an immediate, critical, or widespread threat to public health, environmentally sensitive areas, and/or endangered species); or the well-being of substantial numbers of people (e.g., all users of pesticides). The specialist's recommendations often result in official positions or obligate substantial program resources.

## **FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS**

## **FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Match the appropriate level of personal contacts with the corresponding purpose of the contacts. Credit the point value found where the selected levels intersect on the chart below.

*The persons contacted are:*

2. Employees in the same agency, but outside the immediate office (employees who generally are engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work at various levels within the agency), or with individuals or groups from outside the employing agency in a moderately structured setting. Typical of contacts at this level are those with engineers, chemists, lawyers, contracting officers, service contract representatives, and professional and technical employees from other areas of the installation or agency or in State or local environmental agencies or regulated facilities.
3. Persons from outside the employing agency in a moderately unstructured setting. Typical of contacts at this level are those with persons in their capacities as contractors, inspectors, attorneys, company executives, community leaders, elected officials, or representatives of Federal or State regulatory agencies, professional organizations, the news media, or organized or ad hoc public action groups. This level may also include contacts with the head of the employing agency or program officials several managerial levels removed from the employee when such contacts occur on an ad-hoc basis.

*The purpose of contacts is:*

- b. To plan or coordinate work efforts or to resolve operating problems by influencing or motivating individuals or groups who are working toward mutual goals and who have basically cooperative attitudes (e.g., discussing contract requirements or resolving storage or labeling problems with commercial contractors; advising State officials or owners and operators of hazardous waste facilities on the need for or the results of inspections; promoting compliance with requirements for control and abatement of air or water pollution; encouraging employees, tenant organizations, citizens, manufacturers, merchants, and others to create less waste).
  
- c. To influence, motivate, or persuade persons or groups who are typically skeptical, resistant, or uncooperative, and who must be approached skillfully to obtain the desired effect (e.g., negotiating compliance requirements or timetables; influencing or persuading agencies/companies to agree to use new or improved technologies about which there may be conflicting opinions; representing the office/agency, as a member of an institutional committee, on controversial licensing/permitting requests; working with Indian tribal leaders to modify plans when conflicting values must be resolved or accommodated; challenging the results of surveys or inspections by regulatory agencies; justifying the feasibility and desirability of plans or proposals that significantly affect office and/or agency practices, such as corrective action plans or funding requirements for environmental compliance and restoration projects).

<b>P U R P O S E</b>		
<b>C O N T A C T S</b>	b	c
2	75	145
3	110	180

## **FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

### *Level 8-1 – 5 Points*

The work is primarily sedentary, although some physical effort may be required, e.g., walking, standing, carrying light items such as manuals or briefcases, or driving or traveling by motor vehicle.

*Level 8-2 – 20 Points*

The work requires regular and recurring physical exertion such as prolonged standing, bending, and stooping to observe work operations and identify leaking containers in a treatment, storage, or disposal area.

**FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT***Level 9-1 – 5 Points*

The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts that require normal safety precautions typical of such places as offices, training rooms, and libraries. The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. There may be occasional exposure to moderate risks or discomforts in storage areas or hazardous waste sites.

*Level 9-2 – 20 Points*

The work involves regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks or discomforts that require special safety precautions (e.g., working at a storage, disposal, or spill site where there is risk of exposure to pesticides, hazardous chemicals, radioactive materials, or other pollutants). The environmental protection specialist must use protective clothing and/or gear.