

ENCINA WASTEWATER AUTHORITY

DATE: August 2022
POSITION TITLE: Laboratory Quality Assurance Specialist
DEPARTMENT: Environmental Compliance
SECTION: Laboratory
REPORTS TO: Laboratory Manager
FLSA STATUS: Nonexempt

POSITION SUMMARY: Under the general supervision of the Laboratory Manager, the Laboratory Quality Assurance Specialist (“Lab QA Specialist”) coordinates and administers Encina Wastewater Authority’s comprehensive quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) program in conformance with the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) standards set forth in the California Code of Regulations; participates in and analyzes compliance monitoring of wastewater, industrial waste control, plant process control, biosolids reuse/disposal, reclamation, and the Authority’s revenue sampling program; develops, reviews, and implements safe and compliant laboratory practices and procedures; prepares a variety of routine reports; participates in lab chemical hygiene and safety programs; performs a wide variety of routine to complex biological, microbiological and general chemical analyses to ensure compliance with federal and state water quality laws and regulations; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISORY DIMENSIONS: None

ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES:

- Administer, monitor, evaluate, maintain the laboratory’s Quality Assurance Program, as mandated by the EPA and Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) standards set forth in the California Code of Regulations Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 19.
- Review, update, and assist in the development of the laboratory’s Quality Manual and policies that address all QA/QC practices employed by the laboratory. Develop and approve of updates to standard operating procedures for a variety of laboratory sampling, testing, and documentation practices to ensure they are compliant with regulations. Update quality systems when necessary, working with lab management to address issues of non-compliance and to identify and implement necessary improvements.

- Coordinate, monitor, and conduct independent and continuous audits of all laboratory practices and procedures to ensure conformance and compliance with all pertinent regulatory and environmental laboratory certification requirements.
- Administer the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS); review, correct, and flag data; produces QA/QC charts, reports, and other documents from the data including statistical review of analytical data to evaluate effectiveness of test parameter control limits and ensuring all data meets the minimum acceptance criteria for pertinent regulatory compliance monitoring.
- Review, research and interpret existing and proposed water quality and laboratory regulations and prepares regulatory summaries, comments and reports. Communicates water quality and biosolids data and prepares technical reports and correspondences in response to requests from regulatory agencies, consultants and the public.
- Maintain and administer the mandated Chemical Hygiene Plan; monitor procedures to ensure work is being performed in a safe matter consistent with federal and state OSHA rules and regulations; coordinate, inspect, and monitor laboratory conformance with EWA safety programs and correct and report safety hazards.
- Maintain laboratory employee training records; periodically monitors and evaluates laboratory staff procedures in performance of technical analyses and correct sample handling techniques.
- Maintain laboratory inventory of chemicals and ensures proper record keeping of certificates of analysis and disposal records.
- Perform sampling, analysis, and prepare standards, samples and reagents, and other tasks normally assigned to Chemists as necessary due to vacations, sick leave, attrition, and emergencies.
- Perform administrative tasks for the organization as needed, including but not limited to: inventory and purchase requisitions for Laboratory equipment and supplies, routine maintenance of laboratory and field equipment, contributing to the laboratory annual budget.
- Prepare information for the Laboratory, Member Agencies, and EWA Executive Leadership as needed.

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations will be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Specific Types of Knowledge, Skills and Physical Abilities Required For These Duties:

- Knowledge of (a) chemical, physical, biological, and instrumental testing procedures and (b) standard methods used for water and wastewater sampling and testing. Ability to perform independently a broad range of analyses using standard methods.
- Knowledge of California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 19 as it relates to environmental

laboratories, sampling techniques, and testing procedures and other pertinent state and federal regulations pertaining to the certification of environmental laboratory operations.

- Knowledge of specialized computer operations and software including laboratory information management systems (LIMS) utilized for data review and statistical analyses, and technical documentation and reporting, spreadsheets, word processing, and databases.
- Knowledge of methods and applications of environmental laboratory quality assurance/quality control procedures and processes.
- Knowledge of personal hygiene and safety practices required when working with potentially contagious, corrosive and/or toxic materials.
- Knowledge of sample receiving, chain-of-custody and preservation procedures.
- Knowledge of the principles of laboratory maintenance.
- Skills in operating a personal computer for data processing, spreadsheet preparation, and word processing.
- Ability to rapidly learn and consistently perform sampling and analysis according to regulatory protocol.
- Ability to lift and move heavy sampling equipment, typically in the field and occasionally in inclement weather.
- Ability to work in wet and/or odorous areas to obtain samples.
- Ability to safely collect surf zone samples.
- Ability to work varying hours, weekends and holidays when necessary to cover for Junior/Assistant Chemist positions.
- Ability to understand, follow directions and complete assignments with minimal supervision.
- Ability to work both independently and as a member of a team.
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with coworkers.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENT: A Bachelor's Degree in chemistry, biochemistry, biology, microbiology, natural or physical science, engineering, or a closely related field from an accredited college or university.

EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT: Three (3) years of recent laboratory experience, including at least two (2) years in an analytical/environmental accredited laboratory performing analysis of environmental samples.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT: Possession of a Grade II California Water Environment Association (CWEA) Laboratory Analyst certificate is required. A Grade III CWEA Laboratory Analyst certificate is desired, but not required. Failure to attain and maintain a CWEA Certification constitutes possible cause for demotion or termination.

LICENSE REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid California Class C Driver's License and the ability to be insured under the Authority's automobile insurance coverage.

Note: Failure to maintain a valid California Driver's License constitutes possible cause for termination.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS:

Physical Demands

While performing the duties of this position, the employee is regularly required to walk; talk or hear by telephone and in person; sit; smell; use hands to finger, handle, feel or operate objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands or arms. The employee is frequently required to stand for prolonged periods of time.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, the ability to distinguish colors and shades, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus. The employee must regularly lift and move up to 50 pounds.

Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this position, employees are regularly required to use oral and written communication skills, read documents or instructions; analyze and solve problems; observe and interpret data or information; use mathematical reasoning; learn and apply new information or skills; perform highly detailed work; work under intensive deadlines with constant interruptions; and perform multiple concurrent tasks.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: While performing the duties of the job, the employee is frequently exposed to toxic or hazardous chemicals. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderately quiet.

QUALIFICATIONS: Ability to pass a pre-employment physical examination; possession of a good driving record and the ability to be insured by the Authority's insurance carrier; and the ability to read write, speak and comprehend English.

RIGHT TO WORK REQUIREMENT: Must be a United States citizen or possess qualified alien status. Documentation of eligibility to work in U.S. will be required as a condition of employment.

The Encina Wastewater Authority does not discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of age, race, color, sex, ancestry, national origin, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual identity, religion, military status, medical condition, mental disability, or physical disability.

The list of essential job duties contained in this job description is not exhaustive, and may be supplemented as necessary. This position performs other related duties as assigned, some of which may become essential to the position.

Any offer of employment for this position is contingent upon receipt of acceptable results from a background investigation and drug screen.