



Health and Safety Specialist Water/Wastewater

Don Nichols

Ypsilanti Community
Utilities Authority

What does a typical day look like in this role?

Coordinate with department supervisors to address workforce safety concerns. Prioritize and resolve safety issues through electronic reports and field inspections. Conduct site visits to ensure regulatory compliance. Maintain flexibility in managing evolving situations and implementing necessary process changes. Stay current on safety training and ensure adequate PPE inventory.

Are there alternative pathways or specializations within this career?

You may pursue specialized areas such as industrial hygiene, environmental compliance, ergonomics, emergency management, or risk assessment. These allow for deeper expertise and may lead to consulting roles or advanced leadership positions.

Is ongoing education or training required or beneficial?

Absolutely, OSHA, NFPA, and ANSI standards change from time to time. Implementation and integrating them into your workplace as needed takes a firm understanding. Supplemental classes, either web based or in person is a must.

What are the most rewarding aspects of this career?

Knowing that you're part of a team that keeps others loved ones safe. That my work and efforts are worthwhile. My young adult sons are interested enough in my career to ask how my day went.

Education Requirements

What level of education is typically required?

MIOSHA CET certification, earned through accumulated credits, is essential. Several years of experience in an Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) role are typically required

Are there specific fields of study that are most relevant?

Here at YCUA we have a blend of construction and general industry.

What are the common entry-level positions?

Larger businesses offer internship programs. Company safety committees. Becoming a union or non-union safety representative, or safety coordinator.

What soft skills are important?

Clear communication with all parties involved in incidents or departmental needs. Remain calm under pressure and focus on resolving issues rather than assigning blame.

"My advice is always, Attack the problem, not the person."