

Environmental Scientist

Measure pollution, assess projects before they are built, and hold industry to the rules.

TYPICAL PAY

\$94,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$61k to \$117k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 6 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Consulting firms, government regulators, mines and industry, co...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Biology, chemistry, math and geography. Chemistry matters more than people expect.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Environmental science, biology, chemistry, earth science or environmental studies with a science focus. Choose a program with co-op or a required field course.
- 3 Field seasons** Summers
Summer jobs sampling water, surveying vegetation or monitoring sites. This is the experience employers screen for.
- 4 First consulting or government job** Year 1 to 3
You start as a field technician or junior scientist and learn the regulations on the job.
- 5 Designation or graduate degree, if you want it** Optional
The Environmental Professional (EP) designation from ECO Canada (the Environmental Careers Organization of Canada), or a master's degree if you want to specialise in assessment or toxicology.

Pros and cons

- + Work outdoors and at a desk, not one or the other
- + Start working at 22 with no licence to wait for
- + Demand across mining, energy, cities and agriculture
- Junior pay is modest for a science degree
- Long drives, remote sites and weeks away from home
- Pressure from clients who want a convenient answer

Good to know

Big projects cannot be built without this job

Federal and provincial law requires an environmental assessment before major mines, pipelines, dams and highways proceed. Those assessments run for years and are written by teams of environmental...

Canada has tens of thousands of contaminated sites

The federal government alone keeps a public inventory of contaminated sites it is responsible for, with thousands still being assessed or cleaned up. Old military bases, fuel depots and mines m...

Optional boosts

Contaminated sites and remediation. Environmental impact assessment. Air quality and emissions. Indigenous consultation and traditional knowledge.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Environmental Officer in Canada, wages (updated Nov 2025)
ECO Canada, the Environmental Careers Organization of Canada
Government of Canada: water overview and monitoring
University of British Columbia: Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/environmental-scientist>



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