

Environmental Technician

Take the samples, run the instruments and gather the field data the reports are built on. Two years of college gets you in.

TYPICAL PAY

\$70,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$46k to \$106k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Field sites, testing labs, municipal plants, consulting firms, industrial...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Grade 12 with chemistry, biology and math. Most programs list chemistry as the key requirement.
- 2 College diploma** 2 to 3 years
Environmental technician, environmental technology, ecosystem management or a similar program. Two years, with heavy lab and field components.
- 3 Field placement or co-op** One term
Most programs include one. It is the single best route to a job offer.
- 4 First job** Right after graduation
Sampling technician, lab technician or field monitor with a consulting firm, lab or municipality.
- 5 Build tickets and specialise** Ongoing
Spill response, drinking water operator certification or air monitoring. Each one raises your rate.

Pros and cons

- + Working in two years for under \$20,000 in tuition
- + Outdoors for a large part of the year
- + Clear route into a municipal job with a pension
- Pay plateaus without more training or a degree
- Cold, wet, buggy field conditions
- A lot of driving, and sometimes weeks away in camp

Good to know

Samples have a clock on them

Many water tests are only valid if the sample reaches the lab within a set holding time, sometimes as little as 24 hours, kept cold the whole way. Technicians plan entire routes around courier deadlines.

Walkerton changed water testing in Canada

In 2000, contaminated drinking water in Walkerton, Ontario killed seven people and made thousands ill. The inquiry that followed forced mandatory operator certification and much stricter testing rules that...

Optional boosts

Water and wastewater operator certification. Spill and emergency response. Air monitoring and emissions testing. Drone piloting.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Environmental Technician in Canada, wages (updated Nov 2025)
ECO Canada, the Environmental Careers Organization of Canada
Fleming College: School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences
Government of Canada: water overview and monitoring

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-technician>



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