



Environmental Outreach Coordinator

Job Description

Outreach Coordinators coordinate outreach opportunities for stakeholders and the general public to learn the connection between people and our environment. The facilitation of public learning allows community members to directly understand and interact with utilities, government and other organizations.

Salary

Entry — \$32,000
Middle — \$53,000
Top — \$65,000+

Core Tasks

- Develop educational curriculum for diverse audiences
- Maintain the educational facility site and outreach materials
- Coordinate educational tours of utilities facility and facilitate workshop opportunities
- Learn the story and context of the organization of employment
- Refine teaching techniques to improve the effectiveness of lessons and tours

Workplace / Environment

- **Work hours**
Approx. 40 hours/week
(At key milestones overtime work may be required to meet deadlines)
- **Environment**
Work primarily occurs on-site at the **educational facility**, but can sometimes include off **site trips**
- **Travel**
Travel to **local events** to educate the general public is common

Education / Prerequisites

Education Level

Bachelor's Degree related to education or project management is recommended

Licensing

None

Pre-Job Preparation

Volunteer or job opportunities in outreach or education are extremely helpful

Experience

Soft Skills

- Communication
- Adaptability
- Project Management

Technical Skills

- Curriculum and Lesson Plan Development
- Public Speaking



Career Path: Kristin Covey

About Me

Education/Outreach Coordinator at King County Wastewater Treatment Division

Masters in Teaching from Seattle University
Bachelors in Anthropology and Minor in Biology from Macalester College

College Choices

"I loved **science** as a high school student, although environmental science was not offered when I was in school. Once I was in college, I really wanted to major in the sciences, specifically biology. Unfortunately, I struggled badly in all of my science classes because the majority of the grades were based on timed tests, and I almost always failed to complete the tests in the allotted time. To avoid complete failure, I decided I needed to change my major. I ended up majoring in **anthropology** and minoring in **biology**. But I didn't know what I would do with that major. I wasn't sure anthropology was the direction I wanted to go in, so I decided to take a **break** from school."



Into the Real World



"After college, I ended up getting a **job at EarthCorps**, which is an environmental restoration nonprofit. Environmental stuff was new to me at that point. I was 21, and had never really even thought about working in an environmental field. I ended up being at EarthCorps for seven years and loved it. I realized environmental work was a **passion** of mine. Even though I loved working at EarthCorps, it was my only place of employment since undergraduate school. I thought, 'I might as well try something different.' So, I went back to school for teaching. I figured having a **teaching degree** would be **versatile** enough to open doors to the environmental education world."

"After receiving my degree, I worked as a public school teacher at an elementary school for one year. It was the most challenging, all-consuming year of work I've ever had. (Props to the teachers out there!) As my first year of teaching was ending, King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) was building a new **treatment plant** in Woodinville that included an **education center**. They needed staff to create curriculum and pilot programs for elementary students focused on human impacts to water. I came across this job opening and thought, 'Wow, this is an incredibly perfect job for me.' So, I applied and got hired. Eventually, I was hired for a permanent position as the Education Coordinator and Site Manager of **Brightwater Center**."

About My Job

"It's a job where you can get paid to share your passion"

Pros

- "It's very rewarding as an educator to know that what you're teaching is making an **impact**."
- "It's never boring. I love making **connections** for people in terms of how we affect water and how we impact water — and see that 'aha' moment. Then they make a change in their life to improve the environment."

Cons

- "Teaching is cyclical – you're often teaching the same thing to different audiences, so it can feel **repetitive**. It's important to keep things current and relevant."
- "Having an education program as part of a utility is a fairly new concept. Sometimes our team has to **advocate for ourselves** to get other work groups to understand that what we do is important."

Fieldwork

- "I lead tours of the **Brightwater Treatment Plant** for high school, college and adult groups."
- "Since I'm the site manager for **Brightwater Center**, part of my job is to make the facility **accessible** and **engaging** for the public, including organizing workshops and career events for community members."
- "I also co-lead the **Clean Water Ambassadors Internship Program** for high school youth each summer, which involves a lot of field trips."

Office Work

- "My office is at an education center! That makes it a **unique** place to work. It's a small space so I know my co-workers really well."
- "I spend a little over half of my time in front of a **computer**."

Skills

- "Feeling comfortable and **confident speaking** in front of a group of people is a necessary skill. Although, I find this is a life-long project."
- "I would say being **adaptable** is important — being able to go with the flow, because things will **change** all the time when you teach."

Education/Experience

- "Obtaining a **certificate/degree** in teaching or some type of education is helpful."
- "Having leadership experience at any phase in your life is valuable. **Leading** groups of people doesn't need to be in a classroom — it can be in an informal setting."
- "I joined **AmeriCorps** after college because it provided me with an opportunity to lead people in environmental work."

The Future of **Education Coordinating**

"It's going in the direction of becoming more popular"

"There are more and more utilities seeing the importance of educating their community members because they are realizing it improves the system. As communities grow, and as more people begin to live in these areas, utilities, governments and other organizations are realizing that we need to do more **community engagement**."

"I feel like it's going to be commonplace to have an **education program** as part of a utility."