



## CAREER PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Name:** Isaac Tam

**Job Category:** Assistant Environmental Inspector



1. Please describe the work you do:

I conduct wastewater sampling of industrial users within San José and the tributary areas to ensure that the water from local industries going into the sanitary sewer is in compliance with local limits. Doing so, prevents the degradation of the sewer system and the Regional Wastewater Facility. I take great pride in knowing that my work contributes to protecting the wastewater infrastructure of our community as well as preserving our unique Bay Area environment.

2. What combination of education, vocational training, apprenticeship, experience, and/or skill did you obtain in order to be qualified and selected for your job?

I have a Bachelor of Science in evolutionary biology/ecology. I have previous work experience at the Santa Clara Valley Water District conducting mercury sampling of County owned reservoirs, creeks, and lakes. My current job requires field sampling experience with a background in biology and knowledge of chemistry which was mainly gained through work experience and schooling.

3. What do you like best about your job?

I am an outdoor person, so the fact that I get to spend seven hours a day doing my work in the field is great. It is interesting to see and learn about the diverse range of private and public

industries that are in the City of San José. It's cool to learn about their treatment systems and entire production process.

4. Please tell us about the projects and activities you have enjoyed most in your work in the water/wastewater field, and what made them rewarding:

I enjoy being able to participate in the inspection process. I know I am helping to contribute to the protection of the City's sewer infrastructure and environment.

5. What qualities and capabilities are needed in order for a person in your area of expertise to be successful in the water/wastewater industry?

Be technically minded in order to understand how various wastewater treatment systems operate, have an ability work independently, react properly to crisis with little supervisory oversight, and have the people skills to interact with private business owners as well as your teammates (other assistant inspectors).

6. Do you have any advice for an individual who is considering pursuing a career in your field in the water/wastewater industry?

Brush up on your chemistry knowledge, have a keen eye so you can spot signs of illegal dumping or violations (you never know when you may come across one), and make sure you don't mind getting a bit dirty every once in a while.