



LAKE OF THE WOODS COUNTY POSITION DESCRIPTION

DATE: November, 2017

JOB TITLE: Environmental Specialist

DEPARTMENT: Land and Water Planning

JOB GRADE: 9

FLSA: Non-Exempt (Non-Union)

REPORTS TO: Land and Water Planning Director

SUPERVISES: N/A

GENERAL DUTIES:

The Environmental Specialist is a full-time permanent professional/technical position within the Land and Water Planning Office, responsible for conducting property inspections, approving land use permits, enforcing county ordinances and providing information and assistance to citizens, property owners, contractors and other stakeholders regarding land use regulations, sewage treatment systems and other environmentally related programs. Incumbent will assist in compiling information for reports, handle fees, receipts, and correspondence, maintain records, and conduct on-site inspections. The Environmental Specialist will assist the Assistant Zoning Administrator with the County Agricultural Inspector program and Buffer Law implementation.

The position operates under the supervision of the Land and Water Planning Director. The position provides technical review and administrative support for a number of distinct functions encompassing the administration and enforcement of the county Comprehensive Land Use Plan, land use ordinances, Wetland Conservation Act, state septic system regulations and codes. These functions are accomplished through the review and field-inspection of land use permit applications, review of subsurface sewage treatment system (SSTS) designs and evaluations, conducting SSTS field compliance inspections, investigating land use complaints and enforcing violations. These activities are dedicated to achieving a high level of professional services that promote orderly land development, protection, conservation and enhance the environmental resources of the County.

The incumbent will serve as a technical and administrative support resource to the Land and Water Planning Director, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment and County Board. The position works collaboratively with other various county staff, and external committees, organizations and community members to facilitate an efficient implementation of land use policies, and to educate citizens and stakeholders on procedures and policies to achieve the vision and goals of the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land use ordinances.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Two years of college or technical training AND/OR Two years' experience in related field, or equivalent
- Must be able to acquire agricultural, septic system and wetlands certifications within two years of hire date
- Must possess valid Minnesota Driver's license

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Possess computer literacy and a general knowledge of office procedures, practices and equipment.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality; work closely and maintain good relationship with co-workers and the general public.
- Extensive knowledge of maps, land descriptions, soils, and vegetation.
- Physical ability to manage field work including digging and managing rough terrain.
- Ability to work within a customer-focused, field-based land-use permitting and enforcement environment utilizing site visits for permit approvals and complaint resolution.
- Knowledge of implementing Wetland Conservation Act regulations, stormwater management and soil and water conservation practices.
- General knowledge of state statutes, and local rules and ordinances regarding individual sewage treatment systems, land use planning, wetlands and other environmentally-related fields.
- Knowledge and skills applying land use regulations within a customer service-focused, proactive, site-based evaluation model.
- Effective communication skills, including personal and interpersonal skills, project management and decision making skills.
- Ability to perform technical inspections, provide oversight and make recommendations for various permit applications.
- Maintain effective relationships with citizens, colleagues, county officials, state agency representatives, ISTS professionals, contractors and other environmentally-related groups and constituencies.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Assists in the administration and enforcement of the County Comprehensive Plan and land use ordinances and applicable state rules, plans and statutes.
- Assists in fulfilling the duties of the county agricultural inspector.
- Assists in the research and preparation of permit, inspections, enforcement and special project reports and scan documents.
- Provide customer service to applicants to assist them in complying with the County Comprehensive Plan and Land use ordinance and applicable state rules, plans and statutes.
- Respond to citizen inquiries within the county regarding land use and related environmental matters.
- Assists and works independently on special projects, DNR permits, court cases and investigations.
- Respond to land use complaints through direct communication with complainant, inspection of the property, and communication with the involved property owner. Prepare written reports

regarding alleged violation and proposed resolution. Issue citations and cease and desists orders as warranted. Prepare written reports in the format established by the department, for submission to the County Attorney's Office requesting prosecution of land use violations. Testify in court and provide additional evidence as necessary.

- Assists or conducts independent inspections of properties within the county for all land use activities regulated by the county.
- In conjunction with site visits and consultation with applicants as appropriate, approve or deny land use applications submitted to the county pursuant to the county's proscribed regulatory authority.
- Collaborate and coordinate activities as necessary with other county departments, boards and planning groups, related outside agencies such as the Soil and Water Conservation District, Department of Natural Resources, municipalities and townships within the county and other counties and state and federal agencies as necessary.
- Communicate county land use policies and activities to citizens, property owners, and stakeholders such as lake associations, environmental, business and community groups, as well as to local officials and County Commissioners.
- Recommend land use policy initiatives to improve customer service, promote wise land use practices and enhance protection of natural resources, consistent with the County's comprehensive plan, land use ordinance and applicable state rules, plans and statutes. Recommend ordinance improvements, enhanced public communication opportunities, and improved compliance and enforcement strategies to effectively achieve land use objectives.
- Perform all other related assignments as required, including special project assignments, in a professional manner.
- Assists in compiling monthly, quarterly, and annual reports regarding assigned duties and maintain records and database files.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Other duties as assigned or required.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT:

The position has good working conditions in general, but is a diversified job requiring sustained mental effort related to public contacts, organizational issues, planning and technical areas.

The individual may encounter severe emotional strain and/or tension. There is sustained exposure to travel, sitting, computer keyboards and video screens. There is also exposure to moderate lifting (up to 40 pounds).

SAFETY DUTIES:

- Cooperates with the County's Safety Program and conducts work habits in a manner that ensures the safety of all employees.
- Responsible for behavior that is consistent with OSHA regulations, the County policies, departmental safety rules and office policies. Attends all required safety training sessions.