WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN ... Environmental Science

OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW:

According to the Labor of Bureau Statistics, “Environmental scientists and specialists use their knowledge of the natural science to protect the environment. They identify problems and find solutions that minimize hazards to the health of the environment and the population.” Their work environment can take place in offices and laboratories as well as spending time in the field collecting data (air, water, and other substances) and monitoring environmental conditions. Job outlooks for environmental scientists and specialists are positive with a 19 percent growth from 2010 to 2020 due to population growth and heightened public interest concerning with the current environment conditions (Labor of Bureau Statistics (2013).

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENT:

A bachelor’s degree is the minimum formal education required. Many employers may require graduate school. Consult O’Net for more information on the specific KSAs (Knowledge, Skill, Ability) that are required for this career.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO:

The UNM Environment Science program offers a Bachelor’s of Science in Environmental.

INDUSTRIES & TARGET EMPLOYERS:

A variety of employers specifically recruit UNM students and alumni. Consult UNM’s Lobo Career Connection for a complete list of employers and current job postings. Speak with a Career Development Facilitator at the UNM Office of Career Services for help with identifying employers or additional resources for your occupation of choice.

Hazardous & Solid Waste Management

State, and local government, waste management firms, nonprofit organizations, private companies that generate waste in production, risk assessment, quality control, logistics, planning, recycling, transportation, compliance, environmental engineering, public and environmental health, industrial hygiene

Air & Water Quality Management

Testing/analysis, watershed management, stream restoration, sustainable infrastructure, risk assessment, project development, compliance, permitting, modeling,

Land & Water Conservation

Soil and water conservation, land use planning, waste disposal, environmental compliance, reclamation of contaminated lands, landfill operation and monitoring, agrichemical management, fertilizer technology, agricultural production (food and fiber),

Fishery & Wildlife Management

Consulting firms, developers, federal, state, and local government, marine sport fisheries, nonprofit organization, scientific foundations, timber companies, utility companies, wildlife ranges, zoological parks

Planning and Conservation

Natural resource management: Land, Soil, Water, Plants, Animals, also focus in the areas of sustainability management, water resources, aviation planning, transportation, building/zoning, land acquisition, land use, recreation management, park/preserve management, mining, construction

Environmental Education and Communication

Teaching in the areas such as elementary, secondary, post-secondary, and non-classroom education, technical writing, editing, illustrating, photography, public relations

Environmental Law

Political action/lobbying, regulatory affairs, science policy, patent law, non-profit or public interest, environmental law, mediation
SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:

- Consider supplementing your major with a double major in hard science or engineering.
- Gain professional experience in your area of interest through involvement in international internships, student employment, Co-ops, and/or volunteer opportunities.
- Research firms with international interests.
- Shadow professionals in your field of interest to gain a better understanding of their occupation and to build relationships with professional mentors.
- Build your network and get involved on campus through student organizations and campus events. Find more organizations and events at the Student Activities Center website.
- Attend career-related campus events such as career fairs, company information sessions, and or career workshops.
- Students who are interested in graduate school should maintain a high undergraduate GPA and develop relationships with faculty and community leaders.
- Speak with mentors and faculty about career opportunities.
- Job leads can be found on your department’s website, list-serv, newsletters, and social media sites.
- Consider working in multiple departments throughout campus to gain experience in areas you are interested in through work study or student employment.
- Focus on developing “transferable skills” such as computer competency, written/verbal communication, and project management.
- Seek leadership opportunities on campus. Some positions may require an advanced degree.
- Obtain experience with a campus newspaper or media.
- Research government internship program and think about interning with a government agency to get a foot in the door, as well as building your resume.
- Get on government agencies’ job registers.
- Make sure to research organizational values in order to match with your own value set. Knowledge about organizations is critical, because it shows to employers that you’ve done your research and are committed to work for them.
- Obtain working knowledge of a foreign language.

WHO HIRES ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE MAJORS?
Federal, state and local government: Environmental Protection Agency, Geological Survey, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Agriculture, National Park Service, Department of Agriculture, and Public works departments, consulting firms, private laboratories, nonprofit organizations, water treatment plants, consumer products manufacturers, utilities companies, forestry companies, Indian nations, mining companies (petroleum, mineral), consulting firms, real estate development companies, market research companies, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations (Green Action and Natural Resources Defense Council), land trust organizations: The Nature Conservancy or Trust for Public Land, zoological parks, hunting and fishing clubs, wildlife ranges, public and private schools, museums, nature centers and parks, newspaper, educational and scientific software companies, law firms, large corporations, political action committees

STATE & NATIONAL WAGES:
Adapted from CAREER ONE STOP 2012:

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ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND PROTECTION TECHNICIANS, INCLUDING HEALTH

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Adapted from CAREER ONE STOP 2012:

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE TEACHERS, POSTSECONDARY

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INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:

Association for Environmental Health and Sciences [http://www.aehs.com/](http://www.aehs.com/)
Ecological Society of America [http://www.esa.org/](http://www.esa.org/)
National Registry of Environmental Professionals [http://www.nrep.org/](http://www.nrep.org/)
USA Jobs (official job site of the federal government) [https://www.usajobs.gov/](https://www.usajobs.gov/)

http://onetonline.org  
http://www.bls.gov/

REFERENCES
