

Air Quality Champion in Our Community

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Title: Regulatory and Compliance Engineer

Organization: Maryland Department of the Environment

How does your work relate to air quality?

I work in the Air Regulations Development Division at the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). MDE's mission is to protect and restore the environment for the health and well-being of all Marylanders. I work with a team of engineers who write air regulations (rules) that air pollution sources such as power plants or manufacturing facilities have to follow. These rules help to ensure that the air we breathe in Maryland is healthy and safe.



What is your workday like?

My daily tasks vary from day-to-day. One day I may share ideas with other regulators on rules to reduce pollution, on another day I may meet with businesses to help them understand a regulation. Sometimes, I read and learn about sources of air pollution and what needs to happen to improve air quality. I really enjoy the variety of my job.

What motivates you to come to work every day?

My biggest motivation is knowing that my work is directly involved with improving air quality. I used to have asthma growing up, so working in a field where I can help reduce toxic air pollutants and potentially reduce asthma attacks has a personal connection to me. I also have a young daughter who I want to grow up strong and healthy. I want her to have a love for nature and outdoor activities like taking walks or biking or hiking. Working to protect Maryland's air quality will allow my family and millions of others in the state to enjoy the great outdoors without worry.

What education and career path did you pursue to have the position that you have today?

I graduated college with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. My first real job was working at a nonprofit organization, whose mission is to strengthen Baltimore's communities through education, skills development, and community service. This job taught me the importance of environmental and energy stewardship, a fancy way of saying that we should all act responsibly to protect Maryland's air, land, water, and energy. We can do this by turning off lights when we don't need them; riding our bikes and using public transportation whenever possible; not wasting water and food; and recycling. My role was to educate Baltimore residents about energy conservation and provide them with energy-saving items. Next, I worked at a company that helps business owners to upgrade their lighting to energy-efficient lights. Then I came to work at MDE.

What is your workspace like?

I work in an office cubicle, which has a table, file cabinets, and a desktop computer. I have pictures of my wife, daughter, and former colleagues in my cube. I enjoy going on walks with colleagues during break time (there's a park right beside our building) or talking about shows in the break room.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

For work, I would say my biggest accomplishment has been writing two regulations which aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It was a lot of work that required coordination with other staff at MDE, businesses, environmental advocacy groups, and concerned citizens. I remember the day I had to give a 3-hour presentation, with a question and answer session, on why these greenhouse gas regulations are important. With the help of my bosses and colleagues, we received support from everyone to move ahead with the regulations.

For my personal life, it is raising a 2-year-old. Kids are also lot of work! But I love her dearly and seeing her grow is so rewarding.

Is there something important that you want to share that we haven't asked?

I would just add that you don't need to work for an environmental agency to fight against air pollution and fight for improving air quality. Every day there is opportunity to play our role to help protect, preserve, and restore the environment. Play your part!