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Your health and
safety... our priority.

Votre santé et votre
sécurité... notre priorité.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES



A Career That Makes a Difference!

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH?

- Environmental public health refers to conditions in the environment, both natural and human-built, that can affect a person's ability to achieve and maintain good health.
- A healthy environment includes safe water and food supplies, suitably built and maintained housing and community facilities, as well as proper treatment and disposal of wastewater and solid waste.
- Planning for and responding to emergencies is also important to maintaining a healthy environment and to prevent and control communicable diseases.



WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER A CAREER AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES?

Canada is facing a shortage of Environmental Health Officers because many will be retiring soon. As an Environmental Health Officer working in First Nations communities, you would:

- Earn a salary that is competitive with other health professionals;
- Make a difference in the communities you serve. The work is exciting, rewarding and different everyday;

- Get to travel, spend time outdoors, work independently, and apply your skills in different settings; and,
- Interact with all sorts of people including children, adults, Elders, Chiefs, Councils, and healthcare workers.

WHAT DO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS DO?

- Environmental Health Officers working in First Nations communities do everything from health inspections of homes, public buildings and community events such as pow-wows, to training food handlers in restaurants, monitoring community drinking water supplies, providing public education, and investigating diseases such as rabies and hantavirus.
- Some Environmental Health Officers are employed by Health Canada, the federal department responsible for helping the people of Canada maintain and improve their health. Others are employed directly by First Nations or Tribal Councils.

HOW DO I BECOME AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER?

Environmental Health Officers working in First Nations communities require a bachelor degree in environmental health or science, and successful completion of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (www.ciphi.ca) certification process.



Canadian Environmental Health and Science programs are available at:

- University College of Cape Breton (Sydney, Nova Scotia): www.cbu.ca
- Collège communautaire de Nouveau-Brunswick (Bathurst, New Brunswick): www.ccnb.nb.ca
- Ryerson University (Toronto, Ontario): www.ryerson.ca/sophe
- First Nations University of Canada (Regina, Saskatchewan): www.firstnationsuniversity.ca
- Concordia University College of Alberta (Edmonton, Alberta): www.concordia.ab.ca
- British Columbia Institute of Technology (Vancouver, British Columbia): www.bcit.ca

Becoming an Environmental Health Officer takes four years for high-school graduates and two years for graduates with a relevant Bachelor's degree or technology program.

IS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE?

Yes! In addition to scholarships and bursaries available directly through colleges and universities, you may be eligible for:

- Canada Student Loans Program; (www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/program/cslp.shtml)
- Provincial Student Assistance Program;
- National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation Aboriginal Health Careers Bursary and Scholarship Awards (www.naaf.ca).

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

For more information or to obtain additional copies of this pamphlet, please contact:

- Your Environmental Health Officer.
- A Health Canada Regional Office:
 - Atlantic Region: 902-426-9931
 - Quebec Region: 514-283-0112
 - Ontario Region: 519-751-6516
 - Manitoba Region: 204-984-0158
 - Saskatchewan Region: 306-780-5434
 - Alberta Region: 780-495-2712
 - Pacific Region: 604-666-9766
- Or visit Health Canada's website : www.hc-sc.gc.ca



"One of the best things about being an Environmental Health Officer is the freedom you have in doing your job."
- Keith Smith, Environmental Health Officer

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HC Pub.: 3487
Cat.: H34-177/2008E
ISBN: 978-0-46331-3

Également disponible en français sous le titre : Hygiène du milieu dans des communautés des Premières nations - Une carrière qui fait une différence!

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