

ENGINEER PROFILE

Name: Ben Hong
Organization: San Jose - Environmental Services
Department/Water Pollution Control Plant



Engineering Discipline (Check one below):

- Civil
- Mechanical
- Electrical
- Environmental (including Process)
- Structural
- Information Technology
- SCADA
- Other – Civil/Environmental

1. Please describe the work you do:

I do project and construction management for major and minor projects at the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant.

2. What combination of education, experience, and skill was required in order for you to obtain your job?

Education - Civil/Environmental Engineering Degree

Experience – Water/wastewater treatment process design and project/construction management for water and wastewater treatment plants and facilities.

3. What do you like best about your job?

I have been able to use the knowledge I learned from education and experience in other private consulting companies and design/construction company. My efforts are recognized by the upper management.

I am proud of being one of the staff at the treatment plant whose work is closely related to protecting beautiful San Francisco Bay and its estuaries.

4. Please tell us about the water or wastewater engineering project you enjoyed working on the most, and what made it rewarding,

Alternative disinfection project – completed in October, 2011

Plant had been using hazardous chlorine gas disinfection process to disinfect the plant effluent to the Bay and gas sodium bisulfite dechlorination process to remove the residual chlorine in the effluent after disinfection.

The alternative disinfection project changed these gaseous processes to much safer liquid chlorine and liquid sodium bisulfite dechlorination processes. The plant no longer needs to comply with the toxic gas ordinance and becomes safer place for workers. Chlorine gas evacuation practices by plant-wide alarm system became obsolete.

5. What qualities and capabilities are needed in order for an engineer to be successful in the water/wastewater industry?

Relevant education and experience.

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

Get engineering degree in civil/environmental engineering, not environmental science. Take hard core civil and environmental engineering classes. Work for reputable environmental engineering design consulting firms first, then work for construction firms who construct the water wastewater treatment plants. Persons with these backgrounds are in high demand in the industry.