ABOUT THE JOB

Sanitation Workers play an important role in the Food and Processing industry by cleaning production equipment, machines, and work areas in food processing facilities. They are responsible for handling and preparing cleaning chemicals, preparing sanitizers, preparing chemical concentrations, handling and storing the chemicals, and managing chemical accidents.

Sanitation Workers work alone or with a team, but collaborate extensively with other department staff to ensure that food safety and work space cleanliness are being implemented. They tend to be employed in larger processing plants where production quotas warrant sanitation workers.

There is high demand for hire throughout Canada, and many companies provide full-time employment and competitive salaries with full benefits.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Secondary school requirement
- No previous experience required
- Sanitation workers learn from their colleagues, supervisors and training offered in the workplace

SALARIES AND BENEFITS

- Wages depend on job requirements, work conditions, and can vary between regions.
- Wages can range from $13 to $30 per hour.
- Food Processing Plants generally offer full-time employment, opportunities for overtime and comprehensive benefit packages including; medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurance, pension plan, sick days and more.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Sanitation Worker plays a central role in food processing plants and in doing so they are responsible for a variety of tasks. Some key responsibilities include:

- Reading chemical labels or Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to learn how to properly handle chemicals they will be using
- Reading and processing labels and packages, filling order forms, and basic measurement and estimation of cuts of meat.
- Completing and creating forms by marking check boxes, recording numerical information or entering words, phrases, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more.
- Communicating orally to customers, employers, quality assurance personnel, and government inspectors.
- Referring to diagrams and charts of cuts of meat and animal anatomy.
- Analysing different products and filling special order requests (i.e. meat cuts) to suit the needs of the customer.
- Incorporating special or rotational cleaning duties into their daily schedules, for specialized cleaning or sanitation processes that might not occur every day.
THE IDEAL WORKER

A Sanitation Worker in a food processing plant will be expected to:

- Create and maintain an efficient, hygienic, and positive working environment
- Promote health and safety in the workplace
- Display good work ethic, resourcefulness, and organization.
- Understand the Standard Operating Procedures and Inspection Regulations
- Ensure quality control and efficient work flow
- Display positive leadership

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Sanitation Workers spend almost all of their time on their feet and moving. Additionally, they may find themselves hanging from rigging or using ladders to reach high areas. Significant strength is required for many cleaning operations. Sanitation Workers must be able to control high-pressure hoses (e.g. 250 psi is common), lift heavy containers of chemicals, and empty trash receptacles around production. They could be expected to lift loads of 50 pounds or more in a single motion.

Sanitation Workers must use their senses to discover possible sanitation or equipment problems. Many work independently but they may work together to clean different parts of the same facility, or help when there are extra duties, or help out a colleague when their duties have already been completed.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Essential Skills are the skills needed for performing day to day tasks, learn the job and adapt to workplace change. Sanitation Workers need all 9 of the essential skills however the most important are:

**Document Use:** refers to the skills needed to find, enter and use letters, numbers, symbols and images in electronic and paper formats. For example, refer to visual diagrams or images showing equipment features or processes.

**Job Task Planning and Organizing:** refers to the skills needed to carry out their daily tasks and to be prepared for any unexpected changes that may occur during their shift. For example, plan the best way to perform their cleaning and sanitizing duties on a given shift.

**Decision Making:** refers to the skills needed to best perform a task, manage their time, use appropriate equipment and efficiently deal with a problem should one arise. For example, decide if the severity of a problem warrants contacting a supervisor, or is acceptable to write a note for the production team or others in a log book.
CAREER PATH

As new sanitation workers gain experience they can advance from sanitation worker, to sanitation lead, to shift manager, to manager, and with additional training and education to HACCP Coordinator, and then quality assurance manager.

Shift manager and manager will have additional job responsibilities such as supervising employees, communicating with senior management, scheduling production, and ensuring workplace safety.

OTHER POSSIBLE JOB TITLES

- Janitorial Worker
- Warehouse Worker
- General Labourer
- Mixer Operator
- Cleaning Worker
- Production Line Sanitation Worker

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION (NOC)

The NOC for Sanitation Worker is NOC 7621 Public Works and Maintenance Labourers

MORE INFORMATION

For access to more food manufacturing job descriptions, essential skills profiles and job competencies visit www.fphrc.com