



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Environment and Climate Change	Client Services Lead	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
23-14330	Yellowknife	Water Monitoring and Stewardship/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Client Services Lead (CS Lead) is responsible for and acts as the primary point of contact for clients of the Taiga Environmental Laboratory (TEL), from request for sample analysis to the reporting of results. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that laboratory services are provided in an efficient and effective manner to clients of the TEL.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife and reporting to the Manager, Taiga Environmental Laboratory, the Client Services Lead is a primary point of contact for clients of the TEL and assists clients with aspects of project set-up including advice on method detection limits, turnaround times, quotes for services, and client service agreements. The CS Lead is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Sample Reception Section of the lab which includes preparing bottle orders for clients, receiving samples, preparing samples for analysis. In cases where the TEL is unable to provide requested services to the client, the CS Lead ships samples to subcontractors and works with subcontractors directly to establish standards for the work. The incumbent also has the authority to approve the work of subcontractors and approve their invoices for payment.

The Taiga Environmental Laboratory (TEL) is the only full-service environmental analytical laboratory in northern Canada. The TEL performs a wide range of chemical, molecular, and microbiological analysis on water (freshwater, ground water, drinking water, industrial effluents, and sewage). It is accredited by the Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation (CALA) and the scope of accreditation includes 248 individual parameters in four distinct sections: Inorganic, Organic, Trace Metals and Molecular/Microbiology. In addition to standard services, the TEL offers a variety of specialized services including rush sample services, scientific training, the review of QA/QC plans for regulatory permits, and public education.



The TEL provides approximately \$1.4 million of environmental testing services each year to the following clients:

- internal GNWT departments including Environment and Climate Change (ECC), Health and Social Services (HSS), and Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA);
- federal government agencies, including Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC);
- Indigenous governments and community/municipal governments;
- industry (e.g., mines), consultants, and other local businesses; and
- researchers from academic institutions working in the north.

The TEL performs over 40,000 tests a year; analytical results provided by the TEL are used by its clients to:

- ensure the safety of drinking water in all NWT communities;
- track pathogen levels (e.g., SARS-CoV-2) in wastewater to inform public health actions;
- evaluate trends in environmental contaminant levels in freshwater from across the NWT;
- ensure regulatory compliance of communities and government with the *Public Health Act* and *Water Supply System Regulations*; and
- ensure regulatory compliance of communities, remediation projects, and industries with the conditions of their water licences under the *NWT Waters Act* and *Mackenzie Valley Resources Management Act*.

The CS Lead works within the constraints of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* and its Regulations, the *NWT Waters Act* and its regulations, the NWT *Public Safety Act* and its regulations.

The CS Lead works collaboratively with colleagues within the TEL to ensure samples analyses are completed consistent with client expectations. The CS Lead provides advice about laboratory services to all of TEL's clients, tracks sample progress, and responds to service complaints or other general inquiries.

Work is performed under the general direction of the Manager. The CS Lead has a significant amount of latitude provided that the generally accepted client service and sample reception protocols (including QA/QC) are complied with and meets the requirement of the GNWT, TEL, and CALA. Judgment, diplomacy, and tact are required in interactions with all clients.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Leads and implements the delivery of client services for the TEL.

- Acts as the primary point of contact for TEL clients from the first request for sample analysis to the reporting of results.



- Assists clients in the development and implementation of environmental monitoring projects by providing information on sampling requirements; analytical methods, detection limits and costs; timing considerations; resource implications; and reporting.
- Develops, reviews, and makes recommendations to management on service contracts between TEL and its clients.
- Investigates and responds to client complaints, working with the Quality Assurance Officer to find and implement acceptable resolutions.
- Ensures any special or project-specific client requirements are communicated to TEL staff or subcontractors.
- Provides guidance and advice to Inspectors, appointed under the *NWT Waters Act*, for collecting and managing legal samples.
- Provides professional advice on water sampling, related to data analysis, quality assurance/quality control, sample collection, and analytical methodologies, to departmental staff, scientists, regulatory officers, and other clients.

2. Leads and supervises the day-to-day operations of the Sample Reception Section to ensure that samples are received and processed in accordance with standard protocols.

- Leads the day-to-day operations of the Sample Reception Section.
- Prepares sample bottle orders for monitoring projects and ships supplies to clients as needed.
- Receives samples at the door, ensuring field sheets are properly completed by clients and chain-of-custody procedures are followed.
- Ensures samples are properly labelled and preserved, then processes samples as necessary for each type of test requested.
- Reviews and accepts all legal samples submitted under the *NWT Waters Act* for the enforcement of water licences.
- Organizes and prioritizes sample received according to sample hold times and due dates to ensure workflow is maintained in a timely manner to meet turnaround times.
- Enters sample log-in information into the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and notifies analysts of any time-sensitive samples.
- Contributes to the maintenance of the LIMS system by updating the client library and updating sample and testing information.
- Ensures the stock of laboratory supplies for their section is adequate and order supplies as required. This includes exercising a payment of authority up to \$10,000 per transaction to maintain supplies and equipment for effective operation within the laboratory.

3. Acts as a liaison with subcontractors to support clients' analytical requirements and ensure the TEL can consistently meet turnaround times.

- Identifies appropriate laboratories to subcontract analytical services requested by clients but not done at the TEL; acts as a liaison between the subcontracting lab and the client.



- Identifies the need to subcontract analytical services when it isn't possible to meet standard turnaround times.
- Ships samples to subcontracted labs and verifies results from those labs.
- Enters results from subcontracting labs in LIMS.
- Monitors and evaluates service contracts related to analytical data for quality of results and conditions set out in the contracts.
- Reviews subcontractor invoices and approves them for payment.

4. Trains and supervises staff within the Sample Reception Section.

- Plans the human resource needs for the section.
- Assists the Manager with the recruitment and hiring of new staff.
- Provides training and orientation to new staff for operations, routine duties, procedures, QA/QC systems, and organizational guiding principles.
- Assists the Manager with staff performance appraisals or corrective/disciplinary actions for section employees as needed.
- Acts as a supervisor in the context of the *NWT Safety Act*.

5. Reviews and approves analytical results generated by TEL staff on an as-needed basis to ensure standard or rush turnaround times can be met during the peak summer season on whenever there are staff shortages.

- Reviews and verifies sample result worksheets submitted by staff to ensure quality control data meets TEL standards.
- Authorizes the release of test results to clients.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The position is required to stand for long periods when performing lab work (i.e., up to 7.5 hours per day with standard breaks), typically four to five days per week or more when overtime is required; on average, the incumbent will be either standing or walking for 80% of each working day. As well, the position moves and/or lifts heavy cylinders (up to 25 kg), coolers, and carts daily.

Environmental Conditions

The work is performed in the laboratory and office environments. There is constant exposure to dust, noise and vibrations from freezers, fans, lab instruments and equipment, and daily exposure to substances that require special handling (e.g., using WHMIS) including noxious odors, toxic and corrosive chemicals (including known carcinogens), pathogens and various forms of radiation.



The incumbent experiences exposure to heat, ultraviolet, radio frequency and electromagnetic radiation during normal operation approximately five days a week (or more often during staff shortages).

Protective clothing (e.g., lab coats, safety eye wear, gloves) and proper use of protective equipment (e.g., fume hood) are required for work in the laboratory at all times. Some sections of the laboratory are not air-conditioned and can reach temperatures of up to 28°C between the months of April and October.

Sensory Demands

The work requires visual acuity as well as precise manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination to prepare samples for testing, to handle fragile laboratory equipment parts and glassware, and to calibrate and operate a variety of laboratory equipment. The preparation of samples also requires the ability to make the appropriate motor responses at the appropriate time, and with speed to maximize efficiency.

Visual acuity and tactile sensitivity are needed to assess very subtle sample conditions based on overall visual appearance (colour, shade, intensity, clarity) and temperature.

Sensory demands occur approximately 75% of the time.

Mental Demands

The position is subject to tight timelines, fast work pace, and competing priorities, with seasonal increases in volume of work, particularly May to October, when the lab receives at least 80% of its annual sample load; during this time, staff are frequently required to work overtime (nights and weekends) to meet seasonal demands. During this time, client samples arrive about 10 times per day and the incumbent must quickly shift attention from one client to the next in addition to answering calls and processing samples.

There is a requirement to maintain constant mental vigilance with respect to safety protocols around corrosive, damaging toxins and pathogens.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of the principles, theories, methods, techniques and practices of applied science (chemistry, biology, physical and environmental science).
- Knowledge of methods, techniques, and practices involved in environmental sampling, conducting analyses, and interpreting scientific results in the laboratory.
- Knowledge of the concepts, methods, and techniques of health and safety practices and process related to working with, transporting, and storing toxic/corrosive chemicals and bio-hazardous materials.



- Knowledge of chemicals or materials should include toxicology, safe transportation, spillage, disposal, environmental hazards and mitigations, personal protection equipment, routes of exposure, and effects of short- and long-term or repeated exposure.
- Knowledge of International Standards Organization and Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation guidelines, standards and quality assurance/quality control theories and principles.
- Knowledge of the use, care and maintenance of analytical equipment.
- Knowledge in sterility practices, good hygiene, and ultra-cleaning techniques.
- Knowledge of and ability to comply with legislation that governs labour code safety requirements, occupational health and safety requirements and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems.
- Knowledge of legislation applicable to public health and the protection of water quality and quantity.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with an ability to exercise tact and diplomacy in all situations.
- Interpersonal, listening, and negotiation skills.
- Organizational and time management skills, including the ability to plan, coordinate, prioritize activities, and meet deadlines.
- Problem-solving abilities to assess and resolve issues or difficulties in service delivery.
- Ability to use manual and modern instrumentation methods in water analysis.
- Ability to safely handle pathogenic or carcinogenic material, compressed gas, and organic solvents.
- Ability to solve problems through independent conceptual thinking.
- Ability to work cooperatively as a team member with the ability to motivate staff and get them to work together as a team.
- Ability to remain calm and professional even in stressful interactions with TEL clients.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Bachelor's degree in in a relevant field of science such as chemistry, biology, or environmental science or a chemical technology diploma. Applicants must also have at least five (5) years of experience in an environmental testing laboratory including two (2) years of analyzing water and wastewater samples in addition to experience obtained during a degree or diploma program.

The incumbent must be able to obtain and maintain valid certifications for First Aid, Supervisor Safety, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems, fire extinguisher use, and any other certifications specific to quality control/quality assurance.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.



ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

No criminal records check required
 Position of Trust – criminal records check required
 Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)

French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

Required
 Preferred