



Teresa Duckworth

Assistant Superintendent, Morris County Division of Mosquito Control



I assist in directing the daily operations of a county funded mosquito control agency. That means I get to kill mosquitoes for a job!

How long have you been in mosquito control?

I have worked in mosquito control for 19 years.

Where do you currently work?

I work at Morris County Division of Mosquito Control. We are a county funded mosquito control agency. We do mosquito control, water management, surveillance and education programs about mosquitoes and ticks for Morris County residents.

TERESA'S FUN FACT

I love to watch "The Great British Baking Show" on Netflix.

How do you spend most of your time at work?

- 1) I seem to spend a lot of time responding to emails! Responding to county resident mosquito complaints, interacting with my supervisor and giving instructions to our employees.
- 2) I coordinate our water management activities so I plan out projects where we can reduce standing water. I fill out permits and collect data, analyze maps and check timing restrictions so our work won't have any harmful impacts.
- 3) Often I am planning out our public education events: coordinating staff, planning activities, designing displays and scheduling events. Working at the events themselves is a lot of fun - teaching families about mosquito habitat, biology and keeping safe from tick and mosquito bites and diseases!
- 4) I also spend a lot of time directing employees on their daily tasks and working with them to have a successful operation.

Why did you choose this career?

I always enjoyed spending time outdoors and wanted to do something in the environmental field. My two favorite classes in college were a Wetland Ecology class and an insect class where we learned about entomology and raised our own insects! Lucky for me, a job as a Wetland Specialist at the county mosquito control agency just down the street from where I lived opened up right as I was graduating from college. I accepted that position and since then have switched counties and have had the job titles of Wetland Specialist, Senior Wetland Specialist and currently Assistant Superintendent.

What did you do to prepare for this career?

I majored in Natural Resource Management and received my Bachelor of Science degree from Rutgers University. This degree gave me a solid background in ecology and biology, but most of what I needed to know for my job I learned at work. I am lucky that New Jersey has a wonderful network of mosquito control professionals that I get to interact with and learn from. I have also taken many continuing education classes and training programs over the years..

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy this career because every day truly is something different. One day I can be out in the field checking for mosquito larvae or planning a water management project, another day I can be working on our field tracking software program and the next minute I can be answering an email from a concerned parent about a tick they found on their child. I enjoy working with our employees and leading, and also enjoy our education and outreach program.

What do you find most challenging about your job?

I have a very long commute which is my least favorite part of my job!

What is one piece of advice you would give to a young person who is interested in your profession?

Keep an open mind when it comes to planning your future. You never know what opportunities may present themselves.

