

**ENS William Maier  
Jr. COSTEP Summer 2014  
Ohio University  
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My name is Will Maier and I'm from Worthington Ohio. I'm currently going into my senior year at Ohio University.

I'm currently majoring in environmental health and minoring in economics. I learned about Jr. COSTEP from my professor, Dr. Morrone. After getting through a long application process, I got a call from Tim Duffy and he wanted me to come to Bemidji and work with IHS. I gladly accepted.

I did an institutional survey of the Little Six Casino. In the institutional survey I looked at GFCIs in restrooms, the sprinkler system, chemical storage, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, eye wash stations and electrical safety. I also looked at air changes per minute because people were smoking in the casino and we wanted to know if the air was circulating around the building well. I also did an institutional survey of the Federal Building.

I also did a playground survey. I had taken a class that talked about playground surveys and it was great to use what I learned in class and apply it to the field. I gained even more insight into playground inspections when I looked up the guidance that IHS holds playgrounds to.

On the pool inspection, I looked at chlorine levels, the chemicals they were putting in the pool, life guards on duty, and the machines that were pumping the chemicals in. It was pretty in depth and I definitely need a lot of training before I do a pool survey on my own.

I did a Head Start inspection in White Earth. I looked at outlets to make sure they were childproof. I looked at the ratio of supervisors to kids. I also looked at the kitchens in the Head Start as well.

I did a food surveys for a school, a couple casinos restaurants and a pow wow. In the food surveys, I looked at the flow of dish cleaning, hand washing techniques used by the employees preparing food, storage of utensils, storage of food, food and refrigeration temps, and much more. At the pow wow I had to go over a handbook with the food vendors. I learned that communication is very important in environmental health. The pow wow was a really hard survey because I had to take a lot of food temperatures as vendors were rushing around me. I felt kind of uncomfortable, but I toughed up and got through it. It also took a long time to conduct the pow wow



survey because there were 21 food vendors, and we had to do a follow up of the most serious violations the next day.

I went to Duluth and took a class to become SERVSAFE certified. I accomplished that goal and I now am currently SERVSAFE certified. I learned a lot about food protection in the process.

I also did Operation & Maintenance (O&M) surveys. In the O&M surveys I

looked at the safety aspects of wastewater treatment plants, water treatment plants, and lift stations. At the lift stations, I looked at things like trip hazards and fall grating. In the water and waste water treatment plants I looked at emergency lighting, operator training, eyewash stations, chlorine monitors and secondary containment of chemicals.

The big project I worked on with my coworker was creating an emergency template for disaster scenarios. There was a lot of information to sort through, and I learned to filter information and present only what was necessary.

The desk part of my job entailed writing up violations and looking up regulations that they violated. I would then write a recommendation of how to fix the violation. My preceptor, Lieutenant Commander Kostamo, would then go over my surveys and make suggestions. These suggestions taught me how to write up violation and recommendations as an EH professional.

By the end of my Jr. COSTEP experience I learned how to look up regulations as well as how to communicate and use my knowledge to explain violations to people. I also learned how to conduct O&M surveys, food surveys, pool surveys, and institutional surveys.

My time internship with IHS here in Bemidji was a great experience. Not only did I gain skills specifically related to the environmental health field, but I also learned how to work and communicate with people. I went home at the end of the day feeling satisfied that I helped make peoples' lives healthy and better. I really want to work at IHS or the US Public Health service when I get done with school. I would recommend this internship to anyone in the environmental health profession.

