

Transcript of Nora Donald, Hydrogeologist

The coolest part of my job is... I get to work in places like this!

A Hydrogeologist is a scientist who studies the movement of typically water and any other fluids in rock and soil.

My area of expertise is relating to clean water hydrogeology, which is essentially ground water in clean environments such as drinking water supply. The type of jobs I work on are water supply exploration, drilling supervision of commercial and municipal wells, evaluating whether there is surface water intruding into the well—which is not good for human health—and evaluating a lot of water chemistry.

I get to work on all kinds of neat projects and I get to work with all kinds of great people. I solve problems and help people every day. Other hydrogeologists work in contaminated site hydrogeology; an example of such a project could be a home heating oil fuel spill, where as a hydrogeologist you would be involved to test the soil and the ground water to determine the extent of the impacts. Some of the things I really enjoy doing are looking at data, especially chemistry; it's always the job I prefer to do at the start of the day. Over anything else I'd rather look at data and crunch numbers and make evaluations.

Some of the tougher parts of my job, I find are—I do spend a lot of time writing, and a good part of being in the scientific field is you need to communicate the science, and I do spend a lot of time writing and so it wouldn't be the most favorite part of my job.

I think we're moving towards a really much greener economy and hydrogeologists will have a major role in that. Water supply is always going to be an issue or will be always important, and you know, hydrogeologists are becoming more involved with things such as geothermal energy, it's important that we conserve our water and that we're aware of water sheds, and water planning and there's definitely a lot of work for future hydrogeologists.

My advice would be to explore co-op programs for young people looking at where they are going; they really give you a chance to try out a number of different careers and different jobs and it really helped me, you know, lead to where I am today.