

HORTICULTURAL SPECIALIST

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: Positions in this banded class are responsible for the cultivation, maintenance and promotion of plants, turf or a plant collection in an assigned program or geographical area of a university. Positions in this class observe and diagnose structural and horticultural problems. Work includes installation of all new plant material following plans and/or approved horticultural/grounds practices and procedures; maintaining the beds including pruning, weeding, mulching, fertilizing and spraying of plant material, which may include pesticides. Work may require knowledge of a unique and unusual collection of plants, impacting the cultivation and maintenance of the plants. Positions may maintain detailed records of plant species, including research on the design and maintenance of such plants. Positions may prepare and maintain special beds, participate in landscape design and construction, supply and arrange special foliage for events, maintain indoor foliage, or promote knowledge and understanding of the plants. They may install and maintain systems in the greenhouse or assigned geographical area. Work requires the use of special tools for cultivation, maintenance and transportation of plants.

EXAMPLES OF COMPETENCIES: CONTRIBUTING

Knowledge-Technical: Basic knowledge of plant maintenance procedures used in landscape installation and grounds maintenance. Ability to identify problems and notify higher level technician or supervisor. Ability to perform routine/standard tasks using assigned tools, equipment, and vehicles. Ability to perform assigned tasks in the safe application of various chemicals, pesticides, and nutrient supplements. Basic knowledge of the plant species in the geographical area to which assigned; ability to learn and recognize common diseases, nutritional issues and pests that pose a threat. Ability to perform assigned tasks using standard horticultural practices and basic hand and small-powered equipment.

Coordination-Work: Ability to install new plant material following specific plans and procedures; maintain the beds including pruning, weeding, mulching, fertilizing and spraying of plant material. Ability to sow, propagate, transplant, fertilizes, and apply chemicals and water in a greenhouse under supervision.

JOURNEY

Knowledge-Technical: Working knowledge of plant maintenance procedures used in landscape installation and grounds maintenance. Ability to observe plants and identify plants and plant problems, assess condition and health of plants. Ability to respond to standard problems, and assist or make recommendations for solutions to non-standard problems. Ability to perform a variety of routine and non-recurring tasks. Ability to determine appropriate tools, equipment and vehicles. Ability to administer safe application of various chemicals and nutrient supplements and the use of equipment to perform the tasks. Working knowledge of the different species in the geographical area to which assigned, as well as an understanding of common diseases, nutritional issues and pests that pose a threat to the trees' health. Ability to perform tasks using applied horticultural practices and a variety of tools and equipment.

Coordination-Work: Ability to observe and diagnose structural and horticultural problems. Ability to maintain a unique and unusual collection of plants, impacting the cultivation and maintenance of the plants.

Data Collection: Ability to maintain detailed records of plant work and species, according to detailed guidelines.

Communication: Ability to communicate with other staff to ensure the completion of his/her duties. Ability to answer general questions from the public regarding plant maintenance. Ability to effectively use verbal and nonverbal skills to express routine or simple technical concepts and related facts in a clear, concise, organized and persuasive manner.

Leadership: N/A

Data Collection: Ability to maintain accurate records, track plant health, application dates and rates, and cycles of preventative maintenance.

Communication: Ability to answer a variety of questions from the public and others regarding plant collection; promote knowledge and understanding of the unique plant collection. Ability to effectively use verbal and nonverbal skills to express non-routine technical matters and related facts in a clear, concise, organized and persuasive manner.

Leadership: Ability to supervise crew and/or a separate program function of some complexity.

Ability to organize a work schedule, determine priorities. Ability to maintain required records.

ADVANCED

Knowledge-Technical: Full knowledge of and ability to evaluate and diagnose structural and horticultural issues in plant material and trees to determine a proper corrective action. Full knowledge and skill in the use and care of equipment and vehicles. Full knowledge and skill in the safe application of various chemicals and nutrient supplements and the use of equipment to perform the tasks. Knowledge and ability in safe tree climbing techniques including removal of injured persons from trees. Ability to work around power lines and structures, removal of large limbs and trees, and ability to work at heights. Full knowledge of the different species in the geographical area to which assigned, as well as an understanding of common diseases, nutritional issues and pests that pose a threat to the trees' health. Ability to determine appropriate horticultural techniques and equipment to apply in various situations.

Coordination-Work: Ability to observe and diagnose structural and horticultural problems; assess condition and health of plants; determine treatment. Ability to supervise others in the maintenance of a unique and unusual collection of plants, impacting the cultivation and maintenance of the plants. Ability to organize a work schedule, determine priorities, manage a crew, and maintain effective work relationships.

Data Collection: Ability to review accurate record keeping to track plant health, application dates and rates, and cycles of preventative maintenance.

Communication: Ability to educate others in the knowledge and understanding of a unique plant collection. Ability to effectively use verbal and nonverbal skills to express moderately complex technical and/or program concepts and related facts in a clear, concise, organized and persuasive manner.

Leadership: Ability to function in a supervisory role for direct reports. Ability to perform/supervise a separate function of moderate complexity if necessary.

MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE: High school diploma or equivalency and demonstrated possession of the competencies necessary to perform the work; or an equivalent combination of training and experience. Requires North Carolina Pesticide License and North Carolina Commercial Driver's License.

Special Note: This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to reflect essential functions per ADA. Examples of competencies are typical of the majority of positions, but may not be applicable to all positions.