Vacancy Announcement Notice

Engineering Technician

GS-0802-07/08/09

Duty Station: Madison, Wisconsin

The Forest Products Laboratory, a part of Research and Development for the U.S. Forest Service, is announcing a vacancy for an Engineering Technician (GS-0802-07/08/09). The duty station is Madison, Wisconsin.

Applications are only being accepted at USAJOBS – Vacancy Announcement until February 05, 2024.

Point of Contact
For more information about this position, please contact Carl Houtman at carl.houtman@usda.gov.

About the Position
The incumbent serves as a laboratory technician assisting other staff in conducting scientific research by preparing and testing samples analysis. In general, work methods and procedures are specified by others, but the incumbent may be involved in adapting existing procedures or developing new ones.

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Duties

- Duties listed are at the full performance level.
- Train others in the operation and maintenance of standard and specialized chemical laboratory equipment.
- Perform chemical reactions and wet chemical tests including laboratory operations like weighing, dilution, and adjusting pH,
- Process wood and biomass samples including traditional pulping and bleaching, making handsheets, advanced biorefining, and/or producing nanocellulose and processing lignin.
- Perform a variety of chemical and physical techniques, including rheology, spectroscopy, thermal analysis, mechanical testing or product specific performance, specimen preparation and testing.
- Conduct analytical chemistry techniques, such as titration, chemical and physical analyses of samples, and operate specialized instruments and interpret the results of these analyses.
- Prepare progress reports related to laboratory work that are presented orally and/or in writing.
- Prepare study plans, proposals for funding, presentations, posters, and publications for internal and/or external distribution.
- Develop new or improved techniques and methods related to processing of biomass based on existing methods and practice.

Other Information of Interest

- The work schedule is Maxi flex.
- Travel is required occasionally and/or overnight.
- This is a bargaining unit position represented by National Federation of Federal Employees (nffe.org).
- The Forest Service may use certain incentives and hiring flexibilities, currently offered by the Federal government, to attract highly qualified candidates. Additional information is available at the Office of Personnel Management website.

About the Forest Products Laboratory

The Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin is the only national Forest Service laboratory facility. Producing high-quality, science-based innovation, the Lab research improves the safety, comfort, and well-being of every American, every day. Forest Product Laboratory scientists investigate wood and wood fiber properties, harness cutting-edge technologies to develop renewable polymers and green chemicals from wood, and research ways to make structures safer and more sustainable.

Much of the Forest Service's forest products research is conducted at the Lab in Madison, Wisconsin. Research programs include biorefinery and biomass utilization, nanotechnology, wood science, wood structures, wood and polymeric composites, biotechnology, pulp, paper, wood preservation, and life-cycle assessments. Agency scientists also provide technical support to the public and industries for using wood, wood identification, building code development, and international standards development.
Wood is a renewable resource and sustainable material when it is harvested from responsibly managed forests. It is also a fundamental building block of the U.S. economy. Forest Service research advances wood science and applications to drive a circular economy, diversify wood applications and markets, keep manufacturing jobs in the U.S., and contribute to the prosperity of rural communities.

The Lab has about 150 employees including 60 scientists primarily located in Madison, Wisconsin.

Community Information
The Forest Product Laboratory is in Madison, the capital of Wisconsin. It lies west of Milwaukee. Known for the domed Wisconsin State Capitol, which sits on an isthmus between lakes Mendota and Monona, it is one of only two major U.S. cities built on an isthmus. The city’s paved Capital City State Trail runs past Monona Terrace, a lakefront convention center designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Madison is where big-city opportunities meet small-town conveniences. Vibrant streetscapes lead to lakeside retreats. Madison is home to the University of Wisconsin where the college and capital city blend together, creating a unique atmosphere. Madison is a bike friendly city, and many enthusiasts commute by bike all year around. From skiing and snowboarding in the winter to swimming, sailing, and hiking in the warmer months, Madison offers many active outdoor activities.

Madison is in a temperate climate zone with four distinct seasons. During the warmest months of June, July, and August, high temperatures average 80 degrees Fahrenheit (27 Celsius). Winters are cold with temperatures average 25 degrees Fahrenheit (–4 Celsius) though temperatures can fall below 0 degrees Fahrenheit (–18 Celsius). Snowfall is moderate with an average annual snowfall of 44 inches (112 cm).

The Visit Madison Visitors Guide, the Destination Madison website, and the City of Madison website can provide more detailed information about Madison.

Application Tips
Forest Service jobs are applied for through USAJOBS. It is important to use your personal email address when creating a USAJOBS profile. It is important to read and understand the vacancy announcement before clicking the “Apply” button.

For more information on the application process on USAJOBS, visit https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/application/process/.

- Use the Required Documents section as a checklist
- Review the Tips for Applicants
- Review the Required Documents for special hiring authorities
- Read all questions and response options carefully before selecting a response
- Review application (responses to questions and attached documents) before submitting
- Check the status of application in USAJOBS after applying
- Difference between eligibility and qualifications https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/application/eligibility/difference-from-qualifications/
- Federal resume writing help
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) **fax:** (202) 690-7442; or

(3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov