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Environmental Technology skills.

At a time after the census work in 1970 I was introduced to the [Manpower Developmental Training Act](#), a furtherance of the Full Employment Act of 1946. The concept was to have hands on training in environmental issues that would lead to a Job. I was having difficulties and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission folks had not given me much encouragement. I think they thought I might be “unemployable” and I hated that designation. I still wanted to be a minister but by the summer of 1970 I had gotten involved in Transcendental Meditation and was looking everywhere for facts. So to know the facts, the science, about the environment seemed good to me. The program, as it turned out, would take people from a point of even not having a General Equivalency Diploma from High School to a point of a Certificate in Environmental Technology and have some college credits earned in case they wanted to pursue things that way. Of the graduates I think I knew of 3, maybe 5 that I really knew had a job because of this training. We would go to the Girls Club in Pittsfield, early in the morning and each hour the instructors would change. We had a lunch break and we brought our own lunch or went nearby and bought something, and then the afternoon was like the morning. Sometimes there were field trips to places in the afternoon. So I took the equivalent of about 5 courses each semester. Whatever the “training allowance” was that I received, it meant my rent was paid and I had money for food and telephone, so I was happy.

We began with basic English and some math, writing and communications skills, we were introduced to various topics, of which the current BCC Environmental Science [courses](#) are very similar in content. Since we were being trained for a variety of jobs many disciplines were explored. We became familiar with treatment plants from the simple to tertiary, Millipore counts, what factors influence accurate readings and the way to monitor changes. We learned of water tables and the influence that industries have on drinking water supplies and the fragile cooperative existence we have with the environment around us. Our Environmental movement was not so much a being “green” or a tree “hugger” but rather the importance of working together and in all things looking ahead to see what your actions will have on others, be they humans, natural life or the air, water and soil. It was not so much of a “global warming” focus but rather to think before you dump the barnyard manure into a stream upriver from a large town or city.

But that does not mean we did not follow rules or laws. At that time the housing code for the state of Massachusetts was still called Article II of the State Sanitary Code and Mrs. Bolduct of the Public Health Department taught this. We would often have pop quizzes on subject, many times a day with regards to what we had learned before. Now that is called 105 consolidated Massachusetts Regulations section 410 (section 400 tells how to administer section 410). The pdf is [here](#). A typical question was “how many square feet for the first person”. (Answer is 150sq.ft. 105cmr410.400 (A).) And maybe how many square feet for sleeping for that first person? Answer is 70 sq ft 105cmr410.400(B). Many lawyers thought the 70 square feet was included in the 150 sq ft, but not so as the International Residential Code now requires a total of 220 sq feet, not counting closet space and counter space. So what happens if you add one person? Then you add 100 square feet and the requirements for sleeping are 50 sq ft per person. So one person is 220 sq ft and two are 350 sq ft (150 + 100 + 50 + 50). So I pretty much memorized Article II. Some of the other articles had to do with public buildings, camps, schools, etc. Back then each one had its “article”. Such as Article 5 (sometimes called chapter 5) are now 105cm350 and are sanitary standards for swimming. I added some courses at night and so I got a Associate in Science in Environmental Technology (Now called [Environmental Science](#)) but in Berkshire County I had to drive a car and I had epilepsy and could not. Loved every training moment.