

Executive Summary

Several of the goals within the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)-Local County Health and Environmental Departments (LHEDs) Pollution Prevention Partnership Workplan call for the gathering of information about the LHEDs throughout the state. To obtain the information, last fall the Environmental Assistance Division (EAD) sent a written questionnaire to the LHEDs. This report describes the results of the survey and includes recommendations for future activities.

Sixty-eight (68) percent of the LHEDs responded to the survey. Considering the length of the questionnaire, this was a good response rate. This winter, as a follow up, the EAD field staff will conduct a shorter phone survey to ensure a better response rate.

Overall, the environmental issues of most importance to the LHEDs are food service, groundwater protection, wastewater treatment, surface water, and public education. Most of the respondents know that pollution prevention (P2) assistance is available from the MDEQ; and most are interested in working with the MDEQ on P2 issues. Many of the respondents were willing to distribute P2 publications at their offices or household hazardous waste collection sites.

The LHEDs thought that the best areas for P2 work within their jurisdictions were water supply/groundwater, waste/hazardous waste, and surface water. Responses to how P2 activities could be improved or expanded at the local level were varied. The top response was at colleges and schools. Others mentioned were local conferences, more regional educational opportunities, residential and chambers of commerce.

Half of the LHEDs responding to the survey operate some type of household hazardous waste collection program. There was no distinct geographical distribution between LHEDs that have a household hazardous waste collection program and those that don't.

Overwhelmingly, the LHEDs thought that funding and resources were the best means for the state to support improved and expanded P2 work by the LHEDs. Many of the LHEDs lack staff and resources to cover what they see as a new program. P2 at the local level would be most effective if it can be incorporated into existing programs in such a manner as to make the local health department efforts more effective or easier.

Survey results show that the traditional focus of the EAD's P2 program, business and industry, does not relate to the responsibilities of the LHEDs. For the Partnership to be successful, the EAD must conduct P2 work in areas of concern to the LHEDs. Recently, EAD field staff have started to "specialize" in areas such as food service, septage, water supply, stormwater, and non-point source issues. Also, several P2 publications have been developed on mercury, marinas, boaters, and food service. The EAD will continue to expand its focus to achieve Partnership goals and objectives.

Background

In April 1998, a P2 Partnership was formed between the MDEQ and Michigan's LHEDs. The mission of the partnership is to enhance and increase the practice of P2 in Michigan through cooperative and collaborative efforts that maximize P2 services and activities. A workplan containing partnership goals and objectives was created and serves as the blueprint the MDEQ and the LHEDs follow to achieve the partnership mission. Several of the goals, objectives, and tasks called for gathering of information about the various LHEDs throughout the state, so everyone would have a better understanding of their P2 interests and priorities. It was decided that the best means to collect this information was to send a survey out to the individual LHEDs

and, in turn, evaluate and catalog the information received. A survey is attached. Surveys were sent out in late fall 1998. The following information summarizes the responses received to date.

Response Summary

General Information

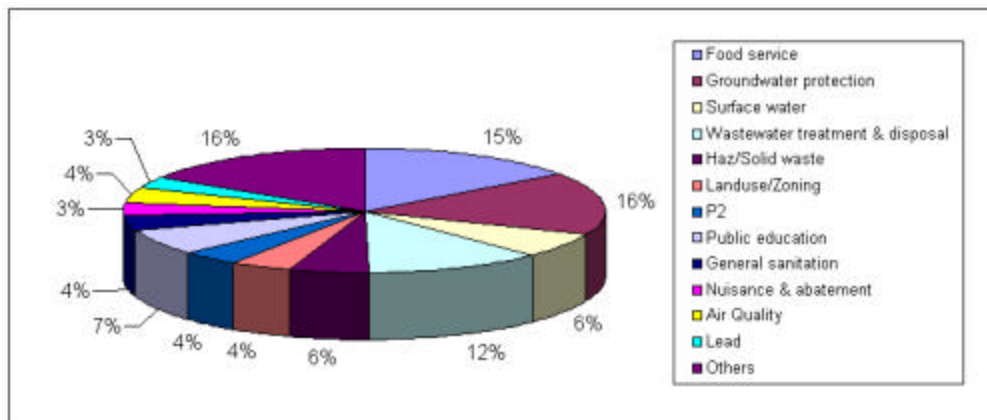
Response Rate

Surveys were received from 68 percent of the now 44 health departments, and two cities. The survey information represents 47 counties, or 57 percent of the geographical coverage of the state. The appendix contains a map graphically showing the LHEDs that responded.

Contact List

A statewide contact list of the local environmental health departments was developed from the survey information. The contact list is included in the appendix.

Environmental Issues of Most Importance



The following chart illustrates the issues felt by the LHEDs to be the most important environmental concerns within their jurisdiction. The top five responses were food service, groundwater protection, wastewater treatment, surface water, and public education.

Responses in the "other" category included: wellhead protection, household hazardous waste, swimming pools, and compliance. Regionally, wide differences in priorities can exist between the LHEDs. For example, Air Quality is ranked as important in Bay County, and the cities of Detroit and Grand Rapids. As one would expect, surface water was listed as very important to Macomb and St. Clair County LHEDs.

The following table shows the top three issues of most importance as ranked by each LHED responding to the survey. (Some responses were not ranked, thus, not included in the table.)

LHED	Three Top Environmental Issues of Importance		
St. Clair	Wastewater treatment	Surface water	Haz/solid waste

Jackson	Food service	Wastewater treatment	Groundwater
Macomb	Surface water	Bathing beaches	Food service
Berrien	Groundwater	Food service	Housing
Midland	Wastewater treatment	Well-head protection	Groundwater
Muskegon	Food service	Wastewater treatment	Groundwater
Mid-Michigan	Groundwater	Haz/solid waste	Nuisance & abatement
Genesee	Air quality	Watershed	Groundwater
Saginaw	Food service	Wastewater treatment	Groundwater
Detroit	Food service	Lead poisoning	General sanitation
Ingham	Groundwater	Env. Education	Food service
Kalamazoo	Pollution Prevention	Air quality	Groundwater
Delta-Menominee	Groundwater	Wastewater treatment	Food service

LHED	Three Top Environmental Issues of Importance		
District #4	Food service	Wastewater treatment	Groundwater
Kent	Groundwater	General sanitation	Food service
Dickinson-Iron	Wastewater treatment	Food service	Cross connections-drk
Bay	Food service	Wastewater treatment	Groundwater
Luce-Mac-Alg-Schfft	Well-head protection	Groundwater	Wastewater treatment
Barry-Eaton	Groundwater	Land use/zoning	Health

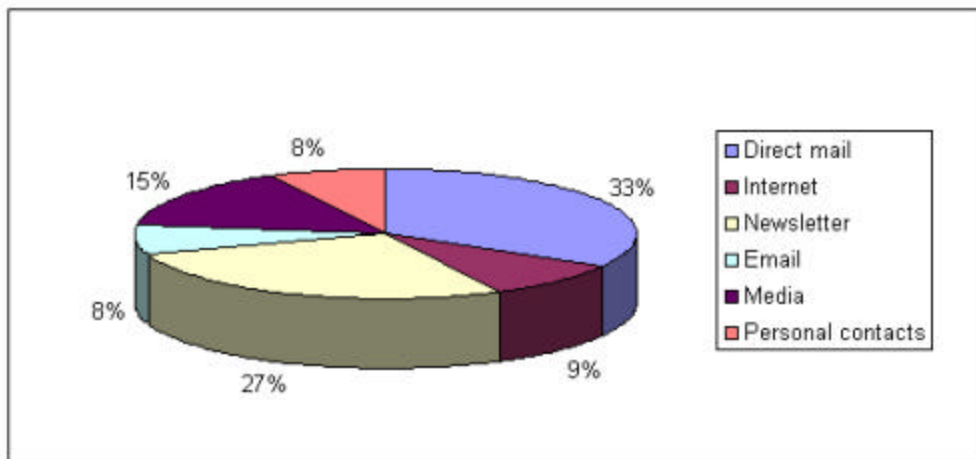
			education
Livingston	Groundwater	Wastewater treatment	Food service

Electronic Capabilities

Most of the LHEDs responding have access to the Internet, and 93 percent have e-mail capability. A few have websites and they have been linked to the MDEQ-LHED P2 Partnership Homepage at www.deq.state.mi.us/ead/p2sect/lhed. Sites will be added to the homepage as they come on-line.

Methods of Communicating with Citizens and Businesses

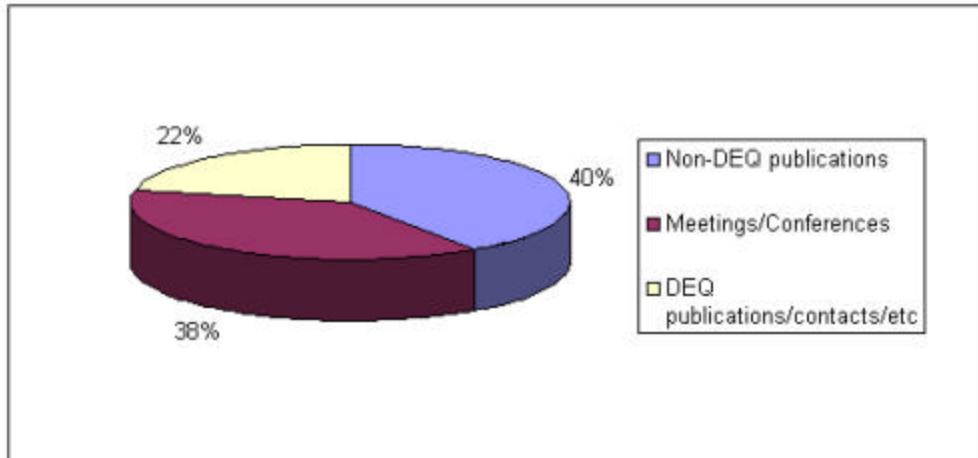
The following chart shows the most common forms of communication used by the LHEDs to present information to citizens within their jurisdictions. The top three responses were direct mail (33 percent), newsletter (27 percent) and media (15 percent).



Forty-six (46) percent of the LHEDs stated that they have newsletters or brochures that they would be willing to send to the MDEQ.

Resources for Environmental Information

The following chart illustrates the environmental resources used by the LHEDs. The publication mentioned most often was the Journal of Environmental Health; and the meeting or conference most often mentioned was Michigan Environmental Health Association (MEHA).



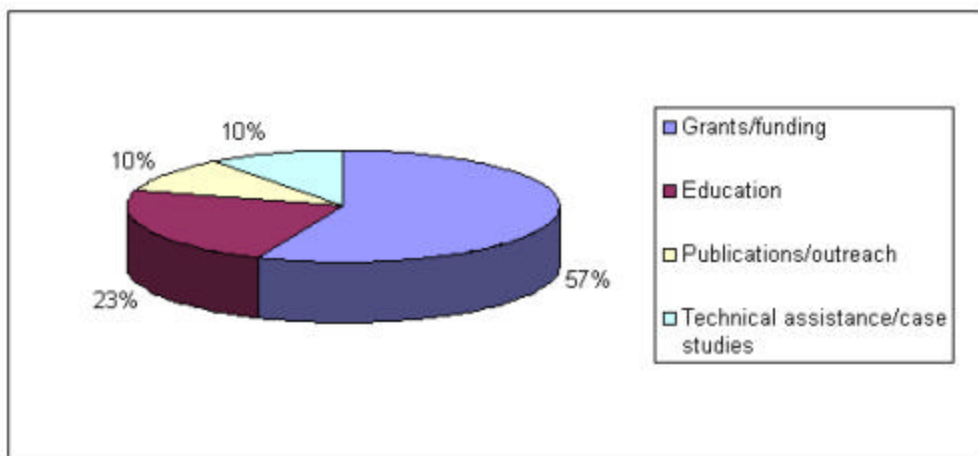
Willingness to Work with the MDEQ

Most (86 percent) of the LHEDs responding to the survey know that P2 assistance is available from the MDEQ. Seventy-nine (79) percent said that they would be interested in working with the MDEQ on P2 issues.

Most (79 percent) of the LHEDs do not participate in P2 Week. Half of the respondents were interested in working with the MDEQ on a P2 Week activity. Several LHEDs did not respond either way to this question, or responded with a maybe, possibly indicating lack of knowledge about P2Week or what it would entail for them.

LHED Needs

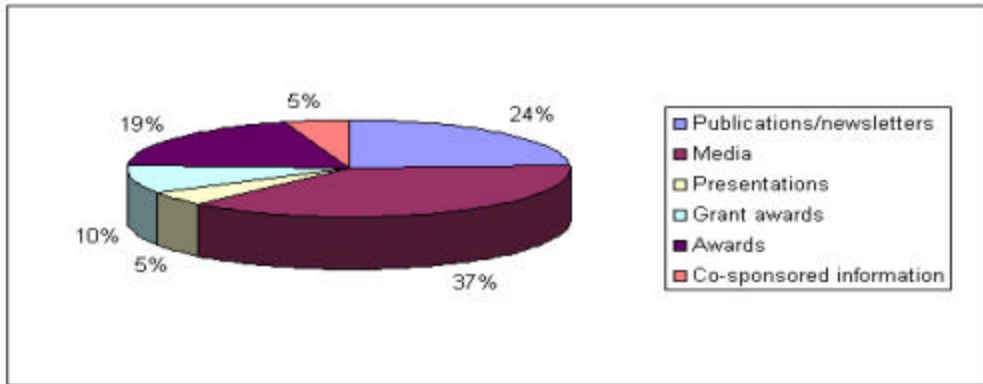
Incentives Needed to Increase P2 Outreach Activities



The following chart shows what the LHEDs thought would be the best incentives for them to increase P2 outreach.

Public recognition for LHED P2 actions

The following chart shows the forms of public recognition that the LHEDs thought would be good ways to recognize an LHED for initiating a P2 activity. The top three responses were media (37 percent), publications/newsletters (24 percent) and awards (19 percent).



State support for P2 activities/education

Overwhelmingly, the LHEDs thought that funding and resources were the best means for the state to support improved and expanded P2 work by the LHEDs. Other responses included P2 training, better communication, more involvement locally, providing news releases for local use, more focus on residential P2, and having DEQ staff act as "consultants" to the LHEDs.

Barriers to Adopting P2

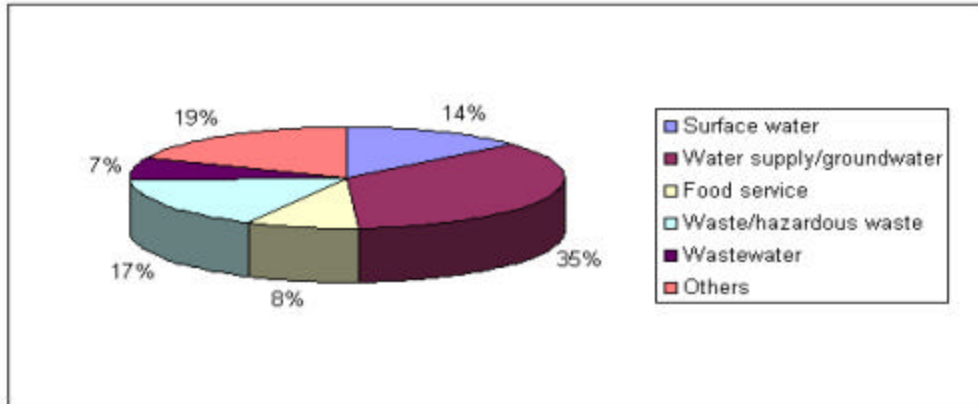
Nearly all the LHEDs identified time and money as barriers to undertaking P2 work. Other responses included: lack of training or knowledge, lack of P2 focus, no internal county recognition of P2 as an important activity, P2 is not our work, and this is not a mandated program.

Only 20 percent of LHED staff have received some type of P2 training.

P2 Responses

Local Programs that would benefit the most from P2

The following chart shows the local programs that LHEDs thought were the best candidates for P2 work. The top three responses were water supply/groundwater (35 percent), waste/hazardous waste (17 percent), and surface water (14 percent).



Suggested Trade Groups to Work with to Promote P2

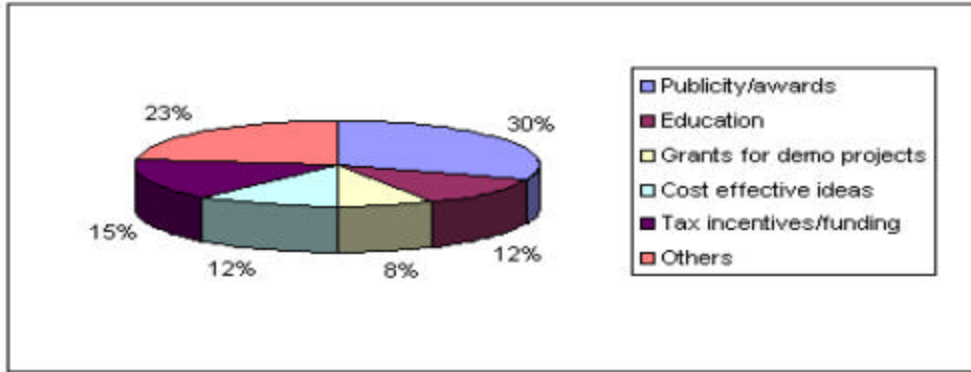
Many different suggestions were given by the LHEDs for good trade groups to work with to promote P2. Those mentioned most often were chambers of commerce, MEHA, and Michigan Association of Local Environmental Health Administrators (MALEHA). Others mentioned more than once were Farm Bureau, and solid waste haulers. Others of interest mentioned were inter-tribal councils, soil conservation districts, septic haulers, sanitary and storm sewer maintenance, automotive service industry, Michigan food associations, and the Michigan Well Drillers Association.

Events for Providing P2 Information

The following were suggested as good events/activities where P2 information should be provided or available:

- Home builders' shows
- Water Supply Type II Sanitary Surveys
- Septic Haulers Association
- College and school presentations
- Conferences and meetings
- Lake association meetings
- Health fairs
- Well-drillers meetings
- Inspections
- MEHA conference
- MEHA groundwater conference
- Wellness groups
- Septic installers forum
- News releases
- Local health department meetings
- Training sessions
- Non-community water supply monitoring
- Watershed coalitions

Incentives for Business to do P2



The chart below shows what the LHEDs thought were good incentives for businesses to increase P2. Others mentioned were understanding, DEQ educational audits and brochure with costs and benefits. The top three responses were publicity/awards (30 percent) tax incentives/funding (15 percent) and education (12 percent).

Expanded P2 activities at the local level

Responses to how P2 activities could be improved or expanded at the local level were varied. The response most given was at colleges and schools. Others mentioned were local focused conferences, more regional educational opportunities, residential and chambers of commerce.

Local groups that would most benefit from P2

This question was left blank on many of the surveys. The groups mentioned most often were manufacturers, small industries, and automotive. Others mentioned include chemical companies, chemical supply houses, platers, salvage yards, farms, business leaders, Small Quantity Generators, and Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Half of the LHEDs responding to the survey operate some type of household hazardous waste collection program. A map is included in the Appendix that shows the LHEDs that do and do not operate a household hazardous waste program. There does not appear to be an obvious geographical distinction between those that operate a program and those that don't. If more data was received from the northern LHEDs, perhaps a trend could be observed.

Three of the LHEDs with household hazardous waste programs indicated that their sites also accept business waste.

Of those that do operate a household hazardous waste program, 60 percent stated that P2 information could be provided at the location.

Recycling

Among the LHEDs responding to the survey, 60 percent participate in local recycling efforts.

Other Ideas

Group Meetings

Some of the local health departments have annual group meetings, testing or training sessions for their septic haulers, pool operators, and/or food handlers. These were identified as good

opportunities for teaching them about P2, and asking them to distribute P2 literature to their customers. For example, septic haulers could be asked to distribute a fact sheet on proper disposal of mercury-containing products to their customers; or swimming pool contractors and suppliers could distribute literature on fluorescent lights containing mercury and PCB capacitor issues to swimming pool owners and operators.

Training

Twenty-seven (27) percent of the LHEDs responding asked for P2 training, especially something customized to their needs. One LHED respondent mentioned that there are large differences between urban and rural LHEDs, and that training would have to be customized to meet the differing needs of each.

Conclusions and Recommendations

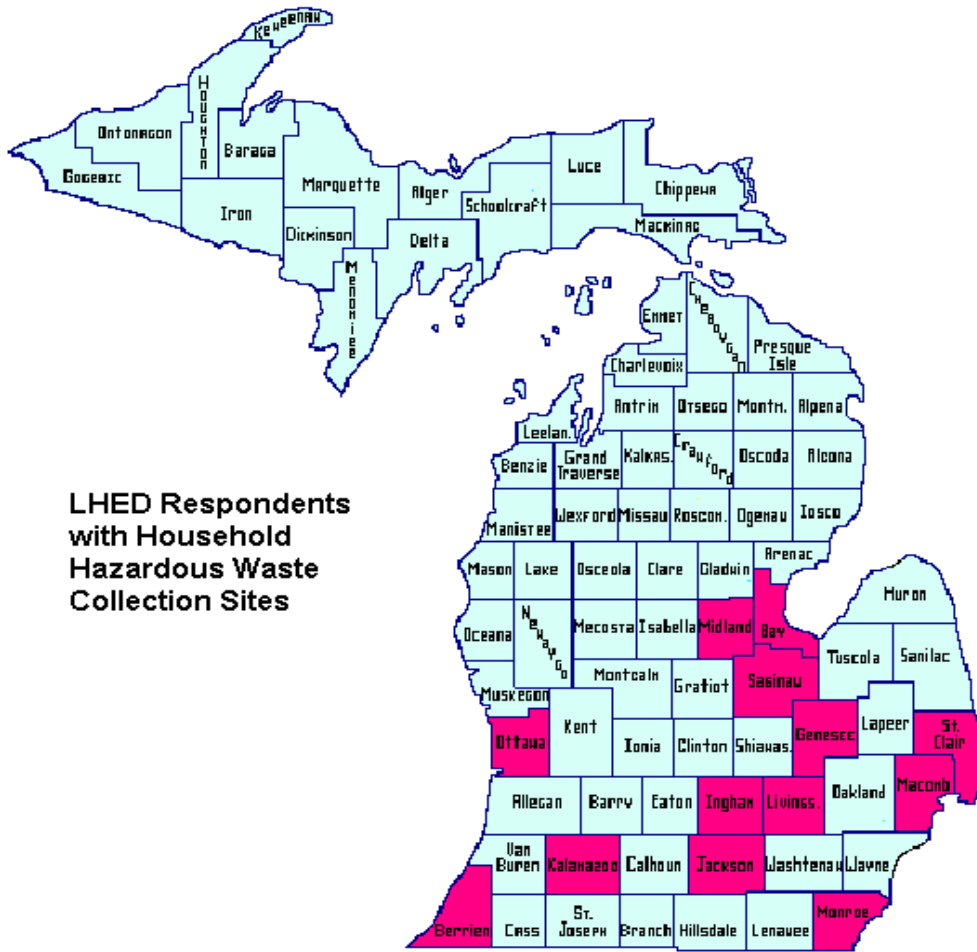
Overall, most of the LHED responses to the survey were similar, signifying common work, attitudes, and priorities. P2 Partnership work should focus on the common problems of concern and try to achieve progress in the areas that were identified by most as important.

The surveys indicate that the incentives and barriers to promoting P2 at the local level are related. Many of the LHEDs lack staff and resources to cover what they see as a new program. P2 at the local level would be most effective if it can be incorporated into existing programs in such a manner as to make the local health department efforts more effective or easier.

Many of the LHEDs were not well acquainted with the concept of P2 and asked for additional training in this area. Several noted that they could not answer some of the survey questions because they did not have enough understanding of P2 to respond. P2 training would be helpful for LHED staff. It would educate all of them and bring them to the same level of understanding, plus promote improved relations with the MDEQ.

Many of the LHEDs are willing to distribute P2 publications either at their offices or at their household hazardous waste collection sites. It is important to provide them with EAD P2 publications. Adjustments in the EAD printing budget should be made to meet this need.

It has been several months since the EAD received the first survey responses. Since then, progress has already been noted. For example, the surveys indicated that only 2.5 staff were assigned to do P2 work among all of the LHEDs responding. Recently, two LHEDs have decided to hire staff to conduct P2 work. Later this year, EAD staff will likely conduct a shorter phone survey of the LHEDs to assess the progress of the DEQ-LHED partnership, and promoting of P2 at the local level.



**LHED Respondents
with Household
Hazardous Waste
Collection Sites**