

Environmental Science and Services Division Program Philosophy

The Environmental Science and Services Division (ESSD) of the Department of Environmental Quality brings innovative, efficient and effective environmental and public health improvements as a direct result of public and private participation. The ESSD meets these objectives through various interactive mechanisms outlined below.

The underlying philosophy that focuses our framework is that generally people and businesses want to run environmentally sound businesses. We provide a means for them to do so through Financial Assistance; Incentive Programs; Innovative Partnerships; and other types of recognition programs.

The Department, through ESSD programs, encourages all entities to incorporate pollution prevention into their everyday business practices. Pollution prevention should be considered before pollution control as it is the most cost-effective and efficient method for reducing or eliminating waste and for protecting environmental quality. Therefore, many of our innovative partnerships and certain aspects of the incentive programs have focused on voluntary pollution prevention. These programs also try to promote going beyond the requirements of regulations and to implement activities that are good for the environment even though they may not be regulated. They also emphasize the implementation of innovative ways of addressing their issues. The department has successfully relied on voluntary approaches and incentives to encourage the adoption of pollution prevention. These programs have been implemented for an extended period and have benefited many facilities; however, there are still a number of regulated facilities that have not explored pollution prevention opportunities.

Given this experience, the Department also implements a series of incentive programs and selected financial assistance programs which are specifically tied in with compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. They are based on the premise that people generally want to be good environmental stewards and comply with the law but face certain barriers; i.e. knowledge as to how, and what, and the financial resources to implement corrective or proactive strategies. Compliance Assistance and Proactive Pollution Prevention drive a greater commitment to compliance, leaving the use of the enforcement tools for those that truly are having difficulties meeting their statutory obligations. Thus some programs have been developed to provide strong compliance incentives; selected financial assistance programs are targeted at facilities in non-compliance where they will generate the greatest environmental benefits through the use of the available funds; and numerous workshops, guidebooks, and other educational information resources are provided to help promote compliance.

Interactive mechanisms that promote going beyond the regulatory requirements and promoting environmental stewardship even when not regulated include: Innovative public and private partnerships; educational outreach; nationally recognized workshops and symposiums, such as the Waste Reduction and Energy Efficiency Conference.

Partnerships

- ❖ Are the means we use to get people engaged in the concept of pollution prevention. They offer shared information; shared resources; and innovation.
- ❖ Partnerships are based on the premise of encouraging entities to exercise voluntary pollution prevention; environmental stewardship and implementing beyond compliance
- ❖ Partnerships are created to accomplish specific goals.
- ❖ Participation is voluntary so the recognition of participation is an incentive for soliciting members.
- ❖ Partnerships bridge all sectors including: academia; non-profits; trade associations; marketers; and sector industries and includes both regulated and non-regulated businesses and industries.
- ❖ Partnerships provide the same benefits to the small business as to the large business through leveraging funding, knowledge, and information transfer.
- ❖ Many partnerships are developed through an initial workgroup of stakeholders that define the goals and objectives of the partnership.
- ❖ In many instances, the partnership eventually runs on its own for the benefits of the members, requiring little if any facilitation from the department.

Goals of a Typical Partnership may include:

- ❖ A partnership network, where all of the participants share a part.
- ❖ Transfer of Pollution Prevention Knowledge and Technologies
- ❖ Supportive non-competitive collaborative research
- ❖ Support workshops such as WREE and other P2 related activities
- ❖ Leverage resources among facilities, i.e. DoD partnerships.

Examples of Innovative Partnership Programs:

- ❖ Michigan Auto Project
- ❖ Michigan Business Pollution Prevention Partnership (MBP3)
- ❖ Michigan Department of Defense Pollution Prevention Alliance
- ❖ Michigan Healthcare P2 Project:
- ❖ Michigan Clean Marinas Program
- ❖ Mercury Reduction Initiative or Mercury P2
- ❖ Michigan Pulp, Paper, and Products Pollution Prevention Partnership (P5)

Mechanisms that promote compliance assistance include: Incentive based programs recognizing good stewardship and compliance; workshops and guidebooks on understanding the regulations; and financial mechanisms for implementing both the required functions and those that go beyond compliance.

Incentive Programs

- ❖ Provide Positive Public Recognition and Regulatory Flexibility to businesses and other establishments that demonstrate environmental stewardship by implementing P2 practices and maintaining a strong compliance record.

- ❖ Emphasis on compliance in these award programs helps to drive environmental performance.
- ❖ Many of these incentive programs have some sort of environmental management systems or practices component.
- ❖ Gets companies to commit to voluntary waste reduction at the source and other P2 efforts; i.e. C3 companies commit to goals, objectives and targets to reduce wastes, recycle and reuse materials, conserve energy and integrate environmental factors into their daily operations.

Examples of Incentive Based Programs

- ❖ Michigan Clean Corporate Citizens Program
- ❖ Michigan Great Printers Project (MI-GPP)
- ❖ Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP)
- ❖ Michigan Metal Finishers Pollution Prevention Initiative (MFP2I)
- ❖ Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Program (RETAP) Internship Program.
- ❖ Michigan Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Program (MAEAP)

Financial Incentives

A known barrier to achieving compliance as well as implementing pollution prevention or innovative approaches to environmental improvement is lack of funding. The ESSD manages a multitude of financial assistance programs that are directed towards various sectors and objectives.

The third major function of the ESSD is Assistance Support back to the regulatory divisions within the DEQ as well as to the public. We provide the staffing that responds to the 800 number published for the DEQ. This service answers over 36,000 calls per year and directs callers to specific areas to meet their information needs. We also serve as a clearing house for many publications and some critical website activities. We also publish the DEQ calendar. We provide laboratory services both to the other divisions within the agency as well as those outside the agency including other departments, local public health offices, and individuals seeking well testing.

We are entirely a service based organization where we target the services to meet the overall needs of the customers.