

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 3, 2004

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The DEQ Announces the Creation of PLEDGE Program

Department of Environmental Quality Director Steven E. Chester announced the PLEDGE permit program (Promoting Leadership in Environmental Decision-Making to Grow Our Economy), a two-year pilot program designed to ensure timely issuance of environmentally sound air quality permits. The Department of Labor and Economic Growth, with the assistance of the DEQ, will identify up to five projects per year with significant economic impacts for which PLEDGE will be most beneficial to the state. For selected projects, PLEDGE will reduce the amount of time needed to obtain an air permit to as little as 100 days – one of the quickest air permit processing times in the nation.

The PLEDGE program, developed by DEQ staff, requires the DEQ and the air permit applicant to commit to processing air new source review permit applications in a cooperative, transparent manner. Information requests and responses, independent technical reviews, and discussions of draft conditions must be conducted quickly and efficiently. PLEDGE also requires the applicant and the DEQ to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure both are working toward a common goal. PLEDGE provides fixed deadlines for regulatory decisions and requires the early involvement of citizens, environmental groups, and local governments.

PLEDGE will not compromise state and federal requirements, and it will not guarantee the project will be approved. However, without sacrificing any scientific analysis or public involvement, PLEDGE will ensure that industrial projects meeting environmental standards will not be delayed by the air permitting process.

“The lessons learned from this pilot program will be crucial for the DEQ as it strives to preserve environmental protection while allowing Michigan to sustain a strong, diverse economy,” stated DEQ Director Chester.

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Editor’s note: DEQ news releases are available on the department’s Internet home page at www.michigan.gov/deq.