

The Advocate

For and about small businesses and local governments affected by environmental regulations

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EMS: It's Not Just for Emergencies!

Having an Environmental Management System – or EMS – now can qualify small businesses and local governments for a host of regulatory incentives from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). These incentives can ease your paperwork burdens, improve operations, and lower costs.

CLEAN TEXAS: EMS Made Easy

Facilities enrolled as “Leaders” in the CLEAN TEXAS program are eligible for EMS incentives without providing additional documentation, as long as the information contained in their CLEAN TEXAS application is still current.

CLEAN TEXAS is a state-wide, voluntary, environmental leadership program of the TNRCC. CLEAN TEXAS Leaders, the most comprehensive level of participation, commit to a number of environmental improvement goals, including instituting a system that ensures compliance and continuous improvement such as an environmental management system, strategic plan, or business plan.

All CLEAN TEXAS members receive recognition, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. For more information or an application form, log on to www.cleantexas.org or call Larissa Peter at 512/239-3766. ■



The incentives can include:

- greater flexibility in meeting state or federal regulatory requirements;
- on-site technical assistance;
- accelerated access to program information;
- fewer compliance inspections; and
- positive points in ranking compliance history.

What is an EMS?

An EMS is basically a system for monitoring a facility's compliance with environmental regulations while making

continuous improvements. To be effective, an EMS must be structured as an ongoing cycle of planning, reviewing, and making adjustments. The goal is to stay on top of environmental performance in order to spot developing issues, identify their causes, and implement strategies for correcting the problems. Many

facilities find that their EMS also saves them money by identifying opportunities to reduce waste and increase operational efficiencies.

What are the components of an EMS?

The new TNRCC rules require that an EMS meet certain minimum standards. It must:

- include a written environmental policy directed toward continuous improvement;

- identify environmental aspects at the site;
- prioritize those aspects according to their significance;
- set targets for improving environmental performance;
- document implementation procedures and their results;
- assign responsibility for managing the EMS; and
- routinely evaluate and refine the EMS.

How do I qualify for the new EMS incentives?

You must submit documentation to the TNRCC showing that your EMS meets the minimum standards and request that the agency conduct an on-site evaluation of the system.

Or, you can have an approved third-party auditor conduct the on-site evaluation.

How do I get started?

The TNRCC is drafting guidance documents to help you work through the process. Those documents will be available on-line at www.abouttexasems.org.

In addition, the agency is in the process of developing model Environmental Management Systems for small businesses and local governments. The models will be tested on four small businesses in Texas and will be finalized by December 2002. The models and other information on EMS will be posted on the Web at www.abouttexasems.org. ■

New Rules Require Individual Permits to Land-Apply Sewage Sludge

As a result of recent legislation, all registrations to apply Class B sewage sludge to land expire Aug. 31, 2003, and a new individual permit will be required under rules now being finalized by the TNRCC. "Class B" describes sludge that has been treated so that it is safe enough to be used on agricultural land.

After Aug. 31, 2003, "responsible persons" may not land-apply Class B sludge without an individual permit.

If the sludge being land-applied was generated outside Texas, the "responsible person" is the owner of the

site. If the sludge was generated within Texas, "responsible person" means the person applying the sludge.

Because the permit process is lengthy, the TNRCC recommends filing permit applications by March 31, 2002. The application must include information on the source, quality, and quantity of sludge to be applied and the hydrologic characteristics of surface water and groundwater within a quarter mile of the land application unit. The application also may be subject to public notice and hearing requirements.

An individual permit will specify the amount of sludge that may be applied at the site and may stipulate monitoring and reporting requirements. Individual permits may be issued for up to six years. The legislation requires the agency to charge at least \$1,000 but not more than \$5,000 for issuing an individual permit. Ultimately, the fee will be based on the amount of sludge applied.

For additional information, call the Wastewater Permitting Agricultural Team at 512/239-4671. ■

Check Renewal Dates for Occupational Licenses, Registrations

The TNRCC has consolidated administrative requirements and established uniform procedures for the Occupational Licensing & Registration program.

In some cases, the fees and renewal dates have changed.

Affected programs include:

- backflow prevention assembly testers;
- customer service inspectors;
- landscape irrigators and installers;
- leaking petroleum storage tank corrective action project managers and specialists;
- municipal solid waste facility supervisors;
- on-site sewage facilities installers, apprentices, site evaluators, and designated representatives;
- water treatment specialists;
- underground storage tank contractors and on-site supervisors;
- wastewater operators and operations companies; and
- public water system operators and operations companies.

For details on a particular license or registration, call the TNRCC office that administers the program. Information also is available through the

TNRCC's Web site at www.tnrcc.state.tx.us. Click on "Index" then on "C" for "certification" to link to the specific office. ■

Cutting Waste Helps Save You \$\$\$

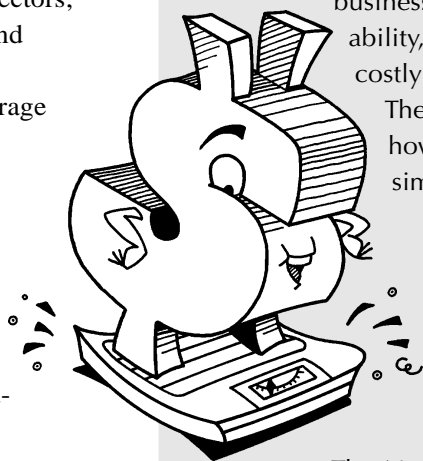
The *Pollution Prevention Pocketbook* – a new pamphlet from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – shows how preventing waste is a sound business strategy for lowering operating expenses, reducing liability, improving worker safety, and possibly helping avoid costly permits and other types of governmental authorization.

The eight-page booklet explains how to get started and how to measure successes. Here are some examples of simple efforts that have paid off big:

- ▼ a hanger reuse program saves a dry cleaner \$18,000 each year;
- ▼ washing and reusing gloves saves a manufacturer \$30,000 annually;
- ▼ replacing fluorescent lamps with energy-efficient lighting cuts a printer's annual operating costs by \$21,000.

The *National Pollution Prevention Resource Guide* is a supplement to the *Pocketbook* with thumbnail summaries of and contact information on resources offering assistance with waste reduction efforts. A regional version also provides information on Texas resources.

The free booklets are available on-line at www.epa.gov/p2/assist/sbg.htm or through the Pollution Prevention Information Clearinghouse at 202/260-1023. Ask for publications EPA-742-E-01-001 and EPA-744-F-01-023. ■



TNRCC to Become TCEQ

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
— That's us starting September 1, 2002!



How does this impact you? It doesn't! Any registration or permit you have with TNRCC will remain in effect, as will any signage you are required to post. You may also see and use forms and documents under our old name for awhile as we phase in materials with the TCEQ name.

If you have any questions, please call us at 512/239-3100. ■

You Can Call on Us

Confused about environmental regulations?

Concerned about inspections?

Who can you turn to for help?

Call the folks with
Small Business and Local Government Assistance
1-800-447-2827

www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/sbea/sblga.html

You can get free, confidential help with questions on air, water, waste, or pollution prevention issues from this special section of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

Small Business and Local Government Assistance (SBLGA) works for you by:

- providing local environmental assistance when and where it's needed;
- giving small business and local government a voice in TNRCC rule and policy making; and
- communicating technical information in plain language.

***SBLGA is entirely separate
from TNRCC's enforcement program.***

With SBLGA, you benefit from:

- a toll-free hotline and Web site with answers to technical questions on air, water, waste, and pollution prevention;
- industry-specific compliance guidebooks for metal finishers, printers, dry cleaners, auto body and auto repair shops, and facilities making wood and fiberglass products;
- the *Local Government Guide to the TNRCC* (GI-145), a reference book with plain language environmental information; and
- many more services.

Local Specialists are Ready to Help You!

You've also got free, confidential help right in your back yard. Just check the list below for your local compliance assistance specialist:

Region 1 (Amarillo)

Doug White 806/468-0505

Region 2 (Lubbock)

Celeste Hoehne 806/788-5005

Region 3 (Abilene)

vacant 1-800-447-2827

Region 4 (Dallas/Ft. Worth)

Mike Smithson 817/588-5836

Melinda Houlihan 817/588-5868

Region 5 (Tyler)

Kevin Glanton 903/535-5133

Cynthia Skief 903/535-5158

Region 6 (El Paso)

Pamela Aguirre 915/834-4971

Region 7 (Midland)

Kit Owens 915/620-6116

Region 8 (San Angelo)

Bill Koger 915/481-8061

Region 9 (Waco)

Elaine Alexander 254/761-3044

Region 10 (Beaumont)

Charlie Adams 409/899-8788

Region 11 (Austin)

Scott Wiedeman 512/239-7015

Region 12 (Houston)

Clarence Gray 713/767-3582

Cynthia Williams 713/767-3549

Region 13 (San Antonio)

Christine Bergren 210/403-4028

Christi Carson 210/403-4039

Region 14 (Corpus Christi)

Glenda Swierc 361/825-3421

Region 15 (Harlingen)

Luis Campos 956/389-7425

Jane Scheidler 956/389-7426

Region 16 (Laredo)

Carmen Ramirez 956/721-8457

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Fleet Maintenance Workshop

Houston, April 18; Cynthia Williams, 713/767-3549

San Antonio Manufacturers Association

San Antonio, April 18, May 16, June 20, July 18; Mike Harris, 210/821-5466

Fleet Maintenance Workshop

Dallas, April 25; Melinda Houlihan, 817/588-5868

Fort Worth Small Business Advisory Committee

Fort Worth, May 1; Mike Smithson, 817/588-5836

TNRCC Environmental Trade Fair & Conference

Austin, May 6-8; TNRCC Event Coordination & Education, 512/239-3159

Texas Environmental Excellence Awards

Austin, May 7; Dana Macomb, 512/239-4745

Dallas Small Business Advisory Committee

Dallas, May 14; Melinda Houlihan, 817/588-5868

Houston Small Business Advisory Committee

Houston, May 23; Clarence Gray 713/767-3582

Metal Finishers Workshop

Dallas, May 28; Fort Worth, May 29; San Antonio, May 30;
Houston, June 5; Doug White, 806/468-0505

Municipal Solid Waste Management & Resource Recovery Advisory Council

Austin, June 6; Gary Trim, 512/239-6708

Golden Triangle Small Business Advisory Committee

Beaumont, June 13; Charlie Adams, 409/899-8788

The Advocate is published quarterly by the Small Business and Local Government Assistance Program. Comments or suggestions for future articles should be sent to:

The Advocate Editor
Small Business and Environmental
Assistance Division, MC 106
Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Toll Free

1-800-447-2827

(All calls are confidential)

Fax: 512/239-1065



The TNRCC is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. The agency does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or veteran status. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document may be requested in alternate formats by contacting the TNRCC at 512/239-0028, Fax 512/239-4488 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD), or by writing P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SMALL BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSISTANCE DIVISION, MC 106
TEXAS NATURAL RESOURCE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PO BOX 13087
AUSTIN TX 78711-3087



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