



## **NOTICE: Northwest Public Entity EMS Implementation Project**

**SUBJECT:** Announcement of a program to assist Northwest government agencies, primarily local and state, that wish to voluntarily develop and implement environmental management systems (EMS). Guidelines for letter of application are included.

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**SUMMARY:** Zero Waste Alliance (<http://www.zerowaste.org/>), a non-profit organization that specializes in EMS training and implementation, located in Portland, Oregon, in association with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces its intention to assist up to ten government organizations that wish to develop and implement environmental management systems (EMS).

Participants are provided assistance, in the form of six 2-day training workshops, on-site visits, conference calls, and electronic materials. Consultation would be provided over an 18-month period of time targeted to start in the first quarter of 2004. ZWA will work closely with each participant throughout the life of the program and provide training, technical assistance, site visits, and other materials designed to help each participant develop a complete EMS, using the ISO 14001 International EMS Standard as a baseline. The completed EMS will meet the EMS criteria for EPA's Performance Track Program (<http://www.epa.gov/performance-track>). Participants pay a fixed fee (estimated to be approximately \$30,000) for implementation. ZWA is currently seeking funding from EPA for the program to lower participant cost.

This initiative is similar to and builds on the successes of three previous projects sponsored by EPA. More information on these projects can also be found at <http://www.peercenter.net/>. The initiative is consistent with EPA's overall policy position of encouraging EMS adoption in key sectors. This statement was recently signed by the EPA Administrator and is attached to this announcement.

**DATES:** Letters of Application from interested organizations should be submitted no later than November 14, 2003. (See below for application guidelines). Decisions will be announced by December 15, 2003. The first workshop is targeted for the first quarter of 2004. The program will last 18 months, ending in mid-2005.

**ADDRESSES:** Letters of application should be submitted to: Larry Chalfan, Zero Waste Alliance (ZWA), 121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 210, Portland, Oregon, (503) 279-9383, FAX (503) 279-9381.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Larry Chalfan, Zero Waste Alliance, 121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 210, Portland, Oregon, (503) 279-9383, FAX (503) 279-9381, [lchalfan@zerowaste.org](mailto:lchalfan@zerowaste.org).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **I. Background**

Over the past ten years, there has been increasing evidence that organizations that adopt environmental management systems (EMS) for their operations can realize significant benefits in terms of improved environmental performance, including but not limited to environmental compliance, prevention of pollution, increased operational efficiency, and improved relations with regulatory agencies. Originally adopted in the private sector, EMSs are now proving to be a powerful tool that can also help public agencies. EMSs do not impose new technical requirements, nor do they act as a substitute for existing regulatory requirements. EMSs provide a powerful and replicable method for an organization to more effectively manage its environmental obligations and, as a result, improve its overall environmental performance, including areas not subject to legal requirements. EMSs can also help organizations reduce unnecessary costs.

Since 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has led a major effort to assist and build partnerships with public agencies, primarily local governments, to voluntarily adopt environmental management systems (EMS) for their operations, using the ISO 14001 International EMS Standard as a baseline. These initiatives have documented a series of important benefits for the 23 organizations that have participated including improved environmental performance, cost savings, and better community relations. The experiences of these agencies have also helped to demonstrate the value of EMSs in the public sector, provided much valuable information that can help other public agencies in the future, and pointed out the need for EPA to continue to build strong partnerships with local governments that wish to adopt EMSs. Organizations interested in applying for the program described below are encouraged to learn more about the program and benefits by going to <http://www.peercenter.net/>.

As a result of the successes of these efforts, EPA has recently launched the Public Entity EMS Resource Center Initiative (PEER) to make EMS expertise more locally available. EPA has selected eight EMS Local Resource Centers (LRCs) around the country, housed in academic and other non-profit institutions that can provide EMS assistance and training for public agencies in different areas around the country. This group includes the Zero Waste Alliance. This program will help achieve the EPA's goal to maintain momentum for EMS adoption in the public sector. The ZWA LRC website is located at <http://www.zerowaste.org/lrc>. The EPA announcement is attached below.

### **II. Program Description**

The program is designed for a group of 8 to 10 public entities. Two to three representatives from each organization attend six 2-day workshops held quarterly in the Northwest, starting in the first quarter of 2004. Over the 18-month period, the organizations develop and implement their own EMS. During the workshops, participants will both learn about the key elements of the EMS and work on customizing their own EMS procedures and processes from provided templates. In addition to the workshops, ZWA will provide:

- Review of EMS documents
- Guidance between workshops
- Site assistance visits for each participants;
- Regular conference calls
- Written and electronic templates and reference materials.

In addition, participants will receive informal mentoring, as appropriate, from agencies that have participated in the three previous local government EMS initiatives sponsored by U.S. EPA.

As part of the program, participants would:

- Develop an environmental management system (EMS) for an operation of their choosing, using the ISO 14001 International Standard as a baseline. (Participants will be provided with information on the process, costs, and benefits of achieving 3rd party certification for their EMS, but will not be required to achieve certification);
- Communicate and share information with local stakeholders as the EMS is developed;
- Adopt performance objectives for the EMS that address compliance, environmental performance beyond compliance, and pollution prevention;
- Pay a fixed fee between \$20,000 and \$30,000 payable in two annual installments. (ZWA has requested partial funding for the program from EPA. Exact cost will depend on the level of EPA funding and number of participants.)

Benefits to the participants include:

- Recognition as environmental leader
- Meets EMS criteria of EPA's Performance Track (Participants that meet all entry criteria for membership in the Performance Track will receive certain benefits. For additional information, see <http://www.epa.gov/performancetrack>.)
- Fulfills Oregon Governor's XO sustainability plan,
- Fulfills City of Seattle EMS requirement
- Opportunity to interact with peers
- Opportunity to learn from experienced practitioners
- Most cost effective implementation method

### **III. Benefits of Previous Participants**

Some of the benefits that previous participants have realized through their EMSs are described below. Additional information on EMSs and benefits can be obtained by going to [http://www.zerowaste.org/lrc/ems\\_info.htm](http://www.zerowaste.org/lrc/ems_info.htm) and <http://www.peercenter.net/whatisems/benefits.cfm>.

#### **Improved Bond Rating**

"Many people hear 'environmental management' and immediately think two things: bureaucracy and expense. But the EMS effort for us yielded dozens of real world, long term cost savings in areas like reduced power and water use. Perhaps even more significant is the possible impact on our bond ratings. Rating agencies recognized that, in taking time to examine how we did our-day-to-day business, Jefferson County had created a workplace that was less likely to generate injuries or serious environmental accidents. Less risk means greater opportunity for return on an investment. We're told the potential impact of our EMS, taken with other factors, is a 1/16th to 1/8th of a point improvement, which could mean millions of dollars of taxpayer money saved each time we borrow money for capital projects. Now, that's the kind of documented savings that makes elected leaders and the public both very happy."

**- Billy Morace, Director of General Services, Jefferson County, Alabama**

#### **Reduced Insurance Premiums**

"Insurance companies have indicated that we can expect to see, in the future, a 20% reduction in our insurance premiums as a result of our EMS documentation and the operational controls now in place."

**- Laura Fiffick, Port of Houston Authority**

#### **Resource Savings (Natural, Monetary)**

"In terms of water use reduction, we eliminated 100% potable water use from our Greens, Dirt and Trash operations which equates to 31 million gallons of potable water saved. For fuel use and emissions, we saved 90,000 gallons of diesel and 9 tons of CO2."

"We saved \$706,000 in heavy equipment rates by shutting off equipment during breaks and lunch periods. An additional \$80,000 was saved in diesel costs thanks to these shutdowns."

**- Mark zu Hone, City of San Diego Refuse Disposal Division**

## **Environmental Efficiencies**

“Tri-Met’s EMS set an objective and target related to resource conservation which included our diesel, electricity, natural gas, and water usage. The [target] goal was 10% savings for 1 year and each facility was responsible for finding creative ways to achieve these savings. After changing procedures, communicating the goals and monitoring results, the total operational savings for one year resulted in monetary savings of approximately \$63,631.”

**- Kevin Considine, Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District, Portland, OR**

## **Operational Efficiency and Consistency**

“Implementing an EMS enabled us to embark on a huge project we always knew we needed to do but could never find the time for – to consciously identify all our regulatory requirements and formally designate responsibility for compliance and updates. We always felt we had a handle on this, but our procedure to identify our legal requirements now relieves worries that we might have missed something.”

**- Pam Badger, King County Solid Waste Division, Seattle, WA**

## **IV Guidelines for Application**

Organizations wishing to apply for this program need to:

1. Submit a letter of application to the person listed above in the summary of this Notice by November 14, 2003. Email submittals are encouraged.

2. This letter should be signed by the head of the organization and contain the following information:

- A brief description of the organization and its responsibilities;
- The name of a top management representative who will have the responsibility and authority for ensuring that the EMS is developed based on the program description provided above. This person should be available to travel and participate in up to six workshops with other participants over the life of the project. These workshops will be held approximately every three months in the Northwest;
- A preliminary, non-binding indication of the particular operation for which the EMS will be developed (i.e. wastewater treatment plant, public works department, transit operation, etc.). If necessary, a final determination of the operation for which the EMS will be developed can take place once organizations have been selected for the program;
- A description of the reasons the organization wishes to participate in the program and some of the benefits it hopes to realize from adopting an EMS;
- Finally, a clear assurance that top management in the organization will provide the necessary visibility, staff time, and other resources necessary to successfully develop and implement the EMS through an EMS implementation team. Ongoing top management support is the most critical factor for ensuring a successful and sustainable EMS.

Once all applications are received, follow up interviews will be conducted by ZWA with each applicant to discuss the information contained in their letter of application in more detail, along with any other information needed before final decisions on program participation are made. These final decisions are expected no later than December 15, 2003, after which ZWA will work with each participant to schedule the first program workshop during the first quarter of 2004.

The Zero Waste Alliance is a program of the International Sustainable Development Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit corporation located in Portland Oregon. (<http://www.isdf.org/>)



# Environmental News

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2002

## EPA WILL HELP LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MEET ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

**Robin Woods 202-564-7841/woods.robin@epa.gov**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water has selected eight organizations from across the nation to become Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Local Resource Centers where local governments can go to make their operations more environmentally friendly.

"What this means is local communities can treat their wastewater more effectively and efficiently and reduce costs to taxpayers," said G. Tracy Mehan, Assistant Administrator for Water. "EMS is a powerful management tool that in the end helps the local citizens enjoy a cleaner and healthier environment."

For years private industry has been using the EMS management tool to reduce pollution and protect public health and now local governments can use EMSs in the same way. These EMS Resource Centers will be located in existing academic or other non-profit institutions that have a proven track record of providing high quality environmental assistance.

EPA will be working with the Global Environment & Technology Foundation to help local agencies adopt the EMS tool for their operations. Each center will also share information on its activities through a publicly available on-line National Clearinghouse of EMS information for public agencies. This clearinghouse is available at <http://www.peercenter.net/>.

According to Larry Chalfan from the Zero Waste Alliance, one of the organizations selected to be Local Resource Center, "As an EMS Local Resource Center, Zero Waste Alliance can realize its mission of supporting organizations in the creation of a more sustainable future. This means we must try to make EMS equally as appealing and accessible to public agencies as private agencies and we intend to do just that."

The local Environmental Management Systems Resource Centers are:

Purdue University  
Indiana Clean Manufacturing Technology and Safe Materials Institute  
School of Civil Engineering  
2655 Yeager Road  
West Lafayette, Indiana 47906 Phone # 765-463-4749  
Contact: Dr. Lynn Corson

University of Wisconsin Stout  
EDA University Center  
103 1st Avenue W  
Menominee, Wisconsin 54751 Phone # 715-232-5023  
Contact: Joe Benkowski

University of Florida  
Center for Training, Research, and Education for Environmental Occupations  
3900 SW 63rd Boulevard  
Gainesville, Florida 32608 Phone # 352-392-9570  
Contact: Dr. William Engel

Georgia Institute of Technology  
Center for International Standards and Quality  
143 OKeefe Building  
Atlanta, Georgia 30332 Phone # 404B894-0968  
Contact: Paolo Chiappina

University of Massachusetts at Lowell  
EMS Service Center  
One University Avenue  
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854 Phone # (978) 934-4741  
Contact: Matthew Donahue

Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission  
Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, Texas 78711 Phone # 512 239-3145  
Contact: Ken Zarker

Virginia Tech University  
Center for Organizational and Technological Advancement  
110 Shenandoah Avenue  
Roanoke, Virginia 24016 Phone # 540-853-8276  
Contact: Robert Herbert

The Zero Waste Alliance  
One World Trade Center  
121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 210  
Portland, Oregon 97204 Phone # 503-279-9383  
Contact: Larry Chalfan

**R-136 ###**

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Position Statement on**  
**Environmental Management Systems (EMSs)**

**Background**

In recent years organizations have increasingly adopted formal Environmental Management Systems (EMSs). The most common framework for an EMS is plan-do-check-act, with the goal of continual improvement. EMSs provide organizations of all types with a structured approach for managing environmental and regulatory responsibilities to improve overall environmental performance, including areas not subject to regulation such as resource conservation and energy efficiency. EMSs can also help organizations better integrate the full scope of environmental considerations and get better results, by establishing a continuous process of checking to make sure environmental goals are met. EMS implementation ensures that procedures are in place for taking remedial action if problems occur. From a business perspective, they can often help make organizations more efficient and more competitive and help address other important issues such as security at key facilities. EMSs do not replace the need for regulatory and enforcement programs, but they can complement them. EMSs can indicate opportunities for EPA to streamline regulations, and be considered in compliance assistance, monitoring, and enforcement.

First adopted by manufacturing industries, EMSs are now being used throughout the private sector and, increasingly, by public agencies of many different types.

For the past several years, EPA has been involved in a wide range of activities designed to facilitate EMS adoption, including those based on ISO 14001 and other models, and cooperative efforts with Canada and Mexico through the Commission on Environmental Cooperation. We are also leading research designed to evaluate effectiveness of EMSs in various settings, and integrating EMSs into more of our own programs, including enforcement settlement agreements.

In 1999, EPA issued a major report entitled *Aiming for Excellence: Actions to Encourage Stewardship and Accelerate Environmental Progress*, which committed that EPA "... will encourage organizations to use EMSs that improve compliance, pollution prevention, and other measures of environmental performance. We'll continue evaluation efforts to learn more about which EMS elements and applications are most effective, and we'll determine how these systems might be used to strengthen environmental programs and policies."

Most recently, EPA has developed an Environmental Management Policy for its own facilities to meet the goals set forth in Executive Order 13148—*The Greening of Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management*.

Based on the practical experience and knowledge we have gained, it is becoming clear that EMSs, when implemented diligently, can help improve environmental performance and foster other important benefits to organizations. Therefore, EPA is today issuing an updated statement on EMSs along with an EMS Plan to guide Agency activities over the next several years.

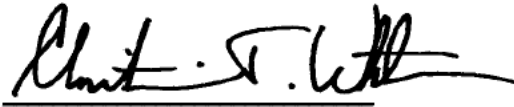
## Statement of Principles

EPA's overall policy on Environmental Management Systems, like the EMS approach itself, will be guided by the principles of continual improvement and learning, flexibility, and collaboration.

- EPA will encourage wide spread use of EMSs across a range of organizations and settings, with particular emphasis on adoption of EMSs to achieve improved environmental performance and compliance, pollution prevention through source reduction, and continual improvement. We will support EMSs that are appropriate to the needs and characteristics of specific sectors and facilities.
- EPA will encourage organizations that use EMSs to obtain stakeholder input on matters relevant to the development and implementation of an EMS, and demonstrate accountability for the performance outcomes of their EMSs through measurable objectives and targets. Additionally, we will encourage organizations to share information on the performance of their EMSs with the public and government agencies, and facilitate this process where practicable.
- EPA will encourage the use of recognized environmental management frameworks, such as the ISO 14001 standard, as a basis for designing and implementing EMSs that aim to achieve outcomes aligned with the Nation's environmental policy goals and the principles of this Position Statement.
- EPA will work collaboratively with other key partners—including states, tribes, localities, industry, and non-governmental organizations—as we implement this policy. EPA will support international EMS initiatives that will assist in increasing the use of EMSs in the United States. We will ensure that our decisions and our work as we implement this policy are transparent to all interested parties.
- EPA will lead by example, by implementing EMSs at appropriate EPA facilities.
- EPA will foster continual learning by supporting research and public dialogue on EMSs that help improve our understanding of circumstances where EMSs can advance the Nation's environmental policy goals. We will strive to collect better information on the application of EMSs, including how well EMSs meet environmental performance expectations; and the costs and benefits to organizations and the environment.

5/15/02

DATE



Christine Todd Whitman, Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency