

# Industry Experience With Pollution Prevention Programs

**Pollution prevention is a multimedia concept**



**that reduces or eliminates discharges to air,**



**water, or land and includes the development**



**of more environmentally acceptable products,**



**changes in processes and practices, source**



**reduction, beneficial use, and environmentally**



**sound recycling.**

Management support can help overcome a number of cultural and organizational barriers that can hinder a pollution prevention program. The following are elements which historically have been used successfully to demonstrate management support to address such barriers:

**Support by management at all levels, made evident to the organization.**

- A clearly-stated policy of top management support for pollution prevention, including the expectation that all levels of management will seek appropriate pollution prevention opportunities in their operations.
- An elevated internal appreciation of environmental issues in general and pollution prevention in particular, by including these issues in the assessment of goals and the performance of operating organizations.
- An employee recognition program to promote and reward new and innovative ideas that lead to pollution prevention.

**Candor in dealing with internal and external perceptions and expectations regarding industry's environmental performance.**

- Recognition that actions of the government and the public are guided by a belief that industry should do much more to protect and improve the environment.
- Recognition that more environmental regulations and restrictions may be tempered by voluntary actions on the part of industry.

## **Management Support**

**Recognition that concerns may arise over changing from the familiar approach of compliance with command-and-control requirements to an approach which emphasizes pollution prevention; however, this change can also offer opportunities.**

- Acknowledgement that command-and-control requirements can provide certainty, but require specific performance which can also stifle creative and cost-effective solutions. Voluntary pollution prevention offers greater opportunity for flexibility, creativity and optimization of solutions.
- Recognition that a pollution prevention approach provides the greater opportunity to identify and exploit competitive advantages which may not be available under a command-and-control approach.

**Internal practices requiring that cost-effectiveness evaluations be performed for potential pollution prevention actions, including appropriate consideration of long-term benefits and otherwise historically hidden costs.**

- Guidelines to assist in identifying and quantifying to the extent possible the long-term benefits of potential pollution prevention actions, such as reduced liability, improved community relations, and improved employee attitudes, etc.
- Requirements to perform cost-effectiveness evaluations which recognize long-term benefits as well as short-term costs and benefits including a full accounting of potential "hidden costs" (costs billed to other cost centers, etc.) for all pollution prevention activities.