

POLLUTION PREVENTION (P2) PLANNING

Essential for Management of Green Biz

1. Introduction - Pollution prevention is defined as “use of processes, practices, materials, products, substances or energy that avoids or minimizes the creation of pollutants and waste and reduces the overall risk to the environment or human health”. Pollution prevention planning is a systematic, comprehensive method of identifying and implementing pollution prevention options to minimize or avoid the creation of pollutants or waste. The plan would also identify recycling, treatment and other measures needed to meet environmental goals.

Generally, every nation gives their Environment Ministry the authority to require the preparation and implementation of pollution prevention plans. To invoke these requirements, the Minister publishes notices requiring persons to prepare and implement plans for a substance or group of substances.

In fact, for an organization, Pollution Prevention (P2) Planning is a process by which it can improve their environmental protection by strategically planning to reduce or eliminate pollution before it is created. P2 is a proactive component of an environmental management approach as shown in the pollution prevention hierarchy. The hierarchy provides options and a prioritization mechanism to achieve solutions to environmental protection. hierlrge

* Pollution should be prevented or reduced at the source whenever feasible;

* Pollution that cannot be prevented should be recycled in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible;

* Pollution that cannot be prevented or recycled should be treated in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible; and

* Disposal or other release into the environment should be employed only as a last resort and should be conducted in an environmentally safe manner.

2. Steps for developing a facility Pollution Prevention plan -

Step 1: Develop pollution prevention goals – The first step in preparing a facility pollution prevention plan is to develop goals. These goals will identify specific reductions and accomplishments that you envision for the facility's pollution prevention program. Some recommended goals might include the following:

- * Reductions in the release and use of toxic and extremely hazardous chemicals at your facility,
- * Reductions in the release and use of other pollutants as identified by your agency's pollution prevention strategy
- * Reductions in the unnecessary purchase of toxic and hazardous chemicals
- * Affirmative procurement practices to ensure the purchase of recycled content materials
- * Increases in the volumes of materials captured for recycle
- * Reductions in the generation of solid wastes
- * Reduction in the consumption of materials, water, and power
- * Reductions in the use and release of toxic chemicals to environmental justice areas where socioeconomic factors are of concern

By setting goals, you will define the nature of the pollution prevention program and direct its initial efforts toward a quantifiable objective. As you develop the facility pollution prevention plan, you may identify new goals or modify original goals.

Step 2: Obtain Management Commitment – When management is committed to pollution prevention, the development (and implementation) of the program plan proceeds more smoothly. As with any new project, obtaining management support for pollution prevention involves providing managers with the information they need to make decisions. Managers should understand the reasons for developing a pollution prevention plan, and the elements of a pollution prevention program.

To obtain upper management commitment, you have to sell the concept. To do that, you have to convince managers that a pollution prevention facility plan will help the facility mission by:

- * Improving compliance with all applicable environmental requirements, regulations, and Executive Orders

- * Reducing operation costs with respect to waste management and the purchase of raw materials

- * Reducing the facility's chances of creating environmental contamination that may result in environmental liabilities and large-scale cleanup requirements

- * Improving the productivity of staff by providing a cleaner, healthier working environment through reduced use of toxic materials

- * Increasing efficiency through innovative pollution prevention techniques identified and implemented under the pollution prevention program.