

Pollution Prevention for Industry and the Environment



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

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Pollution Prevention
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What is pollution prevention?

With increasing public concern over environmental quality and worker safety, as well as the liability associated with industrial spills and accidents, many companies are finding that the best way to manage pollution and waste is through a pollution prevention program. Pollution prevention can be any activity that avoids, eliminates or reduces the creation of pollutants or other negative environmental impacts. Pollution prevention can include:

- protection of natural resources
- increased efficiency in the use of raw materials, energy, water, or other resources
- source reduction and other practices that reduce or eliminate the creation or use of hazardous substances, pollutants, or
- contaminants prior to any recycling, treatment, or disposal.

Since 1989 many Oregon businesses have reduced their use of toxic chemicals and their generation of hazardous waste through Toxics Use and Hazardous Waste Reductions Plans. Many have found this to be an effective strategy to help them comply with environmental regulations while improving working conditions, eliminating burdensome paperwork and fees, and increasing profits.

Why choose prevention?

A successful prevention program can result in the following benefits:

Reduced operating costs

- Cost savings in energy, raw material, and other resource use
- Reduced treatment and disposal costs
- Reduced pollution control equipment needs

Reduced compliance costs

- Less regulatory paperwork
- Lower hazardous waste generator status
- Avoided air and water permits
- Lower monitoring requirements and costs
- Fewer training and planning requirements

Increased productivity

- Improved process efficiency and control
- Improved equipment maintenance
- Elimination of avoidable process losses

Reduced liability

- Reduced worker/public exposure risks
- Reduced risk of releases, spills, cleanup
- Reduced “cradle-to-grave” liability
- Reduced risk of criminal liability and fines

Improved company image

- Recognition as a “green” company
- Reduced public and employee concern

What can you do?

Here are some general pollution prevention suggestions. For more detailed information, contact the DEQ.

Production processes:

Conducting a systematic assessment of procedures and operations can help identify options for incorporating pollution prevention at your facility.

- Evaluate options for eliminating toxic chemical use, or using the least hazardous materials in manufacturing processes.
- Explore production changes that recycle wastes back into the process.
- Consider replacing older equipment with more efficient equipment.

Inventory and equipment:

Good purchasing practices and inventory control can reduce waste and prevent pollution.

- Buy only needed quantities of raw materials and materials with minimum packaging to reduce waste.
- Store chemicals sensibly to prevent and control spills.

Housekeeping:

Simple housekeeping procedures can prevent pollution throughout your facility.

- Avoid mixing hazardous and non-hazardous waste to lower disposal costs.
- Incorporate a preventive maintenance program into daily processes.

Where can you get help?

Additional opportunities for pollution prevention may exist which are more specific to your business or industry.

For information or resources:

Please call the DEQ office in your region.

Regional Office Telephone Numbers

- Bend (541)388-6146
- Coos Bay (541)269-2721
- The Dalles (541)298-7255

- Eugene (503)686-7838
- Medford (541)776-6010
- Northwest Region (Portland) (503)229-5263
Pendleton (541)276-4063
- Roseburg (541)440-3338
- Salem (503)378-8240

A copy of the "Industry and the Environment" Flyer is available in alternative format (e.g., large type, braille) upon request by contacting DEQ at (503) 229-5317. TTY is (503) 229-6993