Governor's Environmental Leadership Awards: 2006 and 2007

"I applaud these award winning companies for setting such a high standard for protecting our state's environment. The fact that they have succeeded while pursuing environmental excellence proves that we can create jobs while protecting our environment. A cleaner environment is a top priority of my administration and these facilities are meeting the challenge. Industries such as these lead by example and are the forefront of the new way of doing business in Louisiana."

Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco

This program recognizes activities and projects undertaken by Louisiana companies, municipalities, and government facilities that demonstrate environmental leadership.

Awards are given for contributions in:

Pollution Prevention (P2)
Community Environmental Outreach (CEO)
Environmental Management Systems (EMS)

In addition, special recognition awards have been given for significant contributions to various other environmental and conservation initiatives.

Traditionally, the governor presents achievement certificates at a ceremony in the spring. The Governor's Award is one way the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) seeks to accomplish its central goals to recognize and promote pollution prevention and other efforts that exceed regulatory requirements in the pursuit of a cleaner, safer environment.

Any member of the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program fulfilling all membership requirements, including updating annual pollution prevention progress reports, is eligible to enter. Eligible facilities are encouraged to submit multiple entries and may win multiple awards based on the merit of each entry.

The Deadline for 2006 and 2007 is January 15th, 2008.

For information on ELP membership requirements please contact:
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Waste Management Hierarchy

The ELP subscribes to the Waste Management Hierarchy that follows:

- Wastes should be prevented or reduced at the source whenever feasible.

- Wastes that cannot be prevented should be recycled in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible, or be reused in a beneficial way.

- Wastes that cannot be prevented, recycled or beneficially reused should be treated in the most environmentally safe manner existing.

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

Source Reduction:
"Source Reduction" means any practice which:

- Reduces the amount of any hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant entering any waste stream or otherwise released into the environment (including fugitive emissions) prior to recycling, reuse, treatment or disposal

- Reduces the hazards to public health and the environment associated with the release of such substances, pollutants or contaminants

The term "Source Reduction" includes equipment or technology modifications, process or procedure modifications, reformulation or redesign of products, substation of raw materials, and improvements in housekeeping, maintenance, training or inventory control.

Recycling:
Recycling, some energy recovery, treatment, and disposal are not included within the strict definition of pollution prevention. However, recycling that is conducted in an environmentally sound manner may share some of the advantages of pollution prevention. This is due to conservation of resources and reducing the need for treatment or disposal of wastes.

Project entries that involve recycling, reuse, treatment or disposal should clearly indicate how the waste management hierarchy was utilized in developing the project.

Design and practices commonly described in the chemical process industry as "end process recycling" usually qualify as pollution prevention.

The Awards Categories

There are three award categories; Pollution Prevention, Environmental Management System, and Community Environmental Outreach. In the Pollution Prevention category, facilities may submit project entries or program entries. A project is an undertaking at one location to reduce a specific waste. Programs are broader efforts, usually a combination of several projects that are coordinated and focused on achievement of a particular goal. Project and program entries are judged separately.

Project Eligibility

Certain projects are **not** eligible.

- Projects that have been submitted for a previous Governor's Award
- Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP's) designated under federal regulations.
- Beneficial Environmental Projects (BEP's) designated under federal regulations.
- Projects mandated by enforcement action, usually a court order
  e.g., settlement agreement, consent decree, some compliance orders, etc…

A project may be closely related to a previous entry and still be eligible provided that the current entry demonstrates fully that the project's scope and performance claims are clearly above and beyond the initial entry.

Pollution Prevention Category

Pollution prevention achievement awards recognize projects that have led to measurable reductions in air pollution, water pollution, solid and hazardous waste, or have contributed to significant energy and resource conservation.

Projects that achieve reduction of pollution at any level in the **waste management hierarchy** may be eligible for an award, but the entry must demonstrate the relevance of the hierarchy to the project.

Examples of Pollution Prevention Projects:

- Process improvements that result in reduced emissions, discharges or generation of wastes
- Achievement of zero discharge for selected waste or emission streams
- Projects that reduce the environmental risks of a facility
- Innovative approaches through product redesign to reduce the lifecycle impact of manufacturing and use of a product
- Projects to reduce reliance on incinerators and deep wells as disposal options
- Beneficial reuse of waste materials
- Emergency releases reduction
- Working with suppliers, customers, and smaller companies to promote pollution prevention

In preparing your entry take care to address each requirement listed on the entry form.

Community Environmental Outreach Category

The Community Environmental Outreach Award recognizes innovative projects that contribute to enhancing the quality of the environment for the local community.

Examples of Projects in this Category:

- A community project that enhances environmental quality
- An activity to improve the interaction and involvement of the facility with the community in dealing with environmental concerns
- An innovative environmental education project
- A mentoring project with suppliers or smaller companies to prevent pollution or reduce risk
- Facility specific environmental reports and/or communication tools
- Voluntary participation in a project to evaluate ambient air and water quality in the community
- An inter-company or multi-company environmental project
- A wildlife enhancement or natural heritage preservation project

An entry must be for a single environmental related project however, an overall environment outreach program may be submitted if designated as such on the entry form.

In detailing the scope of the project consider covering; number of employees involved, company hours spent, volunteered free time, and the time period involved (short and long term). Also answer; is the activity sustainable and what were the costs involved? Suggest how your success with this project is transferable to other facilities? In measuring success; identify target audience, state the objectives, indicate the number of people reached, and/or other project achievements.

Pollution Prevention Award Entry Form

Title of Project/Program _____
Applicant _____
Address _____
Name of Business _____
Senior Management Official/Plant Manager_____
Contact Name, Title _____
Phone (___) _____ Fax (___) _____
E-mail Address _____

Please check appropriate boxes:

☐ Pollution Prevention Project ☐ Pollution Prevention Program

Please limit your entry to no more than five (5) pages and follow this six item format.

1. Describe the project clearly and concisely. Consider a simplified drawing to save words. Each entry must be for a single project or specifically designated as a program.

2. Describe the environmental improvement resulting from the project. The use of standardized measures of emissions such as TRI data and hazardous waste generation biennial report information is encouraged.

3. Note the degree to which the results of the project contributed to exceeding regulatory compliance requirements. Were they accomplished earlier than required? How does the project exemplify environmental leadership? Discuss cost considerations if significant (capital investment and/or cost savings).

4. Describe any reductions in environmental risk resulting from the project.

5. Describe how the waste management hierarch (source reduction, recycling, and disposal) was utilized in planning and implementing the project. If this project is “end of the pipe” treatment, emphasize how the hierarchy applies.

6. Highlight the innovative aspects of the project that represent a departure from “business as usual.” How does the project exceed the average pollution prevention project for your industry?

Community Environmental Outreach Award
Entry Form

Title of Project/Program _____
Applicant _____
Address _____
Name of Business _____
Senior Management Official/Plant Manager_____
Contact Name, Title _____
Phone (___) _____ Fax (___) _____
E-mail Address _____

Please limit your entry to no more than five (5) pages and follow this three item format.

1. Describe the project or program in sufficient detail. How is it innovative? How does it rise above the typical outreach activity? Does it exceed regulatory requirements (e.g., RMP)? Each entry must be for a single project or specifically designated as a program.

2. Describe how the project or program contributed to community environmental quality improvement. What indicators were used to measure the effectiveness of the project?

3. Provide a statement from at least two community individuals outside the company attesting to the success of the project.

Environmental Management System (EMS) Category

This award category recognizes exceptional improvements in facility environmental performance resulting from innovative implementation or enhancement to a model environmental management system (ISO 14001, U. S. EPA National Environmental Performance Track or third-party certified). The award recognizes both the management system improvement and the results achieved. The EMS improvement and results achieved must have occurred between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006 to be considered for the 2006 Governor's Award. To be considered for the 2007 Governor's Award the achievement must have occurred between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007. Both 2006 and 2007 awards will be presented at the 2007/2008 ELP Governor's Awards ceremony.

The environmental management system must include the following five elements:

- Environmental policy
- Environmental planning (identifying significant environmental impacts, legal requirements, and setting quantifiable objectives)
- Environmental management implementation programs and procedures, including environmental training
- Environmental audits and corrective action
- Management review of the EMS

Successful entries will demonstrate the value of EMS by the improvement achieved in the facility's environmental performance. Award entries must document 1.) the implementation of, or change in the facility's EMS and 2.) the achieved performance improvement attributable to it, supported by comparative data. This involves the use of quantifiable objectives for achieving tangible environmental benefits. Less tangible benefits are not discounted, but must be convincingly described.

Improved performance can be measured through:

- Improved level of regulatory compliance
- Reduction in energy, water, and materials use
- Reduction in waste generation
- Reduction of pollutant discharges to water
- Reduction of emissions to air
- Reduction of accidental releases to the environment
- Reduction of annual total reportable releases (TRI)
- Reduction of inherent process risk
- Reduction of risk posed by ancillary operations
- Application of green chemistry and engineering in process and product development
- Reduction of costs of environmental compliance and operations (eco-efficiency)
- Improved community acceptance of the facility's environmental performance

Examples of eligible EMS changes include:

- Significant improvements to an existing EMS
- Innovative and successful approaches to meeting one or more EMS elements
- Innovative methods of implementing a new EMS or changes to an existing EMS
- Effective means for assuring integration of environmental aspects and impact determination with facility objectives

Facility Eligibility

To enter, the facility must be a member of ELP including submission of the annual pollution prevention progress report. The facility must have an EMS certified to the ISO 14001 standard, be a member in good standing of the National Environmental Performance Track program or have third-party certified EMS. The third party certification can be from the corporate office if the audit was made by people not associated with the facility's staff.

Facility Manager's Statement

The Environmental Management System category requires a statement signed by the senior facility manager attesting to the implementation and maintenance of a model environmental management system that complies with the requirements of the ELP. The facility manager's assessment of the facility's current regulatory compliance statuses also required. A form for this is provided in the Governor's Award application.

Environmental Management System Award
Entry Form

Title of Project/Program _____

Applicant _____

Contact Name/Title _____

Address _____

Phone (___) _____ **Fax (___)** _____ **Email** _____

Senior Management Official/Plant Manager _____

Please check appropriate boxes and provide documentation of certification:

☐ Facility EMS is registered to ISO 14001 Standard

☐ Facility is a member of National Environmental performance Track

☐ Facility has had a third-party certification audit

Provide written confirmation from top management that the environmental management system has the six elements delineated in the EMS category description. Please limit your entry to no more than seven (7) pages in response to the following six items:

1. Concisely describe the scope of the EMS (which facility or facilities, units, etc...).

2. Describe the EMS improvement(s) clearly. Consider graphics and tables to save words. Entries should be for innovation in implementation of, or significant improvements to an EMS since January 1, 2006.

3. Demonstrate the environmental performance improvement(s) resulting from the project or change to the EMS. The improvement should be measurable and include summarized data substantiating the improvement. What environmental benefits followed, such as improve eco-efficiency? Were there any benefits to the public?

4. Note the degree to which the improvement(s) contributed to exceeding regulatory compliance requirements (if applicants).
   a. Were they accomplished earlier than required?
   b. Why is the change significant?

5. Describe any reductions in environmental risk resulting from the change to the EMS (if applicable).

6. Are the EMS improvements transferable to other facilities? If so, have they been shared with others?

Environmental Management System Statement

On behalf of (name of nominee) _____

[My Facility] _____

I certify that:

- I have personally examined and am familiar with the information contained in this award entry. The information contained in this entry is, to the best of my knowledge and based on reasonable inquiry; true, accurate, and complete. I have no reason to believe the facility would not meet all program requirements.

- My facility has an environmental management system (EMS), as defined in the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program's Pollution Prevention Award guidance, including systems to maintain compliance with all applicable federal, state, tribal, and local environmental requirements in place at the facility.

I am the senior facility manager and fully authorized to execute this statement on behalf of the corporation or other legal entity whose facility is applying to this program.

Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Name [Mr.] [Mrs.] [Ms.] [Dr.] _____

Title _____

Phone (___) _____

Email Address _____

Facility Name _____

Facility Street _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

The Selection Process

The selection panel for the EMS Category will be composed of experts in EMS assessment, specifically ISO 14001 or Performance Track as well as those experienced in implanting and maintaining environment systems at the facility level.

The panel reviews the documentation of the facility manager statement, a copy of the current ISO 14001 certification and/or documentation of the facility's membership in EPA's National Environmental Performance Track (NEPT) program, and/or third-party certification.

The selection panel assesses the merit of each entry following the numbered instructions items of the EMS category entry form. Panelists receive copies of entries for their individual review and assessment well in advance of the panel session.

Enforcement screen guidelines apply to the EMS Category in the same way as for other categories in Pollution Prevention and Community Outreach. Be aware that serious violations disqualify the applicant. As with the other award categories, the LDEQ Secretary makes the final selection of award recipients based on selection panel recommendations and consideration of facility compliance records.

The selection panel, at their discretion, may request a ½ day on-site visit to verify the EMS. The on-site visit may include the following:

1. A review of documentation, including examining the facility's environmental records

2. A short interview of senior level management, operating supervisors, and/or operations personnel. A list of questions will be provided to the facility in advance.

It is noteworthy to mention that on-site assessments, at this time, must be conducted at the office level. In the future, it may be possible to promulgate a Memorandum Of Understanding that would allow the panel the opportunity to conduct an assessment inside the battery limits.

Additional Guidance

Successful entries will include all required components presented in an orderly fashion, the focus indicated by the italicized statements, and in compliance with numbered instructions of the entry form. Experience has shown that some superior entries have failed due to an incomplete or inept description.

Since this is a competition, we cannot share results about individual entries until after selection of the finalists by the LDEQ Secretary.

Judging Protocol

Judges are instructed to maintain confidentiality regarding all applications. Judges will not participate if they have a conflict of interest (major customer / competitor, previous employer, prior consulting).

Scoring of Applications

The following is an example of some of the criteria that will apply during judging of the different categories:

1. Scope

2. EMS improvements (if applicable)

3. Performance or eco-efficiency improvements

4. Exceeds regulatory requirements (if applicable)

5. Reduced risks (if applicable)

6. Innovative project/shared with other organizations

Note: If items 2, 4 and/or 5 are not applicable, a judge can provide general thoughts about the application and/or on-site visit. Comments help to explain why a judge scored the application a certain way.

Compliance Screen Protocol

See separate document entitled “Compliance Screening Guide” which describes this process.

Compliance Screening Guide for the ELP Governor's Awards

I. Purpose

The purpose of conducting a compliance screen is to ensure that a facility is in "substantial compliance" with all state, federal, and tribal regulations and to verify the suitability of awarding a facility the Environmental Leadership Program Governor's Award. LDEQ may consult with the EPA in evaluating the compliance record of an applicant for Pollution Prevention, Environmental Management System, and Community Environmental Outreach awards. The guide may also be used to screen non-member facilities recommended for special recognition by the LDEQ Secretary.

II. Compliance Screen Process

The general process for conducting a compliance screen for "substantial compliance" is as follows:

1. The ELP Director will notify potential applicants verbally whether they are in "substantial compliance."

2. After the award applications are received in January, the ELP Director initiates the final compliance screen within LDEQ (Step 3) and submits a screening request for each applicant to EPA Region 6, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance.

3. The ELP Director requests a compliance screen from LDEQ's Surveillance and Enforcement Divisions in the Office of Environmental Compliance and the Criminal Investigation Group.

Note: When contacting the LDEQ staff, ask them to apply the criteria listed in Section III and note the examples provided in Section IV as they perform compliance screen.

4. Decisions are handled as described in Section V. Turn-around time for this process may range from a few days up to one month, depending on the complexity. Screening must be completed no later than thirty days following the submission of the applications. Requests for pre-screening should take only a few days up to two weeks, but must be completed in 10 working days.

III. Compliance Screen Criteria

The screen should check for information under all state environmental laws by state and those administered by the EPA. A substantially compliant facility has no environmentally-related criminal or civil activities described below.

Criminal Activity (environmentally-related)

- A corporate criminal conviction or plea for violations involving the facility within the past five years.

- A criminal conviction or plea of an employee at the same facility within the past five years.

- An ongoing criminal investigation/prosecution of the corporation, corporate officers or corporate employees at the same facility for violations.

State or federal criminal actions against a participant are equally serious and will be treated no differently.

Civil Activity (environmentally-related)

- Three or more substantial (see definition below) civil non-compliances at the facility in the past three years

- Unresolved and/or unaddressed substantial non-compliances at the facility

- Judicial or administrative actions by LDEQ against the facility

- Ongoing state or EPA initiated litigation with the facility

- A facility that is not in compliance with the schedule and terms of an order or decree

Definitions:

Substantial Civil Non-Compliances:
Violations in which a measurable harm or substantial risk of harm to the environment or public health occurs.

The non-compliance results in, or would reasonably be expected to result in, the temporary or permanent loss of a use of the environmental resource.

A violation of major impact and hazard may be one characterized by high volume and/or frequent occurrence and/or high pollutant concentration. Such violations may have a detrimental impact on sensitive environments or include the discharge of toxic pollutants.
(Source: Penalty Matrix, Item 1.a. Major)

IV. Examples

LDEQ understands that voluntary programs operate at the facility level and compliance evaluation should be site specific. Listed below are examples of what is and is not acceptable with compliance.

Example 1: Facility or employees are under an ongoing criminal enforcement action. The candidate's award application should be declined.

Example 2: A large facility has a history of promptly addressing all non-compliances. Records show substantial non-compliances, which the facility quickly resolves. Unless the LDEQ and the Governor's Office would incur significant negative public media attention, the applicant should be accepted.

Example 3: The facility has some unresolved violations, but is actively working toward compliance. Acceptance is at the discretion of the LDEQ Secretary.

Example 4: The LDEQ Secretary believes that although there are no substantial non-compliances, historically, the facility is environmentally a non-performer. Acceptance is at the discretion of the LDEQ Secretary.

Example 5: A facility incurs a significant violation between the time the screening occurs and the awards ceremony, and the finalist has not yet been notified; acceptance is again at the discretion of the LDEQ Secretary.

V. Final Decision

The ELP Director presents recommendations from LDEQ and EPA Region 6 (if available) to the LDEQ Secretary.

The LDEQ Secretary makes the final decision. The secretary may consider circumstances that are indirectly related to compliance; e.g., a facility involved in current issue receiving significant negative public media attention that could likely reflect poorly on the awards program, LDEQ, and the governor.