



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Dear Interested Party:

In an effort to promote compliance with environmental requirements, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff has created environmental audit checklists which cover a number of areas, such as water, air, solid waste, hazardous waste, and tanks. A checklist(s) and other related information are enclosed to help businesses audit their activities with respect to applicable environmental requirements.

The central benefit of conducting an environmental audit is protection of the environment and public health. Another benefit is the ability of a company to discover minor problems and correct them before they become major liabilities, due to enforcement or clean up.

If you conduct an audit of all or part of your facility, you may choose to participate in the Environmental Improvement Program, more commonly known as the Environmental Audit Program. The Environmental Audit Program provides incentives for regulated entities to conduct environmental audits with some relief from the MPCA's reaction to the potential violations discovered. Please be aware that, to participate in the Environmental Audit Program, your facility must not have paid any penalties within the last two years as a result of an environmental enforcement action with the MPCA, Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, or any of the seven metropolitan county environmental departments.

You qualify for consideration of amnesty under the law when you report any violations discovered, commit to corrective action of those violations, and describe steps to prevent future recurrence of the violations. However, the amnesty provisions may not apply to businesses or organizations that have committed the same violation(s) within the past year, or are involved with criminal activities or other activities that cause serious harm to the environment or endanger public health.

The enclosed information provides a guide that will help you conduct an environmental compliance audit. You should not feel limited by the issues included on the checklist(s), since some facilities may have considerations that go beyond the enclosed checklist(s). Please be aware that the law's amnesty benefits only apply to those operations, practices, and requirements that you evaluate in your audit.

To participate in the Environmental Audit Program, you do not need to submit the completed checklist(s) to the MPCA, but you must submit a report that should contain the following information:

1. A disclosure of all violations of environmental requirements that were identified and a brief description of the proposed actions to correct the violations;
2. A commitment signed by the owner or operator of the facility to correct the violations as expeditiously as possible under the circumstances;
3. If more than 90 days will be required to correct the violations, a performance schedule that identifies the time needed to correct the violations and a brief statement of the reasons that support the time periods set out in the performance schedule; and

4. A description of the steps the owner or operator has taken or will take to prevent recurrence of the violations.

Please complete and return the enclosed Report Inventory within 45 days of completion of the audit. A completed Report Inventory will fulfill the report requirements specified above. In addition, if your facility is “non-major”, you will have certified that you have examined pollution prevention opportunities. If your facility is a “major”, the summary of a pollution prevention plan that includes a statement of objectives based on an assessment of technically and economically practicable options available to eliminate or reduce the generation or release of regulated materials at the facility, and a schedule for achieving those objectives, must be submitted with the report. A major facility as defined by the Minnesota Environmental Improvement Act is one of the following: the largest type of industrial or municipal wastewater discharge facility; a feedlot with 1,000 or more animal units; a large-quantity hazardous waste generator; a hazardous waste treatment, storage or disposal facility; a large stationary air emission source; an air emission source that emits 50 or more tons per year of a specific air pollutant; or an air emission that emits 75 tons or more per year of all air pollutants that are regulated by the MPCA.

Please return the completed Report Inventory to:

E. Edwin Balcos
Environmental Audit Program Coordinator
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-4191

If you need assistance in completing a checklist, please note the MPCA staff contacts listed on the checklist(s) or checklist cover sheet(s).

If you wish to receive additional checklists or general information regarding the Environmental Audit Program, please call me at (651) 297-8661 or 1 (800) 657-3864.

Thank you for your interest in the Environmental Audit Program.

Sincerely,

E. Edwin Balcos
Environmental Audit Program Coordinator
Regular Facilities Section
Metro District

Enclosures