

ENVIROVISTA: ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT'S PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE AND PROMOTE CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL

ENVIROVISTA LEADERS GUIDE

Updated August 2006

Introduction

Alberta Environment (AENV) developed this voluntary, facility-based program to recognize as environmental leaders those facilities that meet the restrictive participation criteria. The program is meant to encourage others to take the actions required to become 'EnviroVista Leaders'. Facilities operating at the EnviroVista Leader level contribute to improved environmental outcomes through a five-year history of sound compliance, sound emissions performance and a comprehensive environmental management system.

Alberta has a successful history of, and continues to assure a high level of, environmental protection through the use of command and control regulatory instruments - particularly approvals issued under the [Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act \(EPEA\)](#).

Alberta Environment has also come to appreciate the significant environmental benefits arising from voluntary stewardship practices of many regulated (approved) facilities.

Facilities (private and public) holding a current Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act approval, and that demonstrate the prerequisite environmental leadership qualities, are eligible to apply for recognition as EnviroVista Leaders.

EnviroVista Leader Participation Criteria

To be eligible for acceptance into the Program, facilities must have:

1. *An Environmental Management System (EMS) in place¹. Robust EMSs provide the right conditions for excellent performance and continuous improvement. A properly designed and implemented EMS helps organizations achieve and maintain compliance and improve their environmental performance in both regulated and non-regulated areas.*
 - a. *Applicants should use the ten elements identified below to confirm their EMS is robust. Please see Elements of a 'Robust' EMS below.*
 - b. *The EMS must be third party audited, or internally audited with the audit results made available to the public upon request.*

¹ Common EMSs include: ISO 14001- (International Standards Organization), Responsible Care (Canadian Chemical Producers Association), Forest Care (Alberta Forest Products Association), Basic Environmental Program For the Upstream Petroleum Industry (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers), CSA Z750-94: A Voluntary Environmental Management System (Canadian Standards Association), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), In - house EMS, and other(s). All will be assessed against this criteria.

2. *Sound emissions performance illustrated through greater than 99.5% compliance with each approval limit for hourly and daily source air emissions and daily industrial wastewater emissions averaged over a five-year period.*
3. *A sound record of environmental compliance at the facility including:*
 - a. *Five years² with no EPEA or Water Act prosecutions, Enforcement Orders, Environmental Protection Orders, Administrative Penalties or Warning Letters; and*
 - b. *No outstanding notices of investigations from Alberta Environment under the EPEA or the Water Act.*

NOTE: ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RESTRICT PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM TO ANY FACILITY AND TO SUSPEND OR END THIS PROGRAM AT ITS DISCRETION.

Benefits of Participation

Qualifying participants will receive a certificate recognizing their achievements and will have the right to use a unique program logo on facility documents, business cards, and signage. Alberta Environment will list EnviroVista Leaders, along with their logos, on a special Web Page, and if requested, provide a link to the facility or corporate web page.

Timing

Alberta Environment will accept new applications to the EnviroVista Leader level at any time. Facilities must complete and submit their Applications and Renewals prior to the end of the first full week in May to be included in our Environment Week recognition of EnviroVista Program Leaders. (*Please use the [EnviroVista Leaders Application Form](#).*) Facilities qualifying after this period will have an opportunity for recognition during Waste Reduction Week in October.

Future Program Development

The EnviroVista program offers two levels of participation. The EnviroVista Leaders level described above is available to qualifying facilities and emphasizes recognition for demonstrated leadership.

A second level of participation for [EnviroVista Champions](#) is now open. Champions will be recognized for the same elements as the Leader level but through a *Stewardship Agreement*. Champions will commit to a higher level of environmental performance. EnviroVista Champion participants will have access to a broader suite of incentives (over and above recognition) in particular, a streamlined EPEA Approval. A multi-stakeholder advisory committee will guide further detailed program development of this advanced stewardship level.

² The five-year period is measured back from March 31st in the year of application. For example, a facility applying in May 2006 must not have had a compliance incident after April 1, 2001. If a facility does not meet this criteria it would not qualify.

ELEMENTS OF A ‘ROBUST’ EMS

To be eligible to qualify under the EnviroVista Leaders Criteria 1 a., the Environmental Management System at a facility must meet the following “Ten Elements for Improving Environmental Performance and Compliance”. This list is intended to provide a simple way of checking whether your EMS includes elements to help meet public policy needs of regulatory compliance and environmental performance that moves beyond compliance³. All 10 elements are required in an EMS to achieve maximum environmental benefit and qualify under the EnviroVista EMS Criteria.

1. Environmental Policy

The EMS should be based upon a documented and clearly communicated policy. This policy should set out the organization’s commitment towards a cleaner environment. It should include:

- *provision for compliance with environmental requirements;*
- *commitment to continuous improvement in environmental performance, including in areas not subject to regulation;*
- *commitment to pollution prevention that emphasizes source reduction;*
- *commitment to continuous reduction of environmental risks;*
- *commitment to sharing information with external stakeholders on environmental performance against all EMS objectives and targets.*

2. Environmental Requirements and Voluntary Undertakings

The EMS should provide a means to identify, explain and communicate all environmental requirements and voluntary undertakings to all employees, on-site service providers and contractors, whose work could affect the organization’s ability to meet those requirements and undertakings. Environmental requirements include statutes, regulations, permits, and enforceable agreements. Voluntary undertakings include any environmental principles or industry norms that an organization may choose to adopt. Examples include voluntary codes of practice for safety, risk management and energy efficiency issues, where applicable, or sectoral and international environmental principles such as the CERES principles of the international Chamber of Commerce Charter for Sustainable Development, among others.

The EMS should include procedures for ensuring that the organization meets these environmental requirements and voluntary undertakings. The EMS should also specify

³ Commission for Environmental Cooperation, *Guidance Document, Improving Environmental Performance and Compliance, 10 Elements of Effective Environmental Management Systems*, Montreal, June 2000. Found at: http://www.cec.org/files/pdf/LAWPOLICY/guide-e_EN.pdf

procedures for anticipating changes to environmental requirements, including new requirements that may apply as a result of changes in operations, and incorporating these changes into the EMS.

3. Objectives and Targets

Users of this guidance document should ensure that the EMS establishes specific objectives and targets for:

- *achieving and maintaining compliance with environmental requirements;*
- *environmental performance demonstrating continuous improvement in regulated and non-regulated areas;*
- *pollution prevention that emphasizes source reduction;*
- *sharing information with external stakeholders on environmental performance against all EMS objectives and targets.*

The EMS should establish appropriate time frames to meet these objectives and targets. These should be documented and updated as environmental requirements change or as modifications occur in activities and structures within organizations in a manner that affects environmental performance. The Enforcement Working Group encourages organizations that are already performing or seeking to go “beyond compliance” to report on their progress towards continued environmental performance and leadership, including reporting on voluntary undertakings.

4. Structure Responsibility and Resources

The organization should ensure that it is equipped with sufficient personnel and other resources to meet the objectives and targets of its EMS. The EMS should spell out procedures and steps for achieving those objectives and targets. For example, it should define the compliance roles and responsibilities of environmental protection personnel, specify how they and management will be held accountable for achieving and maintaining compliance, and describe how environmental performance and compliance information will be communicated to relevant employees, on-site service providers, and contractors. The EMS should also establish procedures for receiving and addressing concerns raised by these personnel regarding environmental performance and compliance.

5. Operation Control

The EMS should identify and provide for the planning and management of all the organization’s operations and activities with a view to achieving the EMS objectives and targets. For example, facility maintenance may be an important aspect in achieving and maintaining compliance and enhancing environmental performance.

6. Corrective and Preventive Action and Emergency Procedures

The organization, through its EMS, should establish and maintain documented procedures for

preventing, detecting, investigating, promptly initiating corrective action, and reporting (both internally and externally, in accordance with the country's applicable laws) any occurrence that may affect the organization's ability to achieve the EMS objectives and targets. Such measures should pay particular attention to incidents that may have an effect on compliance with environmental requirements as well as an environmental performance in regulated and non-regulated areas. Example of such situations include equipment malfunctions, operator errors and accidental releases of hazardous substances. The EMS should also establish documented procedures for mitigating any adverse impacts on the environment that may be associated with accidents or emergency situations and for ensuring that similar incidents are avoided.

The EMS should include procedures for tracking any preventive and corrective actions that are taken. If the environmental violation or incident resulted from a weakness in the system, the EMS should be updated and refined to minimize the likelihood of such problems recurring in the future. The EMS should also, to the extent possible, provide for the testing of emergency procedures.

7. Training, Awareness and Competence

The EMS should establish procedures to ensure that all personnel (including employees, on-site service providers, and contractors) whose job responsibilities affect the ability to achieve the EMS objectives and targets, have been trained and are capable of carrying out these responsibilities. In particular, the training should highlight means to enhance the ability of personnel to ensure compliance with environmental requirements and voluntary undertaking affecting the organization.

8. Organization Decision-making and Planning

The EMS should describe how these 10 elements would be integrated into the organization's overall decision-making and planning, in particular, decisions on capital improvements, product and process design, training programs, and maintenance activities.

9. Document Control

The EMS should establish procedures to ensure maintenance of appropriate documentation relating to its objectives and targets and should also ensure that those records will be adequate for subsequent evaluation and improvement of the operation of the EMS. For example, it should document the organization's state of compliance with environmental requirements as well as environmental performance relating to non-regulated aspects. All records should be maintained in accordance with relevant laws for document retention and protection.

10. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement

The EMS should require periodic, documented and objective auditing of the organization's performance in achieving these objectives and targets and on how well the EMS assists the organization in achieving those objectives and targets. The goal of the review should be to allow management to bring about overall improvements. The scope and frequency of the review should depend upon the size and complexity of the organization and other factors that are determined relevant in each organization and country.

Privacy Statement

Section 33(c) of the Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act provides that personal information may be collected if that information relates directly to and is necessary for an operating program or activity. Alberta Environment is committed to effective environmental management and ensuring that a high quality environment is a shared responsibility through environmental management and stewardship. Achievement of this commitment requires access to and sharing of information on the state of environment and environmental standards, practices and outcomes. Through the EnviroVista Program, Alberta Environment intends to promote the voluntary efforts of industry. The information you provide may be subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.