

P² Quarterly

The Newsletter of Lee
County's Pollution
Prevention Program

Winter 2000

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A Quote to Live and Prosper By

Sometimes you hear quotes that inspire as well as make you think. When this happens together, the results can be extremely positive for yourself and your business. There is a quote that has inspired the leadership of P2/SQG Program. This has changed the thought process and caused the program staff to work harder to achieve goals that have been set. When goals are achieved and the success is deserved, the result is inspiration.

One of the goals set has been to meet the State mandate that requires the active participation of the County to provide data to the State DEP. While performing this mandated requirement, we extended the goal to also achieve compliance assistance to all businesses in Lee County and to help them provide a healthy economy without negatively impacting the natural resources of our environment. The P2/SQG Program has been the leader throughout the State of Florida in trying new things that no other County would try. The accomplishments were inspired by the words of Theodore Roosevelt who said "The credit belongs to the man who is in the arena, whose face is marred by the dust and the sweat and the blood... not the critic who points out where the strong man stumbles... but he who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best in the end knows the triumph of high achievement and at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring great things so that his place will never be with those cold and timid souls that know neither victory or defeat". The P2/SQG Program was the first in the State to assist a County Fleet Maintenance Facility to become a non-hazardous waste generating facility. Many counties within the State and Nation have adopted our ideas into their operations. The P2/SQG Program was the only program to lead in the design of a software program that enables us to consistently meet the 20% mandated field assessments within the State law. We designed, tested, debugged, copyrighted, and then donated the Generator Assessment Software Program (GASP) to the State DEP and other county's within 8 months of the conception start date. We have been asked to assist the EPA in writing a Government Sector Notebook for operations within local government. This was published in January of 1999 and has been utilized by hundreds of local governments throughout the United States. We have been featured in the National Associations of Counties (NACo) toolkit publication provided to their members across the Nation. We are active members in National and State organizations providing our proven experience to help others achieve regulatory compliance.

Although within a short period of time, we have accomplished so much with such little resources, our biggest satisfaction in the P2/SQG Program is the help we have provided to our local business community. From the savings in compliance requirements to the savings in the purchase of new products and the disposal of waste, we have assured some businesses a new and prosperous future. If you live by the old saying of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it", you may learn the hard way that if you "don't fix it, you'll go broke".



Come meet the Staff of the
Pollution Prevention Program at
the Southwest Florida Fair!!
February 25 to March 5, 2000 at
the Lee County Civic Center

Why do we have a Mercury Rule?

MERCURY: Aside from coal burning energy plants, fluorescent tubes and thermostats are the largest contributors to mercury in our environment. This manifests itself in the form of construction debris from demolitions, as well as businesses and households disposing of these items in their regular trash. Mercury from construction debris comes from both fluorescent tubes and thermostats with mercury switches. This happens when buildings are demolished without removing these items. Once this damage is done it is impossible to reclaim the mercury. If you have ever seen mercury spill you can attest to this. Another problem with mercury spills is that mercury gives off toxic vapors that can cause a multitude ailments. Liver and neurological damage are major side effects associated with over-exposure to mercury.

DAMAGE: Mercury manifests itself in the environment in many ways. The most damaging aspect of mercury contamination is the exponential affect it has on wildlife as it moves up the food chain. For instance as small fish consume mercury through smaller organisms, larger fish consume the smaller fish and the contamination in these larger fish continues to grow. Most of us have heard the warnings about eating too much fish because of mercury contamination. Mercury is persistent in wildlife and cannot be passed as many other toxins can be.

SIMPLE CURE: Recycling of mercury containing lamps and devices has become a major industry in recent years. For information on recycling these items contact Lee County Pollution Prevention Program at 479-8125.

P.S- Households can recycle these items at the household hazardous waste collection days for Free!!

Could your company be next?

Both large companies and small companies are subject to environmental fines. Not only are fines an issue, but violations also can be coupled with jail time. The following examples are a stark example of reality when companies are found to be non-compliant.

- The USEPA has levied up to \$500,000 in fines against Gregg's Diesel Service of Anacortes, Washington and \$100,000 in fines plus up to one year in jail against Wayne Gregg, the company's owner, for illegal discharges. The violations include releasing wastewater contaminated with oil and grease into storm drains and dumping tanks full of oily wastewater directly into a public treatment facility that was not designed to handle it.
- Buryl Head, owner of Texas Metal Finishing, Round Rock, Texas, has received a five-year prison sentence and has to pay \$25,490 in restitution for illegal dumping. Mr. Head has pled guilty to dumping toxic chemicals in a remote area and lying to an EPA agent who asked him about the location of metal plating equipment, supplies, chemicals, wastes and records.
- Safety-Kleen Corporation, Chicago, Illinois, has paid \$274,500 in penalties for improper handling and transporting of PCBs, failing to manifest and unlawfully disposing of PCB contaminated oil.
- Elliot Packer, owner of Royal Recovery Systems, Inc., Newark, Delaware, faces up to five years in jail and \$50,000 per day in fines for storing hundreds of barrels of hazardous waste products in a warehouse without a proper permit. The maximum fine is \$36.5 million.
- Heartland Metal Finishing, Salem, Missouri has been fined \$170,000 for discharging pollutants illegally to the City of Salem's Treatment Works. The firm has been forced to pay restitution to the city for the disposal of contaminated sludge caused by the discharge. It must also provide the court with a written report showing that its pretreatment system is in compliance, and develop and implement a comprehensive environmental compliance program.
- William Jones, owner of Morgan Artcraft Screen Print Co, Highland Park, Michigan, has paid \$30,000 in fines and has been sentenced to 16 months in jail for improperly disposing of several thousand containers of hazardous waste inks. They were stored in an abandoned warehouse in Detroit, Michigan.

The above enforcement actions were recently reported in *Environmental Compliance Alert*. The publication also reports that the USEPA has increased the number of inspections by 20% in the past year. Last year alone, companies paid \$5.5 million in fines for hazardous waste violations. The top three reasons that companies ran into problems all involved paperwork. These figures are from the USEPA alone and do not include local or State enforcement activity. The Lee County Pollution Prevention Program is an educational assistance program, not an enforcement entity. If you would like an assessment of your company's operations, please call us to set up an appointment. We are here to assist you so that your company may not be featured above in the future.

Attention Autobody Repair Facilities

Recently, a hazardous waste assessment was performed at a local auto body repair facility. The owner of the facility was candid, and stated that he was currently under investigation by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for numerous violations including improper disposal of hazardous waste. The violations were clearly spelled out in a written document which was provided to review. In the document specific dates were given for correcting the violations. Unfortunately, the date had past about a month earlier and nothing had been done.

The enforcement case brought by the FDEP focused on paint booth filters and paint dust that was being disposed of as a solid waste (i.e. in the dumpster). Once a waste determination had been done the results

showed that levels of chromium were well over the amounts for the toxicity characteristic under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). After reviewing the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for chromium in the paint it was discovered that not only did the paint contain chromium but also lead, cadmium, and barium. **Without doing a waste determination on these different paints it is impossible to determine proper disposal methods.** If the dust and the filters are

handled as a hazardous waste no additional testing is necessary (dust can be put into the same drum used for liquid paint waste and shipped accordingly; filters need to be stored and shipped in their own container unless your transporter gives you other in-



structions).

In the use of automotive paints, review your MSDS sheets for the above mentioned heavy metals and handle any waste in accordance with the results of TCLP testing. Disposal of any paint filters or dust in your dumpster without doing a waste determination can lead to serious fines for improper disposal of hazardous waste. This is a poor business practice that ends up costing all of us in the end.

Some quick tips for auto body repair

facilities. The most commonly cited violations are:

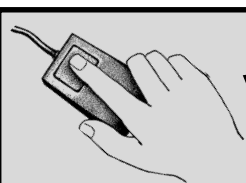
- (1) Open containers of thinner and paint waste.
- (2) Unmarked drums and containers of paint waste. (No accumulation start date for SQG's)
- (3) Improper disposal of hazardous waste in the dumpster via rags and containers not completely empty.
- (4) Small Quantity Generator's not in compliance with record keeping, emergency response spill and contingency plan, preparedness and prevention plan, exception reporting.
- (5) Containers in poor condition i.e. dents, rust, etc.
- (6) No aisle space between containers in storage.

These are just a few of the potential violations that can be found at autobody repair facilities. If you have questions about the above types of violations or any other aspect of your operation, please call us at (941)479-8126, to set up an assessment.

UPDATE

In the last newsletter, we told you about Timothy Eastman, who was tragically killed by injuries received from an electrical accident at work. A memorial trust fund has been set up in his name, in order to assist his wife and children.

You can donate to the fund at any Nations Bank. The fund is called the Timothy L. Eastman Memorial Trust Fund.



Visit our website at:

<http://www.lee-county.com/pollution>

Waste Tires in Garbage, Yes or No?

Businesses that generate waste tires should take these tires to the 'waste to energy' plant on Buckingham Road, or to a private processing facility that accepts waste tires. Two other disposal facilities in Lee County that accept and process waste tires are Modern Recycling, in Bonita Springs and the Gulf Coast Landfill, near Lehigh Acres. In addition, there are other waste tire processing businesses that may accept these tires if the tires can be re-capped and used again. Some companies, such as

Modern Recycling, Inc., also offer a collection service (for waste tires only) and will pick up waste tires on a scheduled basis.

Florida law prohibits the disposal of whole waste tires in landfills (shredded or cut tires are allowed). Tires can be shredded and re-used or they can be burned for energy recovery. The County requests that all waste tires from businesses be separated by the generator for proper disposal or recycling.

**The CESQG Collection Day
Schedule
Sponsored by the Department
of Solid Waste
(Disposal Fee Involved)**

**April 27, 2000
July 27, 2000**

Collection times for the scheduled days are 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Location of the CESQG collection days is on North Airport Road at Page Field. Schedule collection days and times are subject to change and/or cancel, depending on inclement weather. There is a fee involved for disposal. If you have any questions regarding the associated fees, please contact City Environmental Services of Florida, Inc. directly at 1-800-624-5302.



Have a story idea? Need a speaker for your trade association meeting? Call us at 479-8126!!

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