



# PREVENTION *quarterly*



Office of  
Pollution Prevention

## SPRING 1997

## Governor Signs Environmental Audit Bill

The Ohio General Assembly recently passed Senate Bill 138, a new law allowing companies that conduct voluntary environmental audits and disclose information from those audits to Ohio EPA to receive immunity from administrative and civil penalties. Governor George V. Voinovich signed the bill on December 13, 1996; it is effective on March 13, 1997.

The law was developed to encourage companies to look for environmental problems at their facilities and to remedy those problems when they find them. It particularly helps small- and medium-sized companies who have been afraid to audit their facilities for fear of finding a problem, having to disclose it to the Agency and being penalized for doing so.

### **What is a voluntary environmental audit?**

During an audit, a company evaluates its activities to learn more about their operations. This can be useful for maintaining compliance and improving environmental performance through pollution prevention.

### **Will this new law protect companies from all problems discovered during an audit?**

No. The new law does not grant immunity from criminal violations or if compliance is not achieved as quickly as practicable. This also does not remove other types of liability for the Agency's costs to respond to a violation or for harm to persons, property or natural resources.

### **Will this law reduce the enforcement capability of Ohio EPA?**

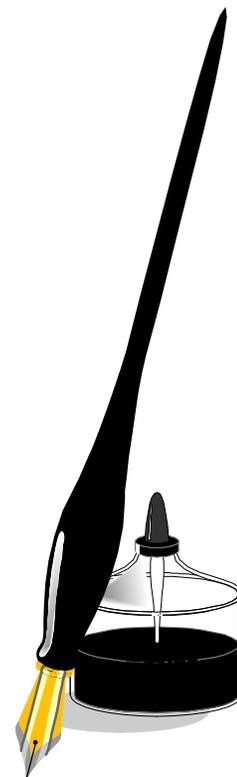
No. The passage of Senate Bill 138 will not change Ohio EPA's ability to enforce state or federally delegated environmental programs. Neither Ohio EPA nor U.S. EPA currently relies on audited information as a basis for enforcement. The State's current ability to obtain information, as necessary to enforce the law or address violations, remains unchanged.

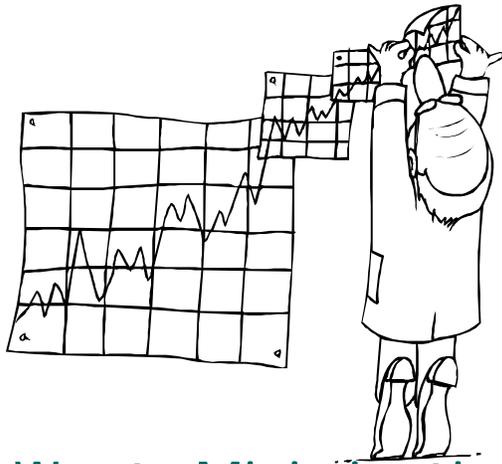
### **What documents are public record?**

The new law does not change the status of any currently public records; all information that is currently public will remain public. Information that is submit-

ted to the Agency because of this law would also become public. Therefore, if a company discloses to the Agency that it has performed an audit and discloses information concerning a violation in order to obtain immunity, that disclosure will be public. The law does not require a company to disclose the audit report itself.

For more information, contact **Judi French, Ohio EPA deputy director of legal affairs, at (614) 644-2782.**





## Ohio Waste Minimization Measurement Pilot Project

As public and private organizations focus attention and resources on pollution prevention, understanding the effectiveness of these efforts has become increasingly important. It is generally accepted that pollution prevention is making a positive environmental impact, but if environmental management strategies continue to shift toward pollution prevention, a reliable measurement system is needed.

From a government perspective, measuring pollution prevention helps evaluate the success and impact of current policies, as well as direct new policy and allocate scarce public resources. Likewise, many businesses work to measure pollution prevention to document program success to internal and external customers and document regulatory compliance. Others work to measure pollution prevention to increase public awareness and foster environmental accountability.

U.S. EPA continues to actively support research in pollution prevention measurement and recently sponsored a series of measurement pilot projects in Ohio, Washington, Oregon and Alaska. To complete this project, Ohio EPA worked closely with seven volunteer companies to collect and review relevant data and information, such as Toxic Release Inventory and other media-specific release information (hazardous waste, wastewater, and air pollution information). Further, Ohio EPA worked with volunteer facilities to construct a "facility profile." Each facility profile included facility-specific information on pollution prevention and other activities and was used, where appropriate, to help explain previously collected data and information.

Overall, this study provided Ohio EPA with important results on using currently collected data to measure pollution prevention progress. The results of this pilot project are important because they provide valuable guidance on what data and information should be collected to more accurately measure pollution prevention and how that data and information should be collected. This information is important to Ohio EPA, other states, U.S. EPA, and companies who are interested in measuring and documenting pollution prevention progress.

To receive additional information on pollution prevention measurement or a copy of a final report detailing the measurement results and recommendations of the Ohio Waste Minimization Measurement Pilot Project, contact **Craig Butler at (614) 728-1261**.

## Design Decisions Seminar

The environmental impact of design decisions and options to minimize this impact will be a few of the topics discussed at the Design Decisions Seminar in Columbus on May 14, 1997.

Architects, solid waste management professionals, designers, builders and building owners will review "green" material samples and their applications. They will discuss various approaches to integrate recycled content materials, energy conservation techniques, wise material use, and non-toxic indoor environments.

The instructor is Chris Stafford, AIA of Stafford Harris Architects, Port Townsend, Washington; he is also a founding member of the AIA Committee on the Environment. Prabhat Krishaswamy, Ph.D., principal research scientist at Battelle Memorial Institute, will detail the latest information on design/build specifications for recycled content materials.

The seminar is co-sponsored by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Recycling and Litter Prevention and the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio. The registration fee is \$85; this includes all materials and lunch. Please contact the seminar facilitator at **(614) 487-9522** for more information.

## Proving Technologies - Getting Beyond "That's Great, But It Won't Work Here"

Process improvements using new technologies often involve considerable technical risk for a company. At the Office of Pollution Prevention (OPP), we realize that your plant cannot be used only as a testing ground for new technologies. That is why we are coordinating a pilot project to PROVE technologies that will reduce waste and save you money. Sounds expensive, right? Well it usually is - but not for you. In fact, it's FREE.

We are working with the National Defense Center for Environmental Excellence (NDCEE) in Johnstown, Pa., to provide free technology testing for Ohio companies. The NDCEE is a comprehensive technology demonstration facility with state-of-the-art, full

production scale process lines in the following areas:

- Organic finishing (powder coating and electrocoating);
- Inorganic coating (vacuum coating and closed-loop electroplating);
- Cleaning & coatings removal; and
- Process water recycle, recovery, & reuse.

Many specific technologies are available for each area listed above. For example, membrane electrolysis, microfiltration, reverse osmosis, ion exchange, and diffusion dialysis are technologies available under the process water recycle, recovery, and reuse area.

After working with OPP to identify potential process improvements at your plant, you will have the ability to test new technologies with your parts under your process parameters. Your company will receive a full report with detailed analyses of the results to help you evaluate whether the technology will be feasible in your plant.

Because this is a pilot project, we can offer this service to only two companies in 1997. If the program is successful, we hope to expand this opportunity to many more companies. If you are interested in participating in the technology demonstration project, call **Tom Maves at (614) 644-2807, or Jeff Lewis at (614) 644-2812.**

## Molded Fiber Glass Company Realizes Benefits From P2

Molded Fiber Glass Company (MFG) manufactures fiberglass-reinforced plastic parts at its facility in Ashtabula. The facility uses both sheet molding and wet mix techniques, and paints its products. MFG has two paint lines, each composed of a prime booth and a top-coat booth. The painting process produces waste paints and waste solvents. Although MFG became interested in pollution prevention as a technique to lower air emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), the project also decreased hazardous waste generation.

MFG installed paint proportioning units to serve the prime booth and top-coat booth on their new paint line. The units draw paints, catalysts and reducers from pots, or drums, and mix them

as they are pumped through the system. The proportioning units measure and dispense the proper amount of paint, catalyst and reducer, thus reducing human error and improving the reject rate. The unit sounds an alarm if any of the paint pots are running low. This system also eliminates leftover paint mixtures.

Before installing the paint proportioning units, catalysts and reducers were mixed with paint in one pot, generating waste when more paint was mixed than was needed, or the mixture was incorrect.

The project reduced emissions and waste at the plant and helped MFG go beyond compliance by using pollution prevention techniques; this allows increased productivity while maintain-

ing compliance with permitted air emissions. The new proportioning unit saves the company raw material and waste disposal costs, increases productivity due to decreased line downtime, and even reduces the reject rate by eliminating human error. MFG saves more than \$50,000 annually in paint and solvent purchase and disposal costs alone.

The project reduced risk to the environment by diminishing air emissions and decreasing hazardous waste generation (primarily waste paint and solvent) without sacrificing product quality.

For more information, contact **Lin Krause of Ohio EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention at (614) 644-2811.**

## Cuyahoga Community College Establishes New Environmental Assistance Center

Today's environmental regulations affect nearly every business in every sector. But they're a particular challenge for small companies, which lack the information to understand the regulations and the internal expertise to implement them properly. So where do they turn?

In Greater Cleveland, they now can look to the Small Business Environmental Assistance Center (SBEAC) at Cuyahoga Community College for help. Supported with funds from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the SBEAC has a simple and direct mission: to help small companies operate as cleanly and as profitably as possible. All assistance is provided on a strictly confidential basis, and is available to any company with 499 employees or fewer that operates

within the Center's seven-county area: Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit.

"The SBEAC is a truly unique project in Northeast Ohio," notes Director Sharon L. Fain. "We're able to provide links and access to the information and expertise that small companies need, as well as some of the financial support to obtain that expertise. That means that we can work as partners to make sure that the problem gets corrected, and that the company stays in business."

Besides helping with specific technical or production problems, the SBEAC sponsors short-term training opportunities, conducts research on industry-wide issues, and maintains an open-access reference library (including

Internet resources). The Center also is working to establish several "technology demonstration sites" to further interest and awareness in using alternative production materials and processes. "Our first site will focus on the dry cleaning industry," said Fain, "where using new detergents and machines may make it possible to reduce or even eliminate the use of chemical solvents. Dry cleaning may soon become 'wet cleaning' - with plain water as the main ingredient."

All services of the Small Business Environmental Assistance Center are available at low cost or no cost to qualified companies. For additional information, contact the **SBEAC at (216) 987-3060 or via e-mail at [sbeac@tri-c.ccc.oh.us](mailto:sbeac@tri-c.ccc.oh.us)**.



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