



State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: September 18, 2007

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Ohio EPA Director Asks Companies to Reduce Emissions

Ohio EPA Director Chris Korleski today announced he is launching a new voluntary program to encourage Ohio facilities to reduce the pollutants they release to the environment. *Tox-Minus* will initially focus on 100 of the top toxic chemical reporters (based on the most current publicly available 2005 Toxic Release Inventory data), but the program is open to any company that wants to participate.

Ohio continues to rank among the top states nationally for toxic releases to the environment. "Even though these are legal and controlled releases that don't necessarily pose an identifiable public health risk, I think we can and should do better," Korleski said. "I am determined to reduce toxic emissions so that Ohio is no longer at the top of the national rankings and I invite these companies to help me achieve that goal."

Korleski is launching *Tox-Minus* during National Pollution Prevention Week. He recently contacted 100 facilities and encouraged them to participate. When unveiling the new program at today's annual all-agency staff meeting, he outlined a few key aspects of *Tox-Minus*:

- It is a significant step toward a long-term goal of reducing toxic releases, which will help enhance the state's image as an environmentally proactive yet economically competitive state.
- It demonstrates how companies and Ohio EPA can work cooperatively to improve Ohio's environment.
- Participation is voluntary. There are no penalties or enforcement associated with the program.
- Ohio EPA's Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) will coordinate the *Tox-Minus* initiative. The office is highly regarded for their pollution reduction work with a variety of statewide initiatives as well as technical assistance they provide to companies and industries.

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Companies should notify Ohio EPA by October 15, 2007, of their commitment to participate in *Tox-Minus*. Ohio EPA is not setting mandatory reduction goals for companies. Each company will be asked to identify its own reduction goals for TRI chemical emissions including waste, air and/or water emissions. Companies are asked to achieve their reduction goals within a five year time frame. Participants will provide a brief annual report on their accomplishments.

An important aspect of *Tox-Minus* is recognizing participants for outstanding environmental projects and their contributions to reducing emissions. Ohio EPA will publicize participant names and summarize success stories and accomplishments through an annual *Tox-Minus* progress report, media announcements and a Web site.

The Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention can conduct site visits to help companies identify pollution prevention strategies; assist companies with their reduction goals; and provide guidance on how to prepare annual progress reports.

More information about the *Tox-Minus* program is available at:
www.epa.state.oh.us/ocapp/tox-minus.html.

More information about National Pollution Prevention Week is available at:
<http://www.p2.org/p2week/index.cfm>.

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<http://www.epa.state.oh.us/>