

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Partner with the Virginia DEQ through the Virginia Environmental Excellence Program (VEEP)

Are you seeking recognition for your environmental accomplishments? Are you interested in more efficiently managing your compliance requirements and becoming a more sustainable organization? The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) invites you to join VEEP – an innovative partnership program for a more sustainable Virginia. The program is aimed at improving environmental performance and stewardship through a beyond-compliance collaboration with the DEQ. It is open to any facility that impacts the environment through its operations, activities, processes, or location. The facility must have a good track record of sustained regulatory compliance and demonstrate a collaborative attitude in improving the environment and economy of the Commonwealth. The basis of this program is that better environmental management makes good business sense. The program allows for membership in one of three levels.

Is E2 right for you?

The first tier in VEEP, Environmental Enterprise, is for anyone, but especially for small businesses, nonprofit agencies, schools, municipal agencies, and others that want recognition for their voluntary efforts and are willing to do more to reduce their environmental footprint and gain the economic benefits of an environmental management system (EMS). This level requires that the facility has begun development of an EMS and has completed:

- ✓ An Environmental Policy Statement
- ✓ Identification of environmental impacts
- ✓ Establishment of targets
- ✓ A Pollution Prevention Program

Members set, track, and report on measurable goals to improve the quality of our environment.

Is E3 right for you?

The Exemplary Environmental Enterprise level is a way for DEQ to recognize and drive environmental excellence by encouraging facilities that have comprehensive, forward-looking management to go above and beyond in their stewardship of the environment through a fully-implemented EMS. This level requires:

- ✓ A fully implemented EMS
- ✓ Documented results
- ✓ An EMS self-assessment
- ✓ Procedures for communicating environmental information to the public

Members set, track, and report on goals and are expected to demonstrate documented results.

Is E4 right for you?

The Extraordinary Environmental Enterprise level is for those organizations that already display a commitment to the highest environmental performance. E4 members must demonstrate a mature EMS, aggressive environmental performance goals, a process for engaging the local community, and continued progress toward performance goals. E4 members must have:

- ✓ One full EMS cycle completed
- ✓ Continuous and sustainable progress
- ✓ Third party EMS auditing
- ✓ Community involvement

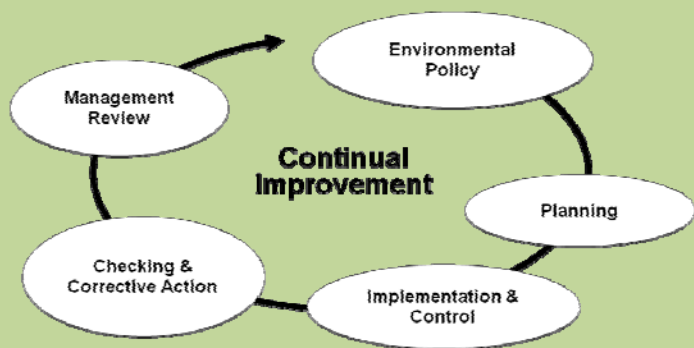
Members set, track, and report on goals and are expected to demonstrate documented results, as well as to mentor or partner with other members.

What is the compliance eligibility requirement?

Your facility must have no judgment or conviction for a criminal violation of the environmental protection laws in the previous five years; no more than two significant environmental violations in the previous three years; and, no unresolved notices of violations or potential violations of environmental requirements. In addition, the facility must be in compliance with the terms of any order or enforcement measure and not have demonstrated in any other way an unwillingness or inability to comply with environmental protection requirements. (See Section 10.1-1187.1 of the Code of Virginia)

What is an Environmental Management System (EMS)?

An EMS is simply a formal systematic process for reducing a facility's impacts on the environment by identifying potential impacts, setting goals to minimize those impacts, improving operating procedures, and tracking progress. The full cycle of an EMS is illustrated below. An EMS will be larger and more complex for a large facility but may be small and focused for a smaller organization.



Annual reports are required at all levels of the program and must be submitted by April 1 of each year

Why is an EMS required?

Some benefits of an EMS include:

- ✓ Improve efficiency and consistency in operations and activities
- ✓ Achieve environmental awareness and behavior change throughout your organization
- ✓ Improve communications
- ✓ Facilitate compliance

Are there any incentives for VEEP membership?

E2 members receive:

- ✓ Public recognition of performance from DEQ
- ✓ Peer-to-peer support network
- ✓ Better government relationships
- ✓ Positive press
- ✓ Reduced annual permit fees

In addition to those benefits mentioned for E2 members, E3 and E4 members may receive:

- ✓ Reduced inspection priority
- ✓ A single point of contact at DEQ
- ✓ Alternative compliance methods (ACM)
- ✓ Streamlined reporting
- ✓ Reduced monitoring requirements
- ✓ Prioritized permit and permit amendment review



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