PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title:   *Environmental Assistance for Less Than Large Businesses*

Project Applicant:     *Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality*

State Project Manager:          *Harry M. Wilson, III, P.E., DEE*
                                *Chief, Environmental Permits Division*

Total Project Cost:     *$[Budgetary Information Withheld by U.S. EPA]*

Project Period:        *October 1, 2007 through September 31, 2011*

Summary Statement:

This pre-proposal outlines the steps, outputs, and outcomes for the development and implementation of an Environmental Results Program (ERP) by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.  The ERP will focus on three business sectors with impact anticipated throughout the state.  This project will have the capability for expansion into other states and regions for the improvement of air and water quality, land management and preservation and environmental stewardship.

MDEQ will focus on less than large businesses to improve compliance and environmental stewardship through the development of brochures, booklets and self-instruction manuals presented in a simplified technical manner.  MDEQ will contract with individuals to assist these small businesses with implementation and continued activities within the ERP.  MDEQ will submit quarterly reports to EPA to discuss project advancements and proposed changes in the implementation of the program.  The Director of the Office of Pollution Control within MDEQ will receive monthly reports regarding the project.

The Chief of the Environmental Permits Division and the Assistance Coordinator will provide project oversight and leadership.  An oversight team will be selected for the duration of the project.  Through focused evaluation of the project steps and review of activities, the oversight team will be able to ensure timely accomplishments and a flexible project implementation to ensure that the needs of the focus businesses are met.

Statutory Authority and Flexibility:   *This project does not require regulatory flexibility.*

State Agency Support:          *The Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is aware of and supports this project.*

PRE-PROPOSAL PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) initiated a program to assist less than large businesses throughout Mississippi in 2004. This program was designed to provide technical assistance in simplified terms to businesses entering the environmental arena through expansions and changes in business operations. To date, this program has been largely focused on agency activities and less focused on specific business sectors. The MDEQ Assistance program is being expanded to focus specifically on three business sectors with the goal of improving the permitting process and compliance through improved environmental stewardship.

During the project period, MDEQ will identify stakeholders and develop several informational outputs, specifically, brochures, self-instructional manuals, self-certification forms, and self-audit forms for focused outreach. MDEQ will also expand the Environmental Data Exchange (enDx) electronic reporting functionality to include the submittal of self-certification and self-audits forms.

The three business sectors selected for this project are solid waste management transfer stations, dry cleaners, and automotive care centers. By focusing on these business sectors, MDEQ will be able to assist less than large businesses located throughout the state. Additionally, by focusing on these business, this project will improve air quality as required by EPA Strategic Goal 1 – Clean Air and Global Climate Change, improve water management and water quality as required by EPA Strategic Goal 2 – Clean and Safe Water, improve land management and increase recycling efforts, as required by EPA Strategic Goal 3 – Land Preservation and Restoration, and finally, improve compliance within these small businesses and environmental stewardship, EPA Goal 5.

MDEQ's vision for this project is to enable less than large businesses to manage environmental issues within the financial confines of small businesses while protecting and improving human health and the environment through the development and implementation of an Environmental Results Program (ERP). MDEQ has implemented a streamlined permitting method that is multi-media in approach. This project will further advance this simplified permitting process for less than large businesses. Documents developed through this project will be multi-media in design so that the business will use a limited number of tools to address multiple environmental issues. Through the expansion of the enDx functionality, MDEQ will provide an easier method for reporting for small businesses and thus encourage environmental stewardship.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

MDEQ will develop a project oversight team. This team will be founded with staff of the Environmental Permits Division with some assistance provided by the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Division. (October 2007)

MDEQ will solicit public involvement. Public involvement will be primarily through the identification of stakeholders and a survey of those stakeholders of issues they would like to be addressed. (November & December 2007)

MDEQ will select contractors for specific tasks within the project. Contractors will be required for the development of brochures, booklets and instructional manuals. Contractors will be necessary for the expansion and further development of enDx. Contractors will also be necessary for direct involvement with stakeholders in providing on-site assistance and training and obtain feedback regarding the ERP from the focus businesses (December 2007 – March 2008)

MDEQ will develop training programs to be presented within MDEQ and throughout the state. (April – June 2008)

MDEQ will develop the text of the brochures, booklets, and instructional manuals. (May – August, 2008)

MDEQ will expand the Permitting Small Business web page to include helpful hints, environmental stewardship "how to's" and provide links for the on-line submittal of certifications, audits and information requests. (June – December 2008)

MDEQ will initiate Environmental Stewardship training through surveys of compliance histories within the focus sectors, on-site meetings and training, and regional training seminars. (October, 2008 – October, 2009)

MDEQ will evaluate the success of the project at mid-term to determine where improvements could be further accomplished or additional opportunities for environmental improvement could be realized. This evaluation will include comments received from the focus businesses regarding the implementation of the ERP.(October – December 2009)

MDEQ will consider the results of the mid-term evaluation and implement changes as recommended. (January – March 2010)

MDEQ will move into the final phase of Environmental Stewardship Excellence through comprehensive program initiatives which can be applied to other small businesses in Mississippi and other states. (April 2010 – September 2011)

MDEQ will conduct a final review of the project. The final review will include identification of problem areas that should be addressed by other states implementing this program and areas of successes that should be expanded. The final review will also include a report of the outcomes of the project within the focus business sectors and feedback from the focus businesses. (April – September, 2011)

To ensure the advancement of this project through the grant period, MDEQ will submit quarterly reports to EPA and monthly reports to the Director of the Office of Pollution Control within MDEQ. The responsibility of this project will be within the Office of the Chief of the Environmental Permits Division and the Assistance Coordinator for Permitting and Compliance for Less than Large Businesses. The Assistance Coordinator has been focused on improving permitting and compliance within small business for the previous two years. Through continuing education seminars, on-site training, brochure development and issuance of the "Assistance – An MDEQ Priority" newsletter on a routine basis, the Assistance Coordinator has a steady background in assistance initiatives, permitting and compliance activities.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES, ELGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Through this project, MDEQ will develop an ERP for less than large businesses to improve compliance and environmental stewardship. This pre-proposal involves the applications of programs to the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Solid Waste Disposal Act. As such, this pre-proposal addresses 4 of the 5 strategic goals developed by the EPA. The total funding requested for this project is $*[Budgetary Information Withheld by U.S. EPA]*and will begin in October 2007. This pre-proposal identifies the steps by which MDEQ will meet the training and demonstration requirements established by the identified regulatory programs. The pre-proposal and associated outputs will be submitted to the EPA as required by the solicitation and subsequent grant requirements.

Environmental Outputs
This project will result in informational brochures, booklets, and instruction manuals presented in a simplified technical manner. Self-certification and self-audit forms will be developed as a part of this project. Self-certification forms will be developed for permitting activities and self-audit forms for compliance activities. The expansion of the existing enDx electronic software to facilitate self-certification and self-audit submittals will also be a result of this project.

Environmental Outcomes
At completion of this project, MDEQ will be able to demonstrate improved operations within the focus business sectors, improved environmental management techniques, improved compliance and an improvement in air and water quality and land management and preservation through the comparison and evaluation of compliance surveys conducted throughout the grant period.

Public Involvement
This project will begin with the identification of stakeholders and others interested in the project. Throughout outreach and media efforts, the public will be invited to submit comments and ideas for the application of the project. Given the controversial issues normally connected to the solid waste industry, there may be some concerns expressed by the public as transfer stations are included in this environmental effort.

Project Application
This project addresses the majority of the national strategies identified by the EPA. Through the selection of three business sectors, found throughout the state that are also common throughout the U.S., this project will be able to provide methods and programs to improve compliance and

environmental stewardship across many regions.  Further, by focusing on less than large businesses, many of which are located in residential areas, more awareness of environmental justice issues may be a result through public involvement in the identification and exploration of environmental concerns.

<u>Pre-Proposal Budget Summary</u>
The costs listed below cover the entire project duration of 48 months:
- Salary costs will be for in-house design and development of the enhancements to *en*Dx.
- Contractual costs will be in support of the design and development of the interface from *en*Dx to *en*Site, brochures, booklets, and manuals, and on-site training and assistance.
- Equipment costs are for a new server for the enhanced *en*Dx application.

*[Budgetary Information Withheld by U.S. EPA]*

The costs outlined above do not include in-kind funding contributions.

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

| Grant Award | Project Results |
|---|---|
| **2003 Network Readiness Grant** EPA Project Officer Hector Buitrago, EPA Region IV buitrago.hector@epa.gov 404-562-8040 | MDEQ received a 2003 Readiness Grant to develop an eDMR module that uses the standard XML schema and again leveraged applications in other states including New Jersey and Michigan. The eDMR module is in production . |
| **2003 Network Challenge Grant** Project led and managed by State of Maine Department of Environmental Protection | As a recipient of the 2003 Mentoring Challenge Grant, MDEQ worked with other leading states to provide mentoring services to new states entering the Exchange Network. Mississippi provided mentoring services to states such as Kentucky, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Minnesota, and Texas in the area of Node implementation and Trading Partner Agreements. |
| **2004 Network Implementation Grant** EPA Project Officer Hector Buitrago, EPA Region IV buitrago.hector@epa.gov 404-562-8040 | MDEQ's 2004 Network Implementation Grant proposed to migrate MDEQ from an outsourced support configuration to an in-house support configuration while implementing and maintaining data flows. MDEQ's contract with its Node support vendor expired this fall, and MDEQ staff now fully support the MDEQ Node. Under this grant award, MDEQ staff were mentored by the Node contractor in a hands-on approach by participating in the development, testing, and maintaining of the Beaches data flow, FRS data flow, and RCRAInfo data flow. As part of this grant award, MDEQ has successfully flowed Beach Notification data through CDX. MDEQ has also established a database for Beach Notification data and Beach Monitoring data under this grant award. |
| **2001 STAG Grant** EPA Project Officer Glendora Spinelli, EPA Headquarters spinelli.glendora@epa.gov 202-564-5042 | Under this grant award, MDEQ developed software to flow data from MDEQ's *en*Site system to PCS/IDEF. MDEQ successfully developed and was in the process of testing this data flow when EPA ceased funding on the project. While this data flow will not be implemented, MDEQ anticipates leveraging this work when developing the ICIS/NPDES data flow. |
| **2003 STAG Grant** EPA Project Officer Gloria Love, EPA Region IV love.gloria@epa.gov 404-562-9672 | MDEQ is developing an interface from its enSite system to AFS via the AFS Universal Interface. This project is on schedule for a completion date of February 28, 2007. |
| **2005 STAG Grant** EPA Project Officer Gloria Love, EPA Region IV love.gloria@epa.gov 404-562-9672 | MDEQ will utilize funds under this grant award to perform a requirements analysis to estimate the cost of moving to the ICIS/NPDES data flow. As stated above, MDEQ anticipates leveraging its IDEF software in the development of this flow. This project is on hold waiting the completion of the ICIS Batch Design and ICIS-NPDES Data Flow Schema. |