

2006 AAPA Environmental Improvement Awards

Title: Port of Portland's Environmental Programs
Category: Comprehensive Environmental Management
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Project Summary

The Port of Portland's Environmental Programs focus people and resources on implementing the Port's environmental management system (EMS) and improving the Port's environmental performance. There are ten programs: water resources, natural resources, site characterization and remediation, waste management and recycling, air quality, energy management, EMS, sediment management, construction environmental management and tenant environmental management. Each program seeks to: eliminate or control the Port's significant environmental aspects and impacts; achieve specific objectives and targets; manage environmental issues in the context of business needs; provide consistency across business lines; identify and proactively address trends that may impact business needs; and help shape the regulatory climate within which the Port operates. Each program includes a designated program manager, a cross-functional coordination team and a workplan, which details goals and priorities that reflect the Port's business needs, policies, environmental aspects and legal requirements. The success of the Port's Environmental Programs is demonstrated year after year through the attainment of substantial and measurable improvements in environmental performance. The Environmental Programs bring the Port's EMS to life and propel the organization to efficiency and effectiveness in integrating environmental considerations into the business.

Award Criteria

1. The Port's Environmental Programs benefit environmental quality, beautification and the community by minimizing impacts to water quality and conserving water, minimizing impacts and seeking opportunities to enhance natural resources, cleaning up contaminated sites, reducing waste generation and hazardous materials use, reducing energy consumption and purchasing electricity from sustainable sources, and minimizing impacts to air quality.
2. The Port of Portland independently created its environmental programs. The successful implementation of the Environmental Programs is an independent, but integrated effort of the Port that involves participation by Port employees at all levels. ISO 14001 is the foundation for the programs, which are customized to the Port's aspects/impacts and particular business needs.
3. The Environmental Programs contain two key, creative elements: a designated program manager, who is responsible for EMS implementation, and coordination teams composed of both environmental and operations staff. These two elements, a designated program manager and coordination teams, ensure consistency across the Port's businesses and truly integrate environmental considerations into all aspects of the Port's business.
4. The Environmental Programs have benefited the Port's environmental performance and its business practices, as well as the community by ensuring the Port meets its regulatory obligations and continuously improves environmental performance.
5. The integration of the Port's Environmental Programs with its business and operations streamlines planning, avoids duplication and prevents fragmentation of work. The Port has also gained cost and workload efficiencies by having Port-wide programs and targets.
6. The Port of Portland's Environmental Programs and the process used to create them serve as a model for use by other ports. The Environmental Programs, included the program manager and coordination team concepts, can be easily scaled for use by larger or smaller ports, specific operating areas within a port or by port tenants.