

Free Environmental Compliance Assistance: Just a Phone Call Away

By the Small Business and Local Government Assistance Section Staff
of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) offers assistance through its Small Business and Local Government Assistance (SBLGA) section to help small businesses and local governments comply with environmental rules. The program gives confidential technical assistance on air, water, waste, and pollution prevention issues without the threat of enforcement.

Businesses and local governments can request free, on-site environmental compliance assessments—and all information remains confidential. Environmental consultants under contract with the TCEQ conduct the voluntary audits for environmental compliance. If the audited site corrects the noted deficiencies and the consultant verifies compliance, the site becomes eligible for the Compliance Commitment (C2) Partnership. Through this partnership, small business owners and local governments stand to earn a one-year exemption from routine TCEQ investigations.

To participate in the C2 Partnership program, the owner of the site or facility must employ a company-wide total of 100 or fewer employees, be operated by a small local government (a county of 100,000 or fewer or a city of 50,000 or fewer), or be an independent school district (ISD) serving a student population of 100,000 or fewer students.

SBLGA also has an EnviroMentor program in which consultants, utility professionals, and lawyers

volunteer their time and expertise to help small businesses and local governments comply with environmental rules. They provide advice on complex environmental problems, help fill out regulatory paperwork, and give answers to technical questions related to regulations, design requirements, waste reduction, and much more.

In addition to providing one-on-one assistance, SBLGA offers a number of compliance assistance tools, regulatory guidance documents, and easy-to-follow checklists for various industries. Example industries include: auto body shops, automotive repair facilities, auto salvage yards, dry cleaners, fleet maintenance facilities, foundries, metal finishers, printers, reinforced plastics facilities, sawmill operations, small airports and tenant operations, surface coaters, and the wood products industry. Specifically, SBLGA provides local governments compliance assistance with operating wastewater treatment systems, public water systems, and fleet refueling facilities.

SBLGA also helps local governments participate in the rulemaking process by keeping them informed of comment periods for suggestions to proposed rules. The section also advocates on behalf of small businesses and local governments in policies developed by the agency.

SBLGA compliance assistance specialists in one of the TCEQ's 16 region



offices are ready to assist you. Call 800-447-2827 for free and confidential environmental compliance assistance today! For more information on our program and tools, visit our Web site at www.sblga.info.★