WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-25-2

§22-25-2. Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to authorize the Department of Environmental Protection to establish and administer an environmental excellence program to promote, reward, and encourage superior environmental performance in this state. The environmental excellence program will establish a system to encourage voluntary environmental performance that will exceed existing regulatory standards for health and the environment and result in continual improvement in the state's environment, economy, and quality of life. The program should, if practical, be compatible with other federal programs which create incentives for achieving environmental performance beyond the regulatory requirements, such as the United States environmental protection agency's national performance track program. The environmental excellence program will be established and implemented to accomplish the following:

(1) Encourage facility owners and operators to assess the environmental impact of their operations;

(2) Encourage innovation by and measure success through facility owners and operators setting measurable and verifiable goals;

(3) Increase public participation and encourage stakeholder consensus in the development of innovative environmental regulatory approaches and methods and in monitoring the environmental performance of projects under this article;

(4) Focus resources toward achieving positive environmental goals that are important to the community and the state;

(5) Report environmental performance information and ambient environmental data to the public in a manner that is accurate, timely, credible, relevant and usable to interested parties;

(6) Provide for the measurement of environmental performance in terms of accomplishing goals and objectives, and require the reporting of those results;

(7) Provide facility owners and operators with flexibility to implement the most effective pollution prevention, source reduction, or other pollution reduction strategies for their particular facilities, while complying with verifiable and enforceable pollution limits;

(8) Encourage superior environmental performance and continuous improvement toward sustainable levels of resource usage and minimization of pollution discharges, emissions and releases;

(9) Promote the transfer of technological and practical environmental innovations that improve environmental performance in a more efficient, effective, and safe manner; and

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(10) Strive to lower transaction costs associated with environmental performance.

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