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EPA OPPT Tribal News

Working together

Environmental News for Indian Tribes from the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics

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PCB Spill Cleanup in Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

On February 5, 1998, EPA received an urgent telephone call from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota about possible PCB contamination from leaking fluorescent light ballasts. The light ballasts were located in the elementary school, administration building, high school library, and several Bureau of Indian Affairs buildings on the reservation.

EPA confirmed that many of the buildings' light fixtures did contain harmful PCBs, and many were leaking. This posed a direct health threat to employees and children exposed to the hazardous materials. An interagency cleanup team was able to successsfully contain, remove, and ensure the safe disposal of PCB-contaminated materials. Team members also tested other areas for contamination, trained tribal staff to identify and test for PCBs, and ensured that fixtures containing PCBs were removed and replaced.

Ms. Kim Le of EPA's Office of Enforcement, Compliance, and Environmental Justice, and Mr. Randy Brown of EPA Region 8's Office of Pollution Prevention, State and Tribal Assistance, were the EPA point persons for the cleanup team. The interagency team was made up of officials from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and key tribal representatives.

In addition to PCBs, tribal members were concerned about potential dioxin contamination in some of the BIA buildings.

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GREETINGS from OPPT's Director!

We are excited to present the first edition of EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics quarterly tribal newsletter! This newsletter offers an excellent opportunity for readers to become better acquainted with our program and projects. Our Office is continuing to seek better ways to communicate with our tribal partners in managing the complex environmental issues that we face each and every day. We hope this newsletter will allow tribal members, governments, and organizations to effectively participate in and benefit from our different programs and funding opportunities.

OPPT is committed to working in partnership with tribal governments to safeguard and protect the environment from toxic hazards and to promote pollution prevention in Indian country. This past year, OPPT took significant steps to foster better communication links through its newly established tribal program. The first priority of this program is improved communication so we can better exchange information regarding environmental concerns and issues facing Indian country today.

In order for us to succeed, we want to hear any comments, ideas, and concerns that you may have about our programs and activities. Please feel free to contact us through Phil Robinson, Chief of our Liaison Branch, at 202-260-3910.

We look forward to continuing to work with Indian tribes and providing newsletters that are of interest and value to your environmental concerns, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

William H. Sanders III

William H. Sanders, III, Dr.P.H., P.E.
Director, Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics

OPPT's Mission

Promote pollution prevention
Promote the use of less toxic chemicals
Promote the reduction of risks
Promote public understanding of the risks of chemicals

PCB Spill *Continued from page 1*

The cleanup team's dioxin expert confirmed the contamination and traced the source to the ceiling tiles. Team members took samples, tested for the presence of dioxin, and safely removed contaminated materials from the affected areas.

From the beginning, the tribal community expressed concerns and uncertainty about potential adverse health effects from exposure to PCBs and dioxin. To allay these concerns and prevent rumors or misinformation from spreading, the cleanup team initiated an extensive public outreach effort, including appearances on public radio talk shows; individual and public meetings; information fact sheets; taking numerous PCB wipe samples to determine the extent of the contamination and reduce fears; and meeting with key tribal and BIA officials to discuss EPA's findings and make recommendations.

For more information on the cleanup, contact Randy Brown, Region 8, at 303-312-6048.

OPPT TRIBAL PROGRAM

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News & Events

EPA Releases Most Recent Data on Toxic Releases

On June 18, 1998, EPA announced the most recent Community Right-to-Know information under the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program. Total industrial releases of toxic chemicals in U.S. communities decreased 4 percent, from 2.5 billion pounds to 2.4 billion pounds in 1996.

The greatest percentage reduction in environmental releases of chemicals occurred in underground injection wells, where discharges were reduced from 240 million pounds in 1995 to 204 million pounds in 1996 -- almost 15 percent. Reported air emissions were down 115 million pounds -- a seven percent reduction -- in 1996. Surface water discharges and land releases both reported increases of about nine percent in 1996 compared to the previous year.

In order to provide more information to the public about industrial releases of toxic chemicals, the Clinton Administration expanded EPA's Toxic Chemical Right-to-Know Program. In 1997, EPA required seven new industry sectors to begin reporting their releases of TRI chemicals by July 1999. These industries are: metal mining, coal mining, electric utilities which combust coal and/or oil, solvent recyclers, hazardous waste treatment and disposal facilities, chemical distributors, and petroleum bulk plants. With the addition of these sectors, the number of facilities reporting to the TRI program will increase approximately 30 percent.

Starting next year, OPPT plans to make available tribal TRI reports in a format similar to state TRI reports. The 1996 TRI data and related information are available on the Internet at http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/tri. To obtain a hard copy of the TRI Public Data Release, call the TRI Hotline at 1-800-490-9198.

4TH National Tribal Conference

In May 1998, the Prairie Island Indian Community sponsored the 4th National Tribal Conference in Red Wing, Minnesota. EPA staff from the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) served on a lead awareness panel with representatives from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Upper and Lower Sioux Community of Minnesota. EPA presented an update on the requirements of 402/404 TSCA and availability of 404(g) grants funds. CDC staff discussed their lead screening program. The Upper and Lower Sioux Community representative explained their training and certification program.

Headquarters Tribal Training Kick-Off Session

On July 22, 1998, approximately 160 EPA managers and staff participated in a "Working Effectively with Tribal Governments" training course. The course provided an excellent introduction to tribal culture and history, as well as the key issues involved with implementing EPA's Indian program. The training consisted of four components:

Jerry Pardilla

- Introduction to Tribal History, presented by Karen Biestman from EPA Region 9
- EPA's Indian Program and Policy, presented by Caren Rothstein, OPPTS, and Janemarie Freiheiter, Region 8
- Legal Issues, with Jim Havard, Office of General Counsel
- Cultural Panel, with Jean Gamache from EPA Region 10, Karen Biestman from EPA Region 9, and Jerry Pardilla, Executive Director, National Tribal Environmental Council

The training was developed by several EPA offices under the leadership of the American Indian Environmental Office and OPPT. From all reports, the training was well received and feedback has been positive. Stay tuned for more information on a follow-up session with EPA staff.

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WASHING

1998 OPPT Tribal Program

This year, EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) has undertaken several new activities for building a more effective partnership with Indian tribes in protecting and safeguarding the environment. OPPT's tribal program for 1998 was developed with the advice of other EPA offices and in consultation with tribal coordinators from the EPA Regional Offices, the American Indian Environmental Office, the National Indian Workgroup, EPA's Tribal Operations Committee, the OPPT Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Action (FOSTTA), and members of Indian tribes.

A major focus of the OPPT's 1998 tribal program has been on better ways to communicate our program and activities with the tribes. Currently under development is a comprehensive communications package for tribes that will explain OPPT programs, list contact people and Internet Web sites, and compile and summarize grant information. This newsletter is another element of the package and is expected to be published quarterly.

Other major activities of OPPT's 1998 tribal program include grants funding, internal training on tribal issues, follow-up activities from EPA Tribal Operations Committee meetings, interagency coordination efforts, and stakeholder outreach.

OPPT is very interested in obtaining feedback from tribal organizations. To comment or for more information, contact Mary Lauterbach, 202-260-9563 or lauterbach.mary@epa.gov.

Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Actions (FOSTTA)

Created in 1991, FOSTTA is a forum which allows state and tribal officials to address toxics-related issues and to improve communications and coordination among states, tribes, and EPA. The group is organized into the FOSTTA Coordinating Committee; four issue-specific projects (pollution prevention, chemical management, Toxics Release Inventory, and lead); and two work groups on tribal affairs and community-based environment.

Membership in FOSTTA is open to state and tribal health and environmental officials for a two-year period, subject to renewal. Candidates for membership may be nominated by agency officials, state and tribal officials, professional societies, or the general public. FOSTTA meets three times a year in the Washington, DC area, with support from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Contact: George Hagevik, NCSL, at 303-830-2200.

What is the AIEO?

The American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) was established by EPA Administrator Carol Browner in 1994 as part of an effort to build a partnership with Indian tribal governments to protect the public health and environment in Indian country.

AIEO strives to ensure the cooperation of EPA Headquarters and Regional Offices with Indian tribes. EPA views tribal governments as the primary parties for setting standards, making environmental policy decisions, and managing environmental programs in Indian country.

In partnership with Indian tribal governments, EPA addresses the environmental protection and public health needs of 1.6 million Indians and non-Indians who live on more than 60 million acres of land in Indian country. The challenge for Indian tribes and EPA is to ensure that the extensive air, land, and water resources in Indian country and the places where people live and work are protected from pollution threats, consistent with tribal and/or federal standards.

In 1998, working with Indian tribes and all parts of EPA, AIEO will design a framework for conducting a baseline assessment of ambient environmental conditions, pollution releases, and physical modifications to ecosystems. The President's budget for 1999 includes significant new resources to implement the baseline assessment.

AIEO is also working with Indian tribes and all parts of EPA to ensure that tribal concerns and issues are appropriately considered in the Agency's annual planning and budgeting process and multi-year planning activities under the EPA Strategic Plan. Since 1994, significant increases have been made in EPA's Indian budget. With these resources, EPA and the tribes have the opportunity to strengthen their partnership for a cleaner, healthier environment. Contact: Richard Regan, AIEO, at 202-260-1008.

PPIS Grants Fund Tribal Projects

Created under the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990, the Pollution Prevention Incentives for States (PPIS) grant program helps establish and expand state and tribal multimedia pollution prevention (P2) programs. Grants are aimed at building P2 capabilities and testing innovative P2 approaches at the local level. EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, which administers the grant program, emphasizes the sustainability of P2 programs and the need to ensure that pollution prevention is a critical component in the delivery of environmental protection in the future.

In 1992, the All Indian Pueblo Council became the first tribal organization to receive a PPIS grant. Since then, EPA has supported 24 tribal PPIS projects, with total EPA funding exceeding $1 million. In FY 1998, the following three grants were awarded to tribes under the PPIS grant program:

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians: In partnership with the Southern Aroostook (Maine) Soil and Water Conservation District, this grant sponsors several projects that demonstrate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent erosion, nutrient enrichment, and bacterial contamination in streams running through fields used for grazing livestock, near the Meduxnekeag watertable. Grantees are organizing a Pasture Support Group interested in using P2 grazing techniques for their livestock. To preserve the quality and quantity of nearby water sources, innovative techniques are being introduced to the larger agricultural community through pasture walks. The Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians will monitor E. coli bacteria levels at test sites before and after these initiatives as an indicator of the impact of the project.

The **Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska** were awarded a grant to address ongoing solid waste problems within the Juneau Native village through a demonstration project that emphasizes waste reduction. This community-based project has the following goals: identify the solid waste issues confronting the community, establish appropriate responses, and assess resources that are currently available. Efforts are being made to involve key individuals at the state and federal levels, and to research how other native groups have addressed similar problems. If the reduction of solid waste within the villages is successful, this pilot project will be replicated at other tribal sites in southeast Alaska.

The **Coeur D'Alene Tribe in Idaho** was awarded a PPIS grant to limit the use of pesticides in order to improve the quality of ground and surface water on the reservation. The grant established a youth conversation camp to do labor-intensive,

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TSCA Section 404(G) Lead Grants

EPA issues grants to help states, tribes, and territories finance lead-based paint activities. Under the authority of Section 404(g) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), these grants are awarded by EPA's Regional Offices at the end of each fiscal year. The total amount of grant money available for FY 1998 is $12.5 million with a $1.5 million "set-aside" for Indian tribes, plus an additional $1.2 million appropriated for tribes this year. For more information, contact Robert Wright, OPPT, at 202-260-7800.

Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan Receives EPA Lead Grant

The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. (ITC) is one of the winners of an EPA Lead Poisoning Prevention and Lead Hazard Awareness Public Education and Outreach Grant. ITC is a non-profit Indian community action agency that acts on behalf of federally-recognized tribes in Michigan. ITC plans to modify educational materials to specifically address Michigan tribal needs. Materials will be distributed to health care professionals and clinics, day care providers, parents and guardians, pregnant women, housing and maintenance staff, and community groups. ITC will also present educational workshops and run an active media campaign. For more information about ITC and the work they will be doing on this project through December 1999, contact Paul Schmeichel, the ITC Environmental Services Coordinator, at 906-635-4208.

EJP2 Grants Fund Tribal Pollution Prevention Projects

EPA's Environmental Justice through Pollution Prevention (EJP2) grants program looks for ways to help environmental justice communities deal with environmental problems by using pollution prevention, rather than pollution control. Pollution prevention means reducing or eliminating pollution at its source, prior to recycling or treatment. Pollution prevention can cut environmental risks while promoting public involvement and economic benefits.

Since the inception of the EJP2 grant program, EPA has awarded 22 grants to tribal communities. Nine tribal applicants won grants in FY 1997 (see accompanying decriptions). Grant funds support:

1. Local environmental, environmental justice, and community grassroots organizations that promote environmental justice, preferably by using pollution prevention; and
2. National and regional organizations working in partnership with local organizations or tribal governments to promote environmental justice using pollution prevention approaches.

Approximately $4 million is available for FY 1998 grants. The deadline for applications was April, and awards will be announced in October 1998.

Defining Environmental Justice

In a 1992 report, *Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities,* EPA found that people of color and low-income communities experience higher exposure to toxic pollutants than the general public. The environmental justice movement has focused attention on equitable environmental protection for all and on empowering those most often disenfranchised from the decision-making process. "Environmental justice" is defined by EPA as the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, programs, and policies. Fair treatment means that no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from the operation of industrial, municipal, or commercial enterprises, or from the execution of federal, state, local, or tribal programs.

Haudenosuanee Environmental Task Force: An Indigenous Strategy for Long-Term Pollution Prevention (Grant Award: $100,000)

The Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force (HETF) was founded to address the environmental concerns of the Iroquois Confederacy; to prevent future pollution problems; and to develop restoration plans to sustain the indigenous people, their culture, and the natural world for future generations. The grant is intended to help HETF function more efficiently as a clearinghouse for the exchange and dissemination of environmental information. HETF will complete the design of community education pollution prevention programs that combine traditional environmental knowledge with scientific and technical information. HETF will also coordinate a conference bringing together experts and the community to discuss environmental laws, pollution prevention, and Haudenosaunee culture.

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians: Environmental Justice Through Pollution Prevention ($91,632)

The Choctaw received a grant to conduct a comprehensive investigation into pollution prevention opportunities and barriers facing the community. The research will produce recommendations for the development of a community-wide pollution prevention plan. To support economic and natural resource development, the project has three components. The first is a sociological assessment of Choctaw community members. The second is a natural resource assessment, focusing on the watershed and tribal interactions with fisheries. The final component is an evaluation of waste reduction and energy conservation opportunities and barriers on the reservation. Defining tribal education and training needs, as well as non-regulatory strategies and technologies for effecting community-wide pollution prevention, is a priority. Tribal members are involved in data collection and interpretation, recommendation development, and oversight efforts.

1997 EJP2 Grants

Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee: Pollution Prevention Initiative ($22,080)
The Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee's solid waste specialist is conducting waste audits on eight businesses on the reservation. The goal is to remove persistent toxins from the businesses' waste streams and educate their employees on pollution prevention alternatives for reducing solid waste. The source reduction audits involve the staff and management of these businesses to help identify areas where toxic substances are being used. The specialist will then assist the businesses in implementing appropriate changes to reduce or eliminate hazards from the waste streams and follow up on their progress.

Lower Sioux Reservation: Wind Energy Demonstration Project ($90,000)
Coal, oil, and gas-fired power plants are disproportionately located near minority, tribal, and less politically established communities. The development of a local wind-powered electrical energy resource will reduce dependency on pollution-creating energy production methods. The project will allow the Lower Sioux community to control its source of electrical energy, while reducing the amount of pollution created. The project has three components: (1) a wind energy system demonstration project called the Lower Sioux Wind Energy; (2) the Project Generation and Distribution System Design and Specification Report; and (3) educational and community input activities such as public meetings and information dissemination.

Montana State University: Tribal College EJP2 Scholarship, Internship and Empowerment Program ($100,000)
The Montana Pollution Prevention Program is an educational and non-regulatory program of the Montana State University Extension Service (MSUES). As a land-grant university, MSUES provides education programming throughout Montana, including all tribal colleges. Through successful past experiences with Montana tribes, the Montana Pollution Prevention Project will facilitate the creation of the Tribal College Environmental Justice/Pollution Prevention Scholarship, Intern, and Empowerment Program. This scholarship and internship program at MSU will provide pollution prevention support courses, in addition to creating experiential learning opportunities for Native American faculty and students from Montana's seven tribal colleges.

Montana Tribal Business Information Network: Pollution Prevention Technical Assistance and Training Project ($85,000)
The Montana Tribal Business Information Network (TBIN) is comprised of seven Tribal Business Information Committees, which form a Pollution Prevention Tribal Cooperative. The cooperative serves all seven of the Native American reservations in Montana. The grant provides technical assistance and training to the Tribal Business Information Committee on each reservation, enabling them to identify and use pollution prevention technologies.

Running Strong for American Indian Youth: Pollution Prevention in Agriculture ($30,000)
Running Strong for American Indian Youth sponsors and operates the Slim Buttes Community Agricultural Development Project on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Grant assistance is enabling the Slim Buttes project to undertake demonstration and training activities that promote organic gardening and sustainable community agriculture. The program will involve workshops, field demonstrations, new composting operations, and the creation and dissemination of written materials.

Chickaloon Native Village: Renewable Energy Development for Alaskan Native Villages ($80,000)
This project establishes an integrated framework to help Alaska native villages assess the development potential of renewable energy resources on village land. Developing these resources should help villages lessen their dependence on fossil fuels and reduce air pollution. The community will experience direct and indirect economic benefits from the reduced pollution and local production of renewable energy.

America Works Partnership: Pollution Prevention Program in Construction for Public Housing Residents and Native Alaskans ($160,138)
The America Works partnership works with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, the International Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades, public housing authorities, and the Alaskan Native Council to recruit and train poor, minority youth in a pre-apprenticeship program that creates lifelong careers as skilled union trades people. This project provides pollution prevention training for America Works pre-apprentices in Chicago, IL; Oakland, CA; and Alaska. Also included in the project are pollution prevention education and assistance for painter and carpenter contractors in these locations, as well as pollution prevention training and policy development for the Oakland and Chicago Housing Authorities.

Interagency Meeting on Tribal Lead Issues

In May 1998, an unprecedented meeting took place in Washington, DC to discuss lead issues faced by Indian tribes. Present were officials from EPA, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Indian Health Services (IHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Sarah Eagle Horse, the new tribal contact who recently joined EPA after working for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe as a tribal Lead Coordinator, reported on the difficulties tribal programs face in trying to gather data and get cooperation from other agencies. Because the prospect of all these agencies working together with the tribes has such great potential, a second meeting was scheduled for June.

The meeting of Regional Tribal Lead Coordinators on June 3-4, 1998 was hosted by EPA Region 8. Three of the four tribes currently holding Section 404(g) grants and working towards applying for authorization were able to attend (Chippewa Cree Tribe, MT; Crow Tribe, MT; and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, ND). Dave Combs, leader of the Lead Team, explained the changes and delay in the Notice of Funding Available for the coming year's grants, and discussed the $1.2 million set-aside grant money. Each tribe presented an update on its program's status and progress, as well as successes and problems. Most tribes reported that they were on track and working towards authorization.

Also discussed at the meeting were the "Treatment in the same manner as a State" (TAS) policy, the authorization application process, revisions to the HUD Chapter 7 guidelines, and the TSCA Sections 1018, 1012 & 1013 rules. Arrangements were made for a representative of HUD to meet with the group. Names of programs and individuals were provided for possible sources of funding of lead abatement projects on the reservations. Other items of interest are noted on the right.

Quick Takes

Child Health Champion:

- The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation in Montana was selected in May 1998 as one of eleven communities to receive a Child Health Champion Pilot Program grant. The program will focus on the effect on children's health from pesticide use and run-off.

TAS Checklist:

- A checklist is in the works for the TAS applications for lead grants and program authorization applications. The checklist was adapted from one used for the Water Quality Standards TAS approval process. It will be distributed to the tribes and other Regions.

Lead Abatement Training:

- During the week of June 15th, the Lead Program Coordinators from the Chippewa Cree Tribe and the Crow Tribe jointly sponsored a training course on Lead Abatement for Supervisors, Contractors, and Workers. The course was held at the Montana Environmental Training Center at Montana State University, Great Falls Campus. Both tribes sent eight people from their reservations who are directly involved in performing or overseeing remodeling, renovation, and maintenance work on housing and schools.

National Lead Grantees Conference:

- Representatives from the EPA Regional Office, the Chippewa Cree Tribe, and the Crow Tribe attended the National Lead Grantees Conference held in Phoenix on June 22-24. The conference was hosted by the EPA, CDC, HUD, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. A tribal break-out session with a panel of representatives from EPA, CDC, and Indian Health Services offered tribes an opportunity to voice some of their concerns, opinions, and questions.

Questions About Lead?

Call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424–LEAD.

Speak with trained lead information specialists.

Get answers to your questions about:

- EPA lead-based paint rules and regulations,
- Lead hazards,
- Renovation safety,
- Blood-lead level testing/results, and
- Finding a lead service provider (1-888–LEAD–LIST).

Obtain copies of important lead pamphlets, including:

- "Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home,"
- "Lead Poisoning and Your Children,"
- "Lead in Your Home: A Parent's Reference Guide," and
- "Reducing Lead Hazards When Remodeling Your Home."

Learn about new technical studies and reports.

Access EPA's Lead Program at www.epa.gov/lead

Get information on all aspects of EPA's and other federal agency lead poisoning prevention programs.

Access the Lead Listing Internet site at www.leadlisting.org/

Get information on lead service providers in your area. (Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).

Hot off the Press!

"Lead In Your Home: A Parent's Reference Guide"

EPA's latest lead hazard awareness publication is *Lead In Your Home: A Parent's Reference Guide.* Available free of charge from the National Lead Information Center's hotline at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323), the new guide is a comprehensive and colorful resource for anyone wanting to learn more about preventing lead poisoning in the home. The publication is equally helpful for renters, homeowners, parents, guardians, or just about anyone looking for more information on lead. Call now for a free copy!

PPIS *Continued from page 5*

small scale spraying, biocontrol of weeds with insectaries, survey of weed species, and revegetation of land tracts with native species of grasses. The objective is the reduction of extensive pesticide use on tribal land.

For more information on these and other P2 project grants, contact Christopher Kent, OPPT, at 202-260-3480 or via e-mail at kent.christopher@epa.gov.

DfE and PETE Join Forces for Change

Question: What do you get when you combine an organization with lots of good environmental information with another group that has entrée to hundreds of colleges? Answer: You get a terrific alliance — in this case, one that brings together EPA's Design for the Environment (DfE) Program and the non-profit Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE).

The DfE Program works with small- and medium-size industries in such sectors as printing, electronics, garment care, automotive, and industrial laundry, to provide businesses with the information they need to make environmentally-informed choices.

PETE provides leadership in environmental education and training in community, technical, and tribal colleges around the country. PETE is currently affiliated with over 650 colleges.

The DfE program has a wealth of pollution prevention and technical information developed for the business community, while PETE has the capability of transferring this information to college curricula, training programs, and existing training networks. In the first year of the DfE-PETE partnership, PETE developed several important pollution prevention curricular materials, including a Guide to P2 Internet Resources, a P2 credit course, and a P2 Guide for the Auto Repair Industry. PETE also sponsored dynamic training programs and networks for two P2-in-Chemistry courses for chemistry instructors which promote new approaches in the use and disposal of chemicals in the classroom and laboratory.

In another area, PETE has held several Tribal College Workshops, designed to foster communications among participants. Over 40 faculty and administrators representing 18 tribal colleges attended the first workshop held in Jackson Hole, WY. Participants expressed two important needs: (1) faculty exchanges and mentoring opportunities among non-tribal and tribal colleges, and (2) the incorporation of tribal/cultural values and traditions in environmental technology education.

A second workshop was held this past spring in Santa Fe, NM. PETE is also sponsoring a Tribal Forum this summer with the goal of adding "tribal perspectives" to environmental curricula. A larger joint workshop for over 300 participants is planned for next year, sponsored by PETE and Montana State University. For more information, contact Dave Boon, PETE, 303-404-5259, or Carol Hetfield, EPA, 202-260-1745.

"Act Locally" Ready for On-Line Access

EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxics (OPPTS) has completed the first phase of its community-based projects with "Act Locally," a listing of tools to help communities learn more about toxics and pesticides issues, resolve problems relating to toxics or pesticides, and find additional resources. "Act Locally" can be found on the Internet at **http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/cbep/actlocal.** A printed version will also be available at a later date.

"Act Locally" is a catalogue of analytical tools, hotlines, clearinghouses, databases, and software programs, guidelines and other publications, initiatives, partnerships, training, funding activities, and program information. These resources can teach communities about potential chemical risks, and help them develop strategies to mitigate those risks and improve the local environment.

There is a growing awareness that many of today's environmental problems, such as non-point water sources and sprawl, cannot be solved completely by traditional regulatory approaches. These often require local, on-the-ground approaches with direct community involvement. OPPTS views its role as facilitating not only the public's "right to know" but the public's "right to understand" by making accessible its expertise in toxics and pesticide issues and its scientific knowledge. "Act Locally" is an effort to give communities ready access to this scientific knowledge base and expertise, and is a further expression of EPA's promotion of community-based environmental protection.

Interview — *Sharri Venno*

For the past five years, Sharri Venno has been an Environmental Planner/Natural Resources Director with the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians in Aroostook County, Maine. The Houlton Band comprises 800 acres and has 600 members. Because of Ms. Venno's involvement with the Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Action (FOSTTA) and her concern about tribal issues, she was named chair of the FOSTTA Tribal Affairs Work Group at its inception in June 1997. The Tribal Affairs Work Group deals specifically with issues of concern to Indians.

Q. What are some of the work group's accomplishments so far?

A. Our accomplishments include: participating in a tribal session at the June 1998 national interagency meeting for EPA's lead program grantees, establishing an interagency tribal lead task force, and finalizing a mission statement. We plan to use the statement as a recruitment tool to encourage other tribal representatives to join the work group.

Q. What progress has the work group made?

A. We have made progress in developing interagency coordination on a variety of toxics issues that affect tribes. Also, we're improving communication to tribes about OPPT programs and initiatives, and providing input to OPPT regarding the form and function of their newly established tribal program.

Q. How many members are there in the work group?

A. The number varies, but generally we have two to five tribal representatives, two state reps, two EPA regional reps, and three EPA headquarters reps.

Q. What does the work group hope to accomplish in FY 99?

A. We hope to increase tribal representation to at least eight members and improve our ability to address the work group's mission statement. We also need to determine what level of organization the work group will have — for example, should it remain at the work group level which meets for a half day on a Sunday, or upgrade to the committee level which meets one and a half days during the week, or try some intermediate format that allows the workgroup members to participate in the other FOSTTA projects.

Q. Do you have a wish list for the work group?

A. Ideally, we would like tribal representation on the work group to be very broad-based, including tribes from every geographic area; small, medium-sized and large tribes; and tribes with a variety of toxics issues.

Q. Are you excited about what the work group is doing or will be doing in the future?

A. Absolutely! The legal relationship between EPA and American Indian tribes is fundamentally different from that between EPA and states because of EPA's trust responsibility for tribes. In addition, whereas the EPA/state working relationship is well-established, the working relationship between EPA and tribes is still being developed. The FOSTTA Tribal Affairs Work Group provides a crucial opportunity for OPPT and tribes to discuss how their relationship should develop in order to be positive, effective, and appropriate to each unique tribal circumstance.

Another positive aspect of FOSTTA's Tribal Affairs Work Group is the participation of states. Toxics contamination doesn't respect political boundaries. Only when federal, state, and tribal governments work together can we achieve the goal of a healthy environment for everyone.

Mark Your Calendars!

October 18-23

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI): 55th Annual Session. Myrtle Beach, SC.
Host Hotel: Myrtle Beach Wyndham Resort:1-800-996-3426.
Landmark Resort Hotel: 1-800-845-0658.
Contact NCAI at 202-446-7767.

October 21-22

EPA Region 8 Tribal Leaders Summit. Denver, CO.
Contact Judy Hervig at 303-312-6290.

October 26-28

65th Annual PNPCA Conference: Our Living Legacy. Portland, OR. This program will feature over 60 technical programs on wastewater treatment, watershed management, public education, competitiveness and privatization, collection systems, water quality and modeling, management, and other topics.
Contact the Pacific Northwest Pollution Control Association (PNPCA) at 503-579-1472.

EPA Web Sites and Hot Lines

EPA	www.epa.gov
OPPT	www.epa.gov/opptintr
Pollution Prevention	www.epa.gov/opptintr/p2home/index
Act Locally	www.epa.gov/opptintr/cbep/actlocal
Envirosense	es.epa.gov
Asbestos Ombudsman Hotline	1-800-368-5888
EPCRA Hotline	1-800-535-0202
Lead Hotline	1-800-532-3394

United States
Environmental Protection Agency (MC 7408)
Washington, DC 20460

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