

SGP Update

The latest information on
the National Strategic Goals Program



Vol. 3, Issue 3 – March 2002

IN THE NEWS

Welcome to our New Members!

Since our last issue, 1 new company (1 from PA) has signed up for the many benefits of the SGP program. Welcome aboard and please call the SGP Answer Line (703-354-2172) if you need any assistance.

Michigan Facilities Honored

Seven Michigan-based metal finishing facilities were honored on March 20 for their commitment to improving their environmental performance. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) commended, for the second year in a row, these Michigan facilities for their continuous environmental improvements under the SGP. The Michigan industry contributes close to \$750 million in annual sales and more than 7,000 jobs to Michigan's economy, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. To see the complete press release, please visit www.strategicgoals.org.

News from EPA Headquarters

In April of last year, EPA announced that it would proceed with the Toxics Release Inventory rule for lead and lead compounds. This rule lowers the reporting threshold to 100 pounds annually for each facility. If you plate chrome, lead/tin-lead or zinc, you may be required to submit a TRI report by July 1 each year, starting this year. All shops should review all operations carefully for any materials that might involve lead. For more information, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/tri/> or <http://www.nmfrc.org/tri.cfm>.

SGP SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

EMS, BENCHMARKING DISCUSSED, WORKING GROUPS TAKE FIRST STEPS

More than 70 stakeholders from industry and local, state and Federal governments gathered at the AmeriSuites O'Hare in Chicago, Illinois on February 20 to discuss how the SGP should be shaped going forward. A central theme of the sessions was that Environmental Management Systems (EMS) should be a core element of the program. Industry leaders widely agreed that EMS, if implemented in a gradual program, is an important management process and measurement tool that can be tailored to meet the needs of individual facilities. EMS is not one-size-fits-all and provides the foundation in which facilities can improve their efficiency, save money and effectively track their environmental progress.

Benchmarking top performance targets for specific metal finishing processes was also discussed as a key mechanism for measuring progress. There is a strong interest in replacing the current percentage-based goals with the 1992 baseline with a benchmark approach. Industry leaders conveyed that benchmarking was always a part of the SGP as an essential tool for establishing "best in class" performance.

U.S. EPA indicated its commitment to the SGP and helping improve sector environmental performance, but could not provide assurances regarding long-term program funding. As a consequence, the major portion of the SGP Summit discussion was devoted to exploring how the transition to a future program should be structured and clearing the existing barriers to moving forward.

In addition to emerging discussions by industry leadership focusing on key needs and opportunities in light of reductions in long term financial support, four workgroups were established to address important issues and initiate a new direction for the SGP. The groups include New Performance Goals, Integrated Assistance Tools, Grassroots / Local Operations and National SGP Infrastructure. All stakeholders are welcome to participate.

The Integrated Assistance Tools Group kicked off post-Summit discussions with a conference call on March 13. The group, representing industry, all levels of government and technical assistance providers, discussed issues ranging from the effectiveness of on-site visits versus workshops to the importance of communications for reaching tier three shops. Other observations included: POTWS often provide the best link for reaching facilities; there is a lack of understanding of all of the available assistance; making the business case is an important tool in convincing shops to participate in technical assistance and training opportunities; and EMS is one of many technical assistance opportunities available. Geoff Blake of the Metal Finishers Association of Southern California mentioned that his facility "went through the Southern California EMS training and saved \$55,000 in the first year." Several group members volunteered to assess and inventory the available tools. The Group met again on March 27 to provide updates on the technical assistance inventory and to discuss possible outreach strategies for reaching tier 3 and 4 facilities with technical assistance. For more information, please email Carl Koch at koch.carl@epamail.epa.gov

There was a strong sense on the March 14 Local/Grassroots Operations call that the POTW/industry interaction is what makes the SGP work. It is vital to strengthen the partnerships and supporting SGP infrastructure. Reduced transaction costs for POTWs and industry, and the direct savings for industry via P2, improved technology, etc., also needs to be emphasized. For instance, the Chicago POTW has reduced their transaction costs by \$2,000 per SGP facility. Other issues discussed included targeting resources where the most metal finishers operate and inventorying lessons learned from local programs. Please participate on the next call, Wednesday, April 17, 10-11:30 EST. The call-in number will be 202/260-8330, 3748#. For more information, please email Guy Aydlett of HRSD and AMSA at gaydlett@hrsd.dst.va.us.

Details regarding the progress of the National Infrastructure and New Performance Goals Working Groups will be featured in next month's *SGP Update* edition.

Spotlight on Acid Elimination Technologies – Process improvements save more than \$25,000 annually

The return on investment time for innovative technologies is often realized in terms of years, not weeks. But, that is exactly what happened to Amplate, Inc. of Charlotte, NC. Amplate has implemented a new closed-loop acid discharge, acid replacement system that returned their investment in just two weeks according Amplate President David French. Amplate provides zinc, electrolytic nickels, electroless nickel, black oxide, decorative chrome and for the passivation of stainless steels. These operations are performed on all basic metal substrates except for aluminum and zinc die Castings.

“We saved a ton of money and significantly reduced sludge shipped to the landfill,” said French. This new system has saved Amplate more than **\$25,000** annually from the use of a new acid bath extender. Seven lines total are using 12, 18 and 24 month old acids for pickling and are performing like new. All Amplate’s reductions in waste generation and water conservation were achieved despite a **four-fold increase in total production**

A coagulant (DTC) had been used periodically in the acid pickle tanks to remove metal contamination without the usual pH adjustment. However, organics would eventually build up and thus require acid bath disposal. Amplate tested PRO-pHx – an acid bath extender and decarboxylating agent – on the spent muriatic acid tank and found that the acid was restored to a nearly new condition. So, instead of going through the expense of proper disposal and replacement, Amplate was able to reuse this acid, and is still using it more than a year later. Since then, Amplate has been adding PRO-pHx to all of their plating lines, acid strips, pickling tanks and activator baths with highly successful results. They have found that a concentration of 0.5-1.0% PRO-pHx extends the bath life indefinitely. In 1991, Amplate was disposing of more than 11,000 pounds of acids. Last year, their acid disposal was zero. Acid addition is required only to make-up for drag-out, evaporation and neutralization. Amplate reports that the *PRO • pHx*:

- Extends acid life indefinitely;
- Eliminates new makeup acid costs;
- Eliminates costly disposal methods & costs;
- Requires no down time;
- Eliminates organic buildup;
- Is cost effective; and
- Eliminates issues associated with acid disposal.

Amplate also has been using other innovative approaches to wastewater reuse and sludge reduction. The company has been recognized for Outstanding Achievement in the Small Business Category of the 1994 Governor’s Award for Excellence in Waste Reduction competition. For more information on how Amplate’s closed loop acid elimination model and other technologies can help your company, please contact David French at davidfrench@amplate.com

UPCOMING SGP EVENTS...

Virginia TRI Reporting Workshop

Date: April 9, 2002

Location: Richmond's Crowne Plaza Hotel, 555 East Canal Street, Richmond, VA

U.S. EPA Region III will sponsor a one day workshops to help businesses prepare their annual Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) reports. A portion of each workshop will focus on preparing reports for the new reporting requirements for lead and lead compounds which are due by July 1, 2002. There will also be a refresher course - *Review of Section 313 - TRI and Reporting Form R filing*. For registration questions contact Maggie Rodriguez at Mega-Tech, Inc. 1-888-534-1629. View workshop details and register online at www.epaconference.com/TRI_2002/index.htm.

P2 Roundtable Discussion of Federal and State Funding for Pollution Prevention and Energy Efficiency Improvements

Date: May 15, 2002

Location: Hampton Inn, Williamsport, PA

One of a series of P2 Roundtables specifically designed to facilitate networking by Pennsylvania companies interested in beginning, implementing or improving pollution prevention and environmental improvement programs at their facilities. Organizations of all types and sizes participate in the roundtables, providing a wide spectrum of experiences

New York 14th Annual Pollution Prevention Conference

Date: May 29-31, 2002

Location: Crowne Plaza Albany Hotel, Albany, New York

The theme for this year's conference is "Pollution Prevention Through Energy Efficiency" with keynote speaker Congressman Sherwood L. Boehlert. Join other environmentalists, business and trade representatives, scientific and academic professionals, environmental groups, government officials and various industry sector representatives. A ceremony for the 2002 NYS Governor's Award Winners for Pollution Prevention will be held. Additionally, case studies of the 2000 and 2001 award winners will be presented at the conference. A pollution prevention tour will be hosted by a local organization. The event is sponsored by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Pollution Prevention Unit. For registration contact Dottie O'Hare at (518) 402-9469 or fax (518) 402-9470.

The National Metal Finishing Strategic Goals Program is a voluntary program that encourages companies to meet environmental targets by 2002. The program offers incentives, assistance tools and a means for removing regulatory and policy barriers to achieve these environmental goals.

For more information, please call 703-354-2172.

The SGP Update is a regular feature of the national SGP Outreach Team. To receive it via email, send your email address to chuck@getf.org.