



**SOUTHERN REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

2007



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SRRC Environmental Management System



Agricultural Research Service

Research, Education, and Economics
United States Department of Agriculture

SUBJECT: SRRC Environmental Management System Policy Statement

TO: SRRC Personnel

FROM: John Patrick Jordan /s/
Center Director

The policy of the Southern Regional Research Center (SRRC) is to fully support and comply with Executive Order (E.O.) 13148, "Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management," which requires each Federal agency to develop and implement an Environmental Management System (EMS) at its locations. An EMS is a framework that allows an organization to consistently address the effects its operations may have on the environment.

The attached policy statement establishes the foundation of a successful EMS for SRRC.

David Daniels, the SRRC Safety, Health and Environmental Specialist, will coordinate the SRRC efforts towards the implementation of the SRRC Environmental Management System. I challenge each of you to be better stewards of our environment and make pollution prevention an essential part of your operational decision practices.

Enclosure

cc w/encl:
E. King, AD
D. Brennan, AAD
A. Tucker, DAD



Center Director's Office
Southern Regional Research Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

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SRRC

**Environmental Management System
Policy Statement**

The Southern Regional Research Center conducts research to develop solutions to agricultural problems. In conjunction with this mission, SRRC is committed to protecting human health and the environment; meeting or exceeding Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, codes, and guidelines; and employing sustainable pollution prevention practices. Whenever feasible, SRRC will utilize pollution prevention initiatives as the means for achieving compliance. We will strive to minimize impacts and continually improve our environmental performance by:

- Maintaining a policy of commitment to environmental excellence.
- Developing annual goals, objectives, and targets to advance our program performance in terms of both regulated and unregulated impacts.
- Considering environmental impacts when making policy, planning, purchasing, and operating decisions.
- Identifying and complying with pertinent requirements in Federal, State, and local laws and regulations; permits; Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, and MSA policies and procedures; and industry codes that we must adhere to.
- Requesting the necessary resources to successfully carry out our goals, objectives, and targets.
- Making personnel aware of their environmental roles and responsibilities, providing appropriate training, and holding employees accountable for their performance and actions, including recognizing them for outstanding performance.
- Effectively communicating with employees, partners, stakeholders, customers, and the general public, our commitment to the environment and soliciting their input in developing and achieving our goals and objectives.
- Routinely monitoring our environmental operations and conducting periodic inspections, audits, and reviews to ascertain that we meet applicable standards and to evaluate our program effectiveness.
- Correcting identified deficiencies in a timely manner and taking appropriate steps to prevent their recurrence.
- Clearly documenting and reporting the progress and achievements related to this policy.

1. Maintaining a policy of commitment to environmental excellence.

Commitment: It is the policy of the SRRC to demonstrate its commitment to environmental protection and management through the following: **1)** Adherence to applicable regulations of Federal, State, and local Governments, Policies and Procedures of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Agricultural Research Service, and Executive Orders, and **2)** Advancement of stewardship of natural resources by using sound management systems and conducting research to reduce impacts of agricultural production in the MSA, integral with the Pollution Prevention Program. Executive Order 13148 is the foundation of this policy. Executive Order 13101 incorporates requirements for proactive affirmative procurement.

Environmental Management: An Environmental Management System (EMS) was established that combines the goals of Executive Order 13148, Executive Order 13101, and the benefits of the research programs that are beneficial to the environment of the Mid South Area and SRRC.

2. Developing annual goals, objectives, and targets to advance our program performance in terms of both regulated and unregulated impacts.

- Establish Environmental Management System Coordinator at SRRC.
- Designate the Location Safety Committee to include the responsibility of monitoring and facilitating the operation of the Location EMS. The Location Safety Committee shall co-function as the EMS Committee.
- Develop an environmental audit to be completed by the Location Safety Committee.
- Energy Management goals from Area Engineer's report.
- Identify equipment using ozone-depleting substances.
- Initiate and maintain an annual Safety/Environmental award.
- Improve SRRC recycling through training and communication.
- Improve chemical waste minimization.
- Improve EMS training for new employees and existing employees.

3. Considering environmental impacts when making policy, planning, purchasing, and operating decisions.

- **Affirmative Procurement:** An Affirmative Procurement Program has been established in the SRRC to implement the goals of Executive Order 13101. This program requires all credit card holders to be trained in their responsibilities. RCRA 6002 insures compliance with the requirements established by the EPA for procurement of environmentally preferable products.
- **NEPA Compliance:** All elements of the National Environmental Policy Act are considered to insure full compliance. Any construction projects in the SRRC undergo an environmental analysis before construction begins. Repair and Maintenance (R&M) Projects are analyzed on an individual basis by the Location Coordinator, and if appropriate, a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX)

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decision is made by the Area Director. All R&M Projects not qualifying for the CATEX and other construction projects undergo either an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact statement, whichever is pertinent.

4. Identifying and complying with pertinent requirements in Federal, State, and local laws and regulations; permits; Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, and MSA policies and procedures; and industry codes that we must adhere to.

- **Environmental Compliance:** Failure to comply with legal requirements and Executive Orders can have serious consequences for the SRRC, the MSA and the Agency. Line management accountability for environmental performance is an integral component of this Policy. All SRRC personnel must act within the scope of their duties to be eligible for the legal protection of the Agency. Violation of any Federal, State, or local law or regulation is not within the scope of any employee's duties. Violations can result in civil or criminal actions and disciplinary action up to and including removal from the Federal Service.

Executive Order 13148, Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management:

- Integrates environmental accountability into decision-making and long-term planning management systems;
- Promotes adoption of lowest life-cycle cost environmental practices, strives toward zero waste and pollutant generation goals; and
- Requires Federal facilities to inform their workers and the public of potential sources of pollution and to reduce pollution at the source and use of toxic chemical and hazardous substances.

Executive Order 13101, Greening the Government through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition:

- Directs initiatives for acquisition of recycled and recyclable products and environmentally preferable products and services;
- Requires development of affirmative procurement programs;
- Requires review and revision of standards and product specifications;
- Establishes reporting requirements; and
- Recommends outreach programs to promote adoption of practices endorsed in this order.

Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government through Efficient Energy Management:

- Reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gases 30 percent by 2010, compared to 1990 levels;
- Reduce facility use of petroleum products;
- Reduce water consumption;

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- Operate energy-efficient equipment;
- Acquisition of alternative fuel vehicles and use of alternative fuel;
- Reduction of fuel consumption in motor vehicles; and
- Implementation of the Energy Savings Performance Contract.

Executive Order 13134, Developing and Promoting Biobased Products and Bioenergy:

- Increase the use of agricultural commodities and develop new markets;
- Provide income to farmers and increase employment;
- Enhance energy security and economic security;
- Increase environmental benefits and reduce greenhouse gases; and
- Increase production and use of biobased products and bioenergy 30 percent by 2010 compared to 1999 base year.

Executive Order 13149, Greening the Government through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency:

- Reduce annual vehicle fleet petroleum consumption by 20 percent at the end of 2005, as compared to 1999 levels;
- Increase average EPA fuel economy rating of passenger cars and light trucks by 3 miles per gallon by the end of 2005;
- Reduce petroleum fuel consumption through the acquisition of alternative fuel vehicles, as required by section 303 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992;
- Use alternative fuels; and
- Acquire higher fuel economy vehicles and reduce the number of vehicles.

5. Requesting the necessary resources to successfully carry out our goals, objectives and targets.

Resources: In order to successfully carry out our goals, objectives, and targets of the EMS, the SRRC must request the necessary resources. One way this is accomplished is through the Annual ARMP process. During the ARMP process, SRRC engages in an extensive review at the Location level followed by a review at the Area level. Requests are made for the following pertinent Programs:

- Hazardous Waste Disposal/Removal
- Employee Assistance Program
- Occupational Medical Surveillance Program
- Safety and Health Training
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Safety and Health Equipment

6. Making personnel aware of their environmental roles and responsibilities, providing appropriate training, and holding employees accountable for their performance and actions, including recognizing them for outstanding performance.

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- A copy of the SRRC EMS plan will be posted in the mailroom. Informational emails which provide EMS awareness information will be developed and distributed to Location personnel.
- The EMS Coordinator shall direct personnel to various types of EMS training, but specifically it is a requirement for all employees to complete the awareness training Online at AgLearn.
- All new employees receive new employee orientation which contains a segment on environmental management and the Location's environmental management system.
- The MSA has in place procedures for recognizing employees for outstanding performance through a variety of awards. Also, the SRRC plans to issue an annual safety award which includes procedures for nominating employees for outstanding performance in environmental management.

7. Effectively communicating with employees, partners, stakeholders, customers, and the general public, our commitment to the environment and soliciting their input in developing and achieving our goals and objectives.

Right-To-Know and Pollution Prevention: The SRRC informs the public and its employees of possible sources of pollution resulting from facility operations through timely planning and reporting under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) and through collection of chemical inventories and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).

The **Pollution Prevention** program is all-encompassing and includes nutrient management, chemical management, sustainable agriculture, energy conservation, research related to reducing the impacts of agricultural production on the environment within the Mid South Area, and education/outreach activities.

Location Safety Meetings – The Safety Committee co-functions as an EMS Committee.

8. Routinely monitoring our environmental operations and conducting periodic inspections, audits, and reviews to ascertain that we meet applicable standards and to evaluate our program effectiveness.

EMS Review and Revision: It is the policy of the MSA that the Area and Location EMSs be reviewed annually on or before June 30, beginning June, 2006. Necessary revisions should be incorporated and a written report should be compiled. At SRRC, the Safety, Health and Environmental Committee, normally referred to as Safety Committee, conducts the annual review.

Environmental Audit – The Location has conducted a precursory environmental audit and used that information to enhance the Location EMS.

Annual Safety Inspections – Each Location is inspected at least once annually by Area Safety, Health and Environmental personnel. Within each written report of annual Area "Safety" inspections, EMS is listed as a heading with observations, comments, and/or discrepancies. Additionally, during Location

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self-inspections, environmental elements receive focus and consideration.

CARE Team Reviews – Periodic reviews are conducted by CARE Teams.

9. Correcting identified deficiencies in a timely manner and taking appropriate steps to prevent their recurrence.

Environmental Audit Response – After completing the latest environmental audit, SRRC began to immediately address issues. Sound environmental management principals are employed to engage in corrective action and to initiate new programs.

Safety Inspection response – When environmental issues are noted during annual inspections, timetables are established for corrective action. Recommendations and or directives are issued to prevent recurrence.

10. Clearly documenting and reporting the progress and achievements related to this policy.

Written Report after Annual Review – After the review of the EMS, conducted annually on or before June 30 (beginning June 30, 2006) a written report is prepared which clearly documents the progress and achievements related to the respective EMS.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS AND PROGRAMS IN THE SRRC EMS

Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscaping: Cost-effective and environmentally sound landscaping practices are employed to reduce adverse impacts to the environment. The policy of the MSA is to use native vegetation in landscaping projects. Because native trees, plants, grasses, etc. are endemic to the environment, a more natural impact results from their use. Naturally occurring vegetation is situated and located within SRRC facilities to need less watering, maintenance, and other activities that have negative connotations regarding environmental impact.

Recycling Program: SRRC strives to establish and maintain recycling programs for any recyclable material. Special focus should be placed on glass, paper, batteries, metals, oils, printer cartridges, and plastics.

Reductions in Ozone-Depleting Substances: The SRRC has practically eliminated its use of ozone-depleting substances. The remaining equipment, which uses EPA-approved R-12 refrigerant, will be phased out considering life-cycle length and available funds.

Toxic Chemical Release Reduction: The SRRC reduces its releases and transfers of toxic chemicals through innovative pollution prevention and effective facility management and acquisition and procurement practices.

Toxic Chemical and Hazardous Substance Use Reduction: The SRRC reduces the use of specifically selected toxic chemicals, hazardous substances, and pollutants through

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identification of proven substitutes and established or advanced facility management practices. The SRRC has specifically targeted the following five chemicals:

- Mercury
- Cadmium
- Lead
- PCBs
- Naphthalene

Utilization of Biobased Products: Whenever possible, the SRRC utilizes biobased products including the following:

- Biodiesel in backup generators and other diesel fueled equipment.
- Lubricants, oils, and other petroleum products.
- Carpet and other building materials.
- Cleaning supplies.
- Recycled paper products.

Pesticide Program: It is the policy of the SRRC to comply with all Federal, State and local laws governing the use and application of pesticides. Employees engaged in pesticide application are required to be trained and certified according to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Pesticide use and storage is strictly monitored and SRRC has written policies and/or standard operating procedures within specific pesticide programs.

Chemical Hygiene Program – SRRC has initiated laboratory chemical hygiene programs. The utilization of written chemical hygiene plans and Location Chemical Hygiene Officers supports chemical management, hazardous waste management and contributes to waste minimization.

Infectious Waste/Biological Waste: SRRC labs that generate biological waste have programs in place to properly dispose of that waste. Pertinent Federal, State and local laws are strictly adhered to.

Radiological Safety Program: At SRRC, Radiological Safety Programs are in place. A Radiological Officer is appointed by the Location Coordinator and the Radiological Officer routinely interacts with the USDA Radiation Safety Office to insure compliance with all pertinent Federal, State and Local regulations. Proper maintenance and disposal of radiological material is a high priority at all Locations utilizing radiological material in research.