

10_19_2005

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS

to improve safety in the workplace, the NCCOS Environmental Management System (EMS) Team is preparing for *EMS internal audits*. A facility audit addresses the requirements that are documented and allow for periodic and objective review that impact facility environmental operations and/or practices. Audit results will serve as a tool for improving overall environmental performance and agency stewardship in the conduct of our mission. The EMS program is dependent upon each employee's assistance and services that may interact with the environment. All NCCOS employees are reminded to complete the on-line EMS training no later than 31st October, 2005

(<https://www8.nos.noaa.gov/nccos/ems/html/starttutorial.aspx>). NCCOS audits are scheduled as follows: NCCOS HQ - November 1st, 2005, Beaufort Lab, NC - November 2nd, 2005 and CCEHBR/ HML Labs - Charleston, SC on November 3rd, 2005. For more information, contact your EMS representative or Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR), the NCCOS EMS representative; rick.meitzler@noaa.gov or (843)-762-8842.

10_26_2005

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Benefits from New Website Explaining How NCCOS EMS Reduces Environmental Impacts

The NCCOS Environmental Management System (EMS) is a formal set of management processes and practices that enables NCCOS to manage and reduce its environmental impacts and operate with greater efficiency and control. Through a continuous cycle of plan, do, check, and act, the EMS results in improved processes and actions to meet business and environmental goals. NCCOS employees are encouraged to visit the new NCCOS EMS Homepage:

https://www.ems.noaa.gov/Sites/NCCOS/HTML/Public_Home.htm where they can learn about their work process, the environmental consequences of their work, EMS requirements, and potential improvements related to that work. A successful NCCOS EMS Program is one where *everyone* understands what an EMS is and knows their roles and responsibilities. Meaningful employee involvement in the EMS development process greatly enhances employee "ownership" of the EMS and is critical to the success of an EMS. For more information please contact Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR) at 843-762-8842 or Rick.Meitzler@noaa.gov.

11_08_2005

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Continues Towards December Environmental Management System Self Declaration

NCCOS continues to make progress in becoming the first NOS organization to implement and maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) that conforms to NOAA's EMS requirements and Executive Order 13148 by the December 31, 2005 deadline. Since December 2004, an NCCOS EMS Team comprised of representatives from each NCCOS facility, has worked with top management to develop an all encompassing EMS for NCCOS. The plan also allows flexibility to address specialized

functions unique to each facility. The Internal Audit of NCCOS facilities was completed this week using NOAA's audit criteria. The auditor visited our facilities to observe our operations, to interview staff including facility staff, laboratory staff, members of the EMS Team and Senior Management, and to assess EMS documents to determine NCCOS's conformance to the written EMS. The auditor will prepare a report of findings and recommendations and/or best practices that will be reviewed by management for appropriate actions. The final phase, before NCCOS can self declare as having fully complied with E.O. 13148 and have a fully implemented EMS, will be an External Audit conducted by an outside auditor scheduled for the week of November 28th, 2005. For more information please contact Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR) at 843-762-8842 or Rick.Meitzler@noaa.gov.

11_16_2005

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Preparing for the EMS External Audits

The NCCOS Environmental Management System (EMS) Team is preparing for EMS external audits while waiting for the EMS Internal Audit Report. The EMS external audits are scheduled as follows: NCCOS CCEHBR Lab – Oxford, MD on December 1, 2005, HML/CCEHBR Labs – Charleston, SC on December 5th and 6th, 2005. For more information, contact your EMS representative or Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR), the NCCOS EMS representative, at rick.meitzler@noaa.gov or (843)-762-8842.

11_23_2005

NCCOS EMS

Exactly What is an NCCOS EMS Audit?

Audit findings are determined by comparing audit evidence to audit criteria. Evidence is objective information collected by the auditors through interviews, visual inspection, and document reviews. The audit criteria are the expectations of how conditions should be.

NCCOS' EMS Audit criteria are the [EMS System Elements](#) established by the NCCOS [Environmental Management System Team](#). When the collected evidence is compared to the pre-established criteria a determination can be made as to whether the audited entity does or does not conform. This determination can be a positive or negative finding and is simply one of conformance or non-conformance with the agency criteria. As a result the audit always produces findings. By identifying the root causes of nonconformities and deficiencies, and correcting them with appropriate preventive management actions, EMS works to eliminate reoccurrences. For more information about the External EMS Audits of 01, 05 and 06 Dec. 2005, contact your EMS representative or Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR/HML), the NCCOS EMS Representative, at rick.meitzler@noaa.gov or (843)762-8842.

12_7_2005

NCCOS EMS

Internal and External Audits Confirm NCCOS's Commitment to Conducting its Activities in a Safe and Environmentally Responsible Manner

An external audit examiner verified that NCCOS's Environmental Management System (EMS) program conforms with Executive Order 13148 which requires appropriate federal

agencies to develop and fully implement an EMS by December 31, 2005. This finding supported results of the internal audit that found the NCCOS EMS fully implemented at a high level of consistency, awareness, continual improvement, and management review standards. The audit results also demonstrate NCCOS progress toward the global universal ISO 14001 EMS standard. As a result of the audit findings, NCCOS is eligible to submit to DOC/NOAA an authenticated self declaration statement and will do so in advance of the December 31, 2005 deadline. The EMS has established a system for continuous improvement of our environmental performance and increased commitment to a safer workplace. In FY06, we will expand EMS principles, continue improving our facilities, and start tracking performance and trends. Congratulations to all of the NCCOS personnel who contributed to the high level of conformance achieved during this development and implementation process. For more information about the NCCOS EMS System and Audits please contact your EMS representative or Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR/HML), the NCCOS EMS Representative, at rick.meitzler@noaa.gov or (843)762-8842.

12_14_2005

NCCOS EMS

Operational Controls Improve Consistency of NCCOS EMS

Operational Controls are work instructions developed to ensure that environmental and other important operations activities, processes, products, and services associated with the significant environmental aspects of your EMS are properly and consistently controlled and maintained. The work instructions should be short, simple, and easy to use, maintain, and update. NCCOS developed a template which is used for a variety of different operations. A work instruction must include: 1. What needs to be done; 2. How it should be done; 3. How it will be maintained (and repaired, if needed); 4. Who is responsible for doing the work; and 5. How the proper documentation will be maintained. To familiarize yourself with the NCCOS EMS work instructions please go to the NCCOS EMS website (<http://www.seco.noaa.gov/EMS/NCCOS>), follow one of the top links (login required) and click on the *Operational Controls/Work Instructions*. For more information about the NCCOS EMS Operational Controls contact your EMS representative or Rick Meitzler (CCEHBR/HML), the NCCOS EMS Representative, at rick.meitzler@noaa.gov or (843)762-8842.

03_22_2006

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Environmental Management System (EMS) Team Has New Charter

In a significant development to NCCOS' commitment to environmental management and safety, NCCOS director Gary Matlock signed the EMS Team charter, which outlines the responsibilities of NCCOS and local facility EMS teams. An EMS provides organizations with a proactive, systematic approach for managing the potential environmental consequences of their operations. As an environmental steward, it is imperative that NCCOS maintains a robust EMS. The team met earlier this month to discuss the recent NCCOS EMS internal and external audits and initiate final corrective efforts. Additionally, the team discussed various EMS management criteria for chemicals and materials, in conjunction with objectives and targets for FY06, as well as various

software systems to manage and control all EMS documents, elements, and waste management activities. The signed document has been added to the EMS web page: <http://www.seco.noaa.gov/EMS/NCCOS/index.htm>. For more information, please contact: Rick Meitzler (HML) at 843-762-8842 or Rick.Meitzler@noaa.gov

05_10_2006

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Converting Research Vessel to Use of Biodiesel Fuel

The National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) is engaging NOAA's commitment to stewardship of the environment by conversion of the NOAA Research Vessel (R/V) Hildebrand to use biodiesel fuel, an environmentally friendly fuel substitute usually made from vegetable oil. The pilot project is consistent with NOAA's Environmental Management System Policy. NCCOS is currently modifying engine parts and fuel filtering-stability components to accomplish this conversion. Biodiesel is non-toxic, biodegradable, and has fewer emissions than petroleum-based diesel. For more information contact: David Johnson at (252) 728-8746 or David.Johnson@noaa.gov. For more information on NCCOS' Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research (CCFHR) Beaufort Lab go to: <http://www.ccfhr.noaa.gov/>

08_09_2006

NCCOS EMS

EMS and Safety Audits Completed at NCCOS Charleston Facilities Verify Improvements

Independent National Ocean Service Safety and Environmental Management System (EMS) audits were conducted at the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science's (NCCOS) Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research (CCEHBR) and Hollings Marine Laboratory (HML) at Charleston, South Carolina on July 10-14, 2006. The audits verified identifiable and measurable improvements in safety protocols and operations at these facilities. The productive exchange of information between the audit teams and a broad cross-section of CCEHBR and HML staffs was particularly noteworthy and confirmed the high level of importance assigned by NCCOS to environmental protection and management and workplace safety. For more information, contact Rick Meitzler at (843) 762-8842 or rick.meitzler@noaa.gov. (CCEHBR, HML))

08_23_2006

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Small Boat S.F. Hildebrand Completes First Environmentally Friendly Research Mission after Converting to Biodiesel

On August 10, the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) Class III small boat S.F. Hildebrand (NOAA R1492) completed its first research mission since converting to run on 100% soybean-based diesel. The conversion is consistent with the NOAA commitment to environmental stewardship, the Code of Environmental Management Principles for Federal Agencies (CEMP) and Executive Order 13148, "Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management." The hydraulic system and engine crankcases also now contain biologically derived lubricants.

The benefits were immediately noticeable when the typical diesel exhaust smell and smoke disappeared. Biologically-based fuels and lubricants eliminate sulfur contamination, other petroleum-related spill and exhaust hazards to human and marine life and also can reduce engine wear. For more information, contact Roger Mays at (252) 728-8798 or roger.mays@noaa.gov. For more information on NCCOS' Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research (CCFHR) Beaufort Lab go to: <http://www.ccfhr.noaa.gov/>

09_27_2006

NCCOS EMS

NCCOS Institutes Comprehensive Chemical and Biological Waste Disposal Contract to Increase Efficiency of Environmental Management Practices and Reduce Costs

The NOAA Eastern Regional Acquisition Division recently awarded a five-year renewable blanket purchase agreement (BPA) to Pollution Control Industries, Inc. of East Chicago, Indiana for the removal of chemical and biological wastes from three National Centers for Coastal Ocean Sciences (NCCOS) laboratories in South Carolina and Maryland. The contract was initiated as an ongoing effort to promote the Environmental Management System and improve efficiency. By this agreement, participating laboratories expect to reduce costs to NCCOS, promote uniformity in waste management programs, improve waste tracking, reduce paperwork, provide more timely approval and removal of waste, eliminate the need for repetitive individual purchases, and reduce administrative costs across NOAA. The award allows additional NCCOS facilities to participate in the BPA. For further information, contact Rick Meitzler at (843) 762-8842 or Rick.Meitzler@noaa.gov or Jay Lewis at (410) 226-5193 x119 or Jay.Lewis@noaa.gov (HML)