



# British Columbia's Environmental Sector

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## Environmental Industry in British Columbia

The environmental industry in British Columbia is comprised of over 1,350 companies generating US\$ 2.3 billion in revenues. The sector includes: environmental construction, recycling, and solid and hazardous waste management, consulting services, water and wastewater goods and services, renewable energy, air pollution and noise control, analytical services and green building and sustainable urban planning.

The declining focus on pollution prevention is spurring more energy-efficient and cleaner technologies for application in the primary resource, manufacturing, energy and service sectors. BC's environmental business has evolved into a complex and rapidly changing network of sectors no longer focused on "end-of-pipe" solutions to treat pollutants released into the air, soil or water. The sector now includes an extensive array of engineering, analytical and design services designed to help business incorporate environmental considerations into their production processes.

An industry assessment of the water/wastewater industry concluded that BC has the potential to become a world leader in this area. Over 330 companies are involved in the manufacture of small to medium-sized water and wastewater treatment systems; storm water management; and groundwater remediation and water reuse technologies. Demand in these markets will be fuelled by emerging water shortages, the deterioration of water quality due to population growth, industrialization, lack of adequate sewage systems and excessive use of agricultural pesticides and fertilizers.

## Best Prospects/Services

In BC, the most promising opportunity segments in environmental technology and related sectors are:

- Alternative energy systems and associated technologies including:
  - fuel cells and clean fuel technologies
  - small scale hydro
  - biomass co-generation systems
- Urban Environmental management systems including:
  - Contaminated site remediation and brown field reclamation
  - Green building design, technologies and products
  - Planning for Sustainable communities and integrated environmental solutions
  - Urban environmental management systems
- Water/waste water technologies, services and solutions

Areas of corporate needs having particular significance for environment-related technology development in BC include:

- Technologies and services that increase energy efficiency, particularly in industrial processes;
- Cost-effective alternative energy sources such as applications for biomass or industry-specific small hydro, wind and solar applications;
- Eco-efficiency technologies that enhance production and reduce transportation and other costs, (particularly for energy-intensive industries such as forestry and mining);
- Alternative fuel technologies for the transportation sector.

### **Opportunities for US firms**

US companies can often times be most effective by working with Canadian environmental companies in some form of business alliance such as a strategic alliance. In addition, since many "standard" environmental services are already widely available in Canada, it is important to focus on specific value-added technologies and products that will be competitive in this market.

### **For More Information**

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