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Cleaner Production Training Results in Savings in Electricity, Water Consumption and Pesos for Industry



Implementing cleaner production processes helps industries attain cost savings and reduce pollutant loads to the community.

USAID has been actively involved in promoting cleaner production training and technical assistance in Latin America over the past several years. USAID supports a “Cleaner Production Center” (CMP+L) in Mexico that provides guidance and advice to industry in how to implement cleaner production processes in their business practices to attain cost savings and reduce pollutant loads to the community.



A facility that has adopted clean production practices.

The Results

In some cases water consumption dropped from 30-50%; hazardous waste treatment requirements dropped by 50%; and electricity consumption was reduced by 80%. One company made simple efficiency process changes, requiring no monetary investment that resulted in savings of US\$ 40,000 per month. Another company with an investment of about US\$ 2,000 is saving about US\$ 7,000 a year in reduced electricity consumption alone. Finally, with an investment of about US\$ 2,500 one company saved over US\$ 900 per month, representing a payback period of less than 3 months.

How it Happens

In February 2003, USAID sponsored a workshop in Queretaro, Mexico – a highly industrialized area north of Mexico City - on the subject of cleaner production in industry. Working together with CMP+L and Queretaro State’s Secretary of Sustainable Development (SEDESU) the Institute of International Education organized a 3-day training event to introduce the principles of CP to the industry of this region. As part of the workshop, site visits and an “Audit Lite” were performed providing participants with direct evidence of improvements that could be made resulting in savings of energy consumption, water consumption and waste production; savings in all these areas produce significant savings in operating costs – a welcome end product for all manufacturers. Most importantly, it has been the willingness of SEDESU, and in particular, Ing. José Ramón Pérez Contreras, to play the role of “local champion” which allowed for follow-on activities and the quick application of learning to achieve real results.

SEDESU closely monitored the participating industries and let them know they expected to see results in 3 months, at which time SEDESU organized a meeting where the original industries

could present their results to a new group of industries. A second follow-up meeting attracted 100 participants, due to the good news generated from the first follow-up event. The industries – including oil & lube manufacturing, plastic caps, cardboard containers, powdered food and milk manufacturing - presented their actions, investment and savings with remarkable results. While it is not always the case that training events

can be directly linked to real and quantifiable results, in this case it has. This was due to a long-term commitment to the subject by USAID in this region, a very practical and realistic training approach, and a highly motivated and persuasive local champion who is inspiring industry in this area to invest in a cleaner and more productive future.

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