



South Carolina Small Business Assistance Program

RMP Air Modeling Project

RMP Network is designed to share successful practices in Risk Management Program (RMP) implementation, risk communication, and use of the data. The projects detailed in RMP Network are easily reproducible, low cost and promote partnership-building in the community. This fact sheet does not provide extensive information about a project. Rather, it is intended to help stakeholders generate ideas, identify tools and pinpoint funding sources for accident preparedness and prevention initiatives.

Purpose

The South Carolina Small Business Assistance Program's (SBAP) RMP Air Modeling Project helped participating small businesses and small municipalities complete their RMP Offsite Consequence Analysis.

The Risk Management Program requires approximately 36,000 facilities to provide important accident prevention data to the public beginning June 21, 1999. RMP facilities are required to give EPA information on their hazard assessments (including Offsite Consequence Analysis), accident prevention activities, five-year accident history, management systems, and emergency response plans. All information except the Offsite Consequence Analysis will be made available to the general public via the Internet.

Partnerships

The South Carolina SBAP partnered with technical staff in the Bureau of Air Quality (under the Department of Health and Environmental Control) to develop and operate the compliance assistance program. They also worked with the State Propane Board and State Fire Marshall's Office to publicize the program.

Funding

Approximately \$5,000 was obtained from Clean Air Act Title V permit fees paid by industry.

Time Commitment

Estimates ranged from five minutes to 30 minutes for completion of each facility's air modeling, depending on the complexity of the facility.



Results

Questionnaires were mailed to 450 qualified small businesses and municipalities. The SBAP offered to perform the air dispersion modeling required under the Risk Management Program's Off-site Consequence Analysis. To qualify, a business had to employ less than 100, be privately owned and operated, and not be a major source as defined by the Clean Air Act. Confidentiality was guaranteed by SBAP. Sixty-four small businesses and municipalities took advantage of the free compliance assistance program and submitted key information about their RMP-covered chemicals. A printout was sent to each participating facility within two weeks that included RMP distance to endpoint values which could be incorporated directly into the facility's RMPlan.

Additional facilities came into the program as a result of word-of-mouth publicity. As a result, SBAP discovered that small municipalities generally were unaware of RMP requirements and determined that additional outreach was necessary.

Technologies

RMP*Comp, free-of-charge software developed by EPA, was used to perform off-site consequence analysis modeling for the program participants. This software takes the guess work out of calculating RMP's Offsite Consequence Analysis - it makes the same calculations electronically that would have to be done manually after following procedures in EPA's written guidance. RMP*Comp generally gives conservative modeling results so that companies can be assured that they are within acceptable endpoint limits.

Challenges

SBAP received assistance from partners in the South Carolina DHEC to target small businesses that met the core requirements for assistance. Since the regulatory program areas made no distinction between large and small businesses in their databases, the SBAP narrowed the DHEC list manually using industry guides. Also, the SBAP found that "mom and pop" businesses needed more assistance due to lack of access to the Internet.

Next Steps

On an ad hoc basis, the SC Small Business Assistance Program will help small businesses with their RMP air modeling updates after the June 21, 1999, initial compliance deadline.

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