



HIGHLIGHTS

December 17, 2012

Survey of Environmental Compliance and Sustainability

Report Number HR-MA-13-001

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Postal Service's vision is to be a sustainability leader by building a culture of conservation. Sustainability involves harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged. The Office of Sustainability is responsible for managing programs that track and report on sustainability issues and programs that impact energy or environmental compliance. In fiscal year (FY) 2011, the office identified 1,016 facilities as 'high-risk' based on various environmental factors.

Challenges exist that affect the success of these programs, including:

- The Office of Sustainability had a budget of \$24 million for FY 2012. In addition to the field environmental projects funded by the office, areas and districts fund their own projects. As a result, it is difficult to centrally track costs.
- A recent policy change requires violation notices to be forwarded to the Office of Sustainability. However, those responsible for reporting violations may not be aware of the current requirements and reporting process.

In coordination with the chief Sustainability and Environmental officer, we developed and distributed a survey

to personnel at a sample of high-risk facilities. The purpose of the survey was to obtain field personnel's knowledge of the Postal Service's environmental and sustainability regulatory requirements and programs to assist in assessing high-risk environmental issues.

CONCLUSION:

We received survey responses from each Postal area, with response rates ranging from 41 to 72 percent, and 50 percent overall. These included responses from plant, vehicle maintenance facility, network distribution center, and Post Office personnel. We presented the survey results in four categories:

- Environmental Management Process.
- Environmental Compliance.
- Training.
- Facility Deactivation.

We plan to use the survey results to guide future reviews of environmental compliance and sustainability.

WHAT THE OIG RECOMMENDED:

The survey results are provided for informational purposes only. We did not verify the responses, formulate conclusions or offer any recommendations.