

Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) Awards Overview



Purpose

The Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) is a voluntary partnership with businesses, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, federal entities, schools and universities, and community organizations designed to promote a cleaner and better environment for Louisiana. ELP members recognize and promote pollution prevention, waste reduction, community outreach and other efforts that go above and beyond regulatory requirements. ELP membership signifies a commitment to support the ELP core principles. The ELP Awards Program recognizes outstanding activities and projects undertaken by the membership that demonstrate environmental leadership and the pursuit of a cleaner, safer environment.

Project Categories

- Pollution Prevention (P2) (Project and Program)
- Community Environmental Outreach (CEO) (Project and Program)
- Environmental Management Systems
- Environmental Ordinances

In the Pollution Prevention and Community Environmental Outreach categories, applicants may submit project entries or program entries. A project is an undertaking at one location and programs are broader efforts, usually a combination of several projects that are coordinated and focused on achievement of a particular goal. Project and program entries are judged separately.

In addition to the categories mentioned above, special recognition awards are chosen by the LDEQ Secretary and presented for significant contributions to environmental and conservation initiatives.

General Eligibility Requirements

Any member of the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program is eligible to enter. Projects must have been completed, or have benefits realized, in the previous calendar year. Eligible participants may submit multiple project entries and qualify to win multiple awards, based on the merit of each project. Enforcement screen guidelines apply to all award categories. Be aware that serious violations will disqualify the applicant. The LDEQ Secretary makes the final selection of award recipients based on selection panel recommendations and consideration of facility compliance records.

Certain projects are **not** eligible:

- Projects that have been submitted for a previous Environmental Leadership Program Award*
- Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP's) designated under federal regulations.
- Beneficial Environmental Projects (BEP's) designated under state regulations.
- Projects mandated by enforcement action, usually a court order (*e.g., settlement agreement, consent decree, some compliance orders, etc...*).

**A project may be closely related to a previous entry and still be eligible provided that the current entry demonstrates fully that the project's scope and performance claims are clearly above and beyond the initial entry.*

Project Category Descriptions

Pollution Prevention Category

Pollution prevention achievement awards recognize projects that have led to measurable reductions in air pollution, water pollution, solid and hazardous waste, or have contributed to significant energy and resource conservation. Projects that achieve reduction of pollution at any level in the **waste management hierarchy** may be eligible for an award, but the entry must demonstrate the relevance of the hierarchy to the project.

Examples of Pollution Prevention Projects:

- Process improvements that result in reduced emissions, discharges or generation of wastes
- Achievement of zero discharge for selected waste or emission streams
- Projects that reduce the environmental risks of a facility
- Innovative approaches through product redesign to reduce the lifecycle impact of manufacturing and use of a product
- Projects to reduce reliance on incinerators and deep wells as disposal options
- Beneficial reuse of waste materials
- Emergency releases reduction
- Working with suppliers, customers, and smaller companies to promote pollution prevention
- Projects to minimize the impact of waste and promote responsible waste handling in communities (e.g. recyclables collection programs or Litter-free Events).
- Area-wide Environmental Improvements including but not limited to (beautification, recycling, litter prevention waste reduction, graffiti abatement and cleanups

Community Environmental Outreach Category

The Community Environmental Outreach Award recognizes innovative projects that contribute to enhancing the quality of the environment for the local community.

Examples of Projects in this Category:

- A community project that enhances environmental quality

- An activity to improve the interaction and involvement of the facility with the community in dealing with environmental concerns such as a community-industry panel
- Partnership development with other organizations to achieve environmental improvements including waste reduction/pollution prevention projects
- An innovative environmental education project
- A mentoring project with suppliers or smaller companies to prevent pollution or reduce risk
- Adopt-A-Spot/Block/Street/etc...; Campus and Receptacle Drives, Litter Report Cards.
- Facility specific environmental reports and/or communication tools
- Voluntary participation in a project to evaluate ambient air and water quality in the community
- An inter-company or multi-company environmental project
- A wildlife enhancement or natural heritage preservation project
- Educating the public about environmental issues. This may include but is not limited to: organizing and presenting environmental presentations/workshops/seminars in schools and the community; development of environmental education materials including fact sheets, web applications and other resources.

Environmental Ordinance Category

Must demonstrate creation or improvement of strong environmental ordinances with enforcement built in including but not limited to:

- Record of addressing illegal dumping
- Noise, litter, or odor reduction efforts
- Enforcement program
- Recycling programs
- Environmental court

Outstanding Ordinance and Enforcement Development must take place in the calendar year preceding the award ceremony.

Environmental Management System (EMS) Category

This award category recognizes exceptional improvements in facility environmental performance resulting from innovative implementation or enhancement to a model environmental management system (ISO 14001, or third-party certified). The award recognizes both the management system improvement and the results achieved. The EMS improvement and results achieved must have occurred between **January 1** and **November 30 of the previous year** to be considered for the current year awards cycle.

The environmental management system must include the following five elements:

- Environmental policy
- Environmental planning (identifying significant environmental impacts, legal requirements, and setting quantifiable objectives)
- Environmental management implementation programs and procedures, including environmental training
- Environmental audits and corrective action
- Management review of the EMS

Successful entries will demonstrate the value of EMS by the improvement achieved in the facility's environmental performance. Award entries must document 1) The implementation of, or change in the facility's EMS and 2) The achieved performance improvement attributable to it and supported by the comparative data. This involves the use of quantifiable objectives for achieving tangible environmental benefits. Less tangible benefits are not discounted, but must be convincingly described.

Improved performance can be measured through:

- Improved level of regulatory compliance
- Reduction in energy, water, and materials use
- Reduction in waste generation
- Reduction of pollutant discharges to water
- Reduction of emissions to air
- Reduction of accidental releases to the environment
- Reduction of annual total reportable releases (TRI)
- Reduction of inherent process risk
- Reduction of risk posed by ancillary operations
- Application of green chemistry and engineering in process and product development
- Reduction of costs of environmental compliance and operations (eco-efficiency)
- Improved community acceptance of the facility's environmental performance

Examples of eligible EMS changes include:

- Significant improvements to an existing EMS
- Innovative and successful approaches to meeting one or more EMS elements
- Innovative methods of implementing a new EMS or changes to an existing EMS
- Effective means for assuring integration of environmental aspects and impact determination with facility objectives

Facility Eligibility

To enter, the facility must be a member of ELP including submission of the annual pollution prevention progress report. The facility must have an EMS certified to the ISO 14001 standard or have third-party certified EMS. The third party certification can be from the corporate office if the audit was made by people not associated with the facility's staff.

Facility Manager's Statement

The Environmental Management System category requires a statement signed by the senior facility manager attesting to the implementation and maintenance of a model environmental management system that complies with the requirements of the ELP. The facility manager's assessment of the facility's current regulatory compliance status is also required. This should be submitted using the "attach file" button.