



**Minutes**  
**Wisconsin Small Business Environmental Council**

April 24, 2014  
DNR Central Office  
101 S Webster Street, Madison, WI  
Room 713  
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Members Present:** Amy Litscher, Jeanne Whitish, Richard Klinke, Rep. André Jacque, J.D. Tripoli

**Absent:** Vince Ruffolo, Shane Lauterbach

**DNR Staff:** Laurel Sukup, Kimberly Ake, Jennifer Hamill, Lisa Ashenbrenner, Bart Sponseller

**Guests:**

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**Agenda Repair**

Introduction of new council member, J.D. Tripoli.

**Office of Business Support, Science, and Sustainability updates**

Laurel updated the council on the restructuring of the Office of Business Support, Science, and Sustainability.

- Office is directly attached to the Secretary's Office.
- Focus of office is integration across different programs within DNR.
- With Al Shea's retirement, Dave Siebert is acting Office Director. DNR is committed to filling Al's position on the council with someone at a similar level within the department.
- Office includes Science Services section as well as DOT liaisons, the Office of Energy, and environmental assessment staff. All of these staff work across many DNR programs.
- Main areas of focus:
  1. Green Tier – program for superior environmental performance.
  2. Sector Development Specialists – focus on sectors that have a large impact on the state's economy.
  3. Small Business Environmental Assistance Program – historically assisted with air issues but has now expanded into other environmental media.
    - The program is a good fit for the office, because there will be a lot of integration with other programs in DNR as well as outreach to businesses.
    - Also want to be a resource to help small businesses go beyond compliance.
    - The program is still working on filling a vacancy that will be the primary liaison with the Air Program.

**FROM THE SMALL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL**

For more information visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/CompAssist/sb/>

## **Small Business Environmental Assistance Program – Website introduction and project updates**

Kimberly took the council through the draft Small Business website that is currently in development.

Suggestions:

- Add farming to the industry list and provide resources specifically for small farms.
- If a business doesn't fall under one of the example industries they may think they don't have to do anything. May want to add a link to "other businesses" so they know they may still be subject to regulations. Or could keep everything vague so businesses don't get the wrong impression.
- Have a "Top 10 Most Common Questions" section to get at big issues up front.
- Provide definitions of "regulated pollutant," "hazardous waste," etc.
- Highlight that the program is confidential.
- Link to WEDC and have WEDC add a link to the Small Business Program on their website.
- Link to the Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Add stormwater resources to the "water" section.

There was a fair amount of discussion on how to address the program's confidentiality policy.

- Laurel and Kimberly have been working with department legal staff on how to define and address confidentiality.
- If a business says they are in violation, they would most likely be referred to other DNR staff to get back into compliance. Once they contact staff outside the Small Business Program, their information would no longer be confidential.
- Can refer businesses to DNR's Compliance Audit Program which offers limited liability for violations discovered through a voluntary audit.
- Very important to establish trust both with businesses that are calling the Small Business Program and with DNR staff in other programs.
- Rep. Jacque offered assistance if legislation is needed.

**Action Item: The Small Business Program will send another draft of the website to the council for review before it goes live.**

## **DNR Rules Review Participation – check in on process**

Kimberly passed out a brochure on the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program. The brochure provides basic information on the program and how it can help businesses.

For the last year, the council has been taking a new approach to looking at DNR regulations. The council reviews proposed rules or rule changes that are in the early stages of the rulemaking process and evaluate their potential impacts on small businesses.

It was decided that the small business staff will identify proposed rules they believe will have the most on impact small businesses and arrange for rule writers or other knowledgeable staff to speak on the topic. However, an additional list of rule changes that may impact small businesses will be sent to council members. Council members can request that other rules be addressed during the next meeting if there are any they are interested in.

**Action Item: Small business staff will look into inviting Secretary Stepp or other top DNR officials to a future council meeting.**

**Action Item: Small business staff will look into promoting public participation in future council meetings in the Wheeler Report or WisPolitics.**

**Vice-Chair Election**

J.D. Tripoli is the new vice chair.

**Next meeting: Thursday, July 10, 2014 9:00-12:00**