

Topic Hub: Environmental Mentoring Subsection : P2 Opportunities

Environmental mentors and programs have helped others address environmental challenges ranging from minimal regulatory compliance and basic environmental management systems, to cutting-edge P2 opportunities, technologies and initiatives. Whatever the focus area, it is likely that some individual, company or organization that has already "been there and done that", would be willing to mentor and share their learnings.

Mentoring can be beneficial in almost any environmental or pollution prevention issue, opportunity, or program. A few examples follow. When a publication or website is available for the cited example, the source can be found in the "Complete List of Links" section of this topic hub.

Topic Area	Mentoring Example
Air quality and climate change initiatives	The Sand River Project in Arizona involves a utility that mentors to smaller companies to help reduce air emissions.(Source: "The Mentoring Handbook").
Design for the environment (DfE); for product, process, or facility	Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI) coordinates and develops the Peer Exchange portion of the Department of Energy's Rebuild America program nationwide, and offers other mentoring services. Their forums bring peers together to utilize peer experience and influence to convey ideas and strategies, exchange ideas amongst attendees, develop projects, and enable continuing partnerships.(Source: SEI website).
Energy management	Portland General Electric (PGE) performs mentoring to schools in Oregon, in the area of energy efficiency. They conduct an audit with the salient facility staff, provide energy efficiency improvement tips, new equipment options, and provide capital cost and savings estimates. PGE assists where they can with implementation and financing or offsetting costs based on reduced load on the existing distribution system.
Eco-management	Catonsville Community College formed a consortium including the Maryland Environmental Business Alliance, the Environmental Managers of Maryland, the Maryland Energy Institute, the Governor's Workforce Investment Board and the Maryland State Department of Education to develop an alliance focused on improving skill development for environmental and energy occupations.
Environmental certifications or standards	The Natural Step (TNS) in Australia offers a personal learning course in which TNS implementers tutor others in applying this standard for sustainability.(Source: Australia TNS website).
Environmental management systems (EMS) and ISO 14000 implementation	In 1995 and 1996, environmental staff from the John Roberts Company mentored four smaller printing companies in developing their respective environmental management systems. Assistance included site visits, hands-on guidance, and technical support as needed.(Source: "The Mentoring Handbook").
Green purchasing and purchasing control systems	Herman Miller, a furniture manufacturer and service provider, holds conferences for employees and all suppliers on its environmental procurement policies. A second example is the King County (in western Washington) Environmental Purchasing Program, who frequently helps other jurisdictions develop their procurement practices and policies by sharing reports and bulletins, giving presentations, and advising via phone and e-mail.
Health and safety	The Lehigh Valley (Pennsylvania) Industrial Mutual Aid group mentors to small businesses in the valley on safety and health regulations and general workplace safety. The group stepped up to mentor over 200 businesses that deal with or use chemicals, after a fatal explosion occurred in a chemical plant in Allentown in the late 1990s.(Source: "Mentoring Program Enhances Safety").
Implementing best management practices	The Chemical Manufacturers Association, Responsible Care Program with its "mutual assistance network" compiles and disseminates company best practices, hosts regional networking meetings and offers Internet support. Also, their Management Systems Verification process brings in technical experts and representatives from the public to critique members.(Source: "The Mentoring Handbook").
Material or process substitution	Patagonia works closely with suppliers to minimize their environmental impacts; e.g., helping them successfully grow organic cotton. A second example is the EPA's DfE Industrial/Institutional Laundry Partnership Initiative which encourages and assists detergent formulators and launderers in designing and using products with improved environmental qualities.
P2 measurement and tracking systems	Companies that have purchased off-the-shelf software and tailored it to their specific operations, could share their learnings from implementing and using the software, and opinions on the utility of the software product.



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P2 technology and product development	The Santa Clara County Pollution Prevention Program is a county government-sponsored peer mentoring program that convenes companies in the metal finishing and printed circuit board industries to share pollution prevention information and ideas. They also organize workshops on technical subjects drawing on experts from various local companies (Source: "The Mentoring Handbook").
Regulatory compliance and integration	The Texas Enviromentor program instituted one-on-one mentoring through their Small Business Assistance Program. Mentors are volunteer professionals, matched to small businesses according to experience, industry sector, and geography. Assistance covers compliance and beyond, and is guaranteed confidential.
Resource recovery	Levi Strauss & Company works with suppliers worldwide on water quality. More than 35 water treatment systems were built or upgraded at suppliers' laundry and product finishing facilities. Many now recycle the treated water.
Regulatory or voluntary policy and rule-making	The States of Vermont and Minnesota were the first to draft legislation on labeling of products that contain mercury. Then, the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) helped convene the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York, Maine, Rhode Island, and New Jersey to put together model legislation for mercury notification and labelling, some of which has been adopted by these states. The individuals involved in this process have offered advice, information, and mentorship to other states seeking to pass similar notification or labeling statutes.
Sector specific P2	Circle & Square Global Car Service in Port Hadlock, WA, is a small car service company. Through their auto service industry association, a local community college, and other arenas, they mentor to others in the auto service industry on pollution prevention and greening related to this line of business.

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