



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

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**Subject:** Minutes of the Environmental Management System Committee Meeting on July 9, 2008

**To:** Location EMS Committee Members  
Research Leaders

**From:** Tamara Snipes, Chemist/EMS Coordinator

The EMS Committee met on July 9, 2008 at 11:00 AM in the CPMRU Conference Room. T. Snipes, L Marshall, P. Timper, T. Hendricks, R. Hornbuckle, and R. Scarborough were the committee members in attendance. The meeting started with a review of the email update that was sent out in May. Then we reviewed our targets for this year and where we are on accomplishing each one.

As part of Priority Chemical Reduction, target one addresses replacing mercury containing switches or pressure measuring devices. T. Hendricks reported that he is nearly done with the inventory of mercury thermostats in federal buildings. These may be replaced with year end money or as part of R&M, but should be disposed of properly at the time of replacement.

R. Scarborough and T. Snipes drafted an electronics directive and are ensuring that the requirements are fulfilled for the Federal Electronics Challenge (FEC). The directive establishes acquisition and procurement policies for electronics with and without the EPEAT standard. We will be seeking the Bronze Award from the FEC this year. Electronic purchases will now be tracked through the CATS system making reporting much easier. The directive will be distributed to employees in the next few weeks. This meets target two established for the year.

Target three seeks increased environmental stewardship as it relates to motor vehicle management. Committee members were asked to think of ways we could improve the way we manage, use, or purchase vehicles to incorporate some environmentally friendly principles. There has been nothing done with the transportation target to date.



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Since drafting the electronics directive, in Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) format, it has been decided to revisit the other Environmental Procedures (EP) that have already been completed and write more specific instructions for each of these. These include Hazardous Waste Management, Universal Waste, e-Cycling, Recycling, etc. The EP's that exist now are in "flyer" format and will be attached to the new SOP documents as they are created. This will provide specific instructions on what to do, which forms should be filled out, and who to contact.

An environmental newsletter, The Green Gazette, was created to increase EMS awareness among employees. The newsletter will be done quarterly and will highlight different programs or issues that are currently taking place within the EMS program. The committee members, as well as employees, are encouraged to make suggestions on the topics covered in the newsletter.

The next meeting of the Location EMS Committee will be scheduled tentatively for mid-August 2008.