



Standard Operating Procedure – EMS-0100.008 Name: Communication and Public Outreach	Corresponding Requirements: ISO Policy: 4.4.3 EMS Manual: 6-3 NBP Element: 9
Prepared By: Beth Eckert, Environmental / Administrative Manager Modified by Arlene Roman, Quality Assurance Coordinator	Revision Date: 4/18/05 Revision #: 8
Approved By: Beth Eckert, Environmental /Administrative Manager Signature:	Effective Date: 2/1/00 Page 1 of 5

Communication and Public Outreach Standard Operating Procedure

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The following procedure covers internal communications related to the Department’s Environmental Management System (EMS), environmental impacts, public health and biosolids management. Additionally, the procedure covers the routing, documentation, and response to various external communications related to the same. This procedure is intended to help establish a meaningful two-way flow of information between the City and its interested parties as well as between the various levels of City staff.

2.0 Associated Equipment

- 2.1 None

3.0 Associated Reference Material

- 3.1 *Communications Log (designated notebooks, communications databases, e-mail, etc)*
- 3.2 *Call Routing Charts - Form # EMS-0102.008 or WST-EMS2.002A (controlled copies located in back of each communications log or posted near City phones.)*
- 3.3 *Customer Service Evaluations*
- 3.4 *City of Gastonia EMS Manual: EMS-0100.000 and Policy*
- 3.5 *ISO 14001 Standard: ANSI/ISO 14001-1996 Environmental management systems – Specifications with guidance for use*
- 3.6 *ISO 14001 Standard: ANSI/ISO 14001-2004 Environmental management systems – Specifications with guidance for use*
- 3.7 *Customer Service Procedure WST-EMS0.002*
- 3.8 *Customer Service Form WST-EMS1.002A*
- 3.9 *Communications Form Procedure WST-EMS0.003*
- 3.10 *Communications Form WST-EMS1.003A*
- 3.11 *National Manual of Good Practice for Biosolids*
- 3.12 *National Biosolids Partnership Biosolids EMS Guidance Manual*
- 3.13 *Frequently Asked Questions – Wastewater EMS-0102.008B*

3.14 *Presentation Listing EMS-0102.008C*

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Internal Communications

- 4.1.1 Information identified to be useful in minimizing environmental impacts of the Department must be communicated to persons in affected positions. This determination must be made on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.1.2 Incidences of an environmental impact caused by the department shall be reported to management and documented through the corrective and preventative action procedure (EMS-0100.004).
- 4.1.3 This information shall be communicated verbally, through memos, e-mail, the Communications Form WST-EMS1.003A or other means determined appropriate by the person relaying the information.
- 4.1.4 An EMS bulletin board will be maintained at each location.

4.2 External Communications

- 4.2.1 The Department will handle investigations and corrective actions prompted by an external source on a case-by-case basis as deemed appropriate for that situation.
- 4.2.2 Anyone who receives an external call concerning a significant environmental aspect and/or impact, improvement program, EMS, or a biosolids management issue must log the call in a communications log.
 - 4.2.2.1 This may be one of the communication log notebooks, a computer file or other appropriate location, where the information will be maintained and can be retrieved.
 - 4.2.2.2 External communications regarding drinking water will be handled per the Customer Service SOP WST-EMS0.002
- 4.2.3 The following information should be logged: name, address, and phone number, date, time, reason for call and who the call is being referred to per the call routing charts (EMS-0102.008 or WST-EMS2.002A). The person who

received the call is responsible for seeing that the caller's concerns get answered.

4.2.3.1 External e-mails, verbal or other communications concerning these issues should be handled in a similar fashion.

4.2.3.1.1 External communications, as described above, also includes requests, inquiries, and/or complaints received from interested parties during meetings and/or conferences.

4.2.4 Upon determining to whom the call shall be referred, the call shall be transferred to the appropriate personnel.

4.2.5 If none of the personnel identified to handle the call by the call routing charts is available, the person who received the call must take a message for the individual and ensure that the message is routed appropriately.

4.2.6 The identified person to handle the call must promptly address a caller's concerns and answer all questions as completely as possible, conduct required investigations, do necessary corrective actions and log the City's response in a communication log.

4.2.6.1 If a complaint is deemed to be a valid concern that cannot be handled at the level designated by the call routing flow chart then immediately inform either the Division Manager or one of their Assistants for further instructions.

4.2.6.2 If a complaint is from a regulatory agency complete the above instructions and immediately notify the Division Manager or one of their Assistants of the findings. All communications with the caller must be logged in a communication log along with the results of any investigations prompted by the call.

4.2.7 Responses to interested parties must be logged in a communication log.

4.2.8 In addition, anyone who receives a call inquiring about our EMS must log the call into the communication logs along with the name of the person,

associated organizations, if applicable, and the persons particular interest regarding the EMS. If necessary route the call to the EMS Coordinator.

4.3 Contractors - External Communications

4.3.1 If a Contractor receives a complaint, inquiry, or request related to the City's products or services he shall ensure that this information is passed along to a management level staff member.

4.3.2 Once the City is informed the process described above for handling external communications is to be followed. Responses to these situations will be handled on a case by case basis.

4.4 Public Outreach

4.4.1 Following interaction with interested third parties and/or stakeholders and if appropriate, Staff will provide the person and/or group with a Customer Service Evaluation form to be completed and returned. These evaluations shall be reviewed during the MRB meetings

4.4.2 Annual reports will be made available to the public each year upon completion via the City's website.

4.4.3 The EMS policy will be maintained on the City's website.

4.4.4 Staff will periodically do presentations concerning environmental, public health and/or biosolids management issues to interested community groups and/or any other interested stakeholder groups.

4.4.4.1 Additionally, staff will provide tours of wastewater facilities upon request by interested groups.

4.4.4.2 Staff giving presentations will update the Presentations Listing Reference Chart EMS-0102.008C and/or submit the appropriate information to complete the chart to the EMS Coordinator or designee.

4.4.5 The WWTD has a list of Frequently Asked Questions EMS-0102.008B posted near each phone within the Division so that routine questions can be answered correctly and consistently by any staff member. Routine questions on this list may not require transferring per the call routing chart, but should be

logged into the communication log if they pertain to our significant environmental aspects, biosolids management, or the EMS.

4.4.6 Additionally, hard copies of at least the following information will be provided upon request:

- ◆ EMS Policy
- ◆ Annual Wastewater System Performance Report
- ◆ Annual WSTD Consumer Confidence Report
- ◆ Legal and Other Requirements Listings
- ◆ Third Party EMS Audits

4.5 Correspondence described above as well as the City's response, will be documented and reviewed at the Divisional MRB meetings.

4.5.1 The EMS teams will consider this information when evaluating aspects and impacts each year.

4.5.2 Designated Staff in each area will consider this information when establishing and updating Objectives and Targets for the next year.

5.0 Revision History:

Revision		C/PAR #	Reason for Revision	Description of Revision
Date	#			
5/20/02	4	EMS-0084	C/PAR	Added a modification history section
3/3/03	5	EMS-0116	C/PAR	Added NBP requirements as a part of the WWTD's participation in the NBP demonstration group.
11/4/03	6	N/A	Internal EMS Audit	Reworded to allow for tracking of external communications by means other than writing in external communication logbooks. And for clarification on what is to be logged and reported to the MRB.
5/24/04	7	N/A		Changed name to remove public participation since we created a separate Public Participation procedure and to correct the corresponding requirements section of the header.
4/18/05	8	N/A	Expansion of EMS	Added WS&TD procedures and forms; changed "Biosolids Contractor" to "Contractors"; noted that there are now MRB and EMS Teams in more than one division; added ISO 14001:2004 revision of standard. Added Presentation Listing Reference Chart EMS-0102.008C to associated reference material and that staff doing presentations should update the chart or have the chart updated.