

ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE 2016 SILVER AND GOLD LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

May 21, 2015

The Encouraging Environmental Excellence (E3) Silver Level recognizes an organization's exceptional achievements in environmental stewardship. To reach the Gold Level an organization must also demonstrate an ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship. The E3 Silver and Gold Levels are open to any business, industry, trade association, professional organization or local government of Ohio. Applications are evaluated using environmental stewardship criteria developed by Ohio EPA. Applications will be accepted annually and include both written and onsite evaluations. Applicants must be in compliance with environmental laws and regulations for a year prior to receipt of their application.

The goal of environmental stewardship is to reduce the impact of business or organizational activities on the environment beyond measures required by any permit or rule, producing a better environment, conserving natural resources and resulting in long-term economic benefits. Indicators of environmental stewardship include: a commitment to go above and beyond compliance; integration of an environmental management system into the core business functions; aggressive environmental performance goals; and a process for communicating with the local community about program activities and progress toward performance goals. **Applications are requested by August 28, 2015.**

E3 SILVER BENEFITS

- an E3 flag to hang at the recipient's location;
- Ohio EPA news release touting the recipient's environmental accomplishments;
- invitation to an awards ceremony and possibly a site visit by the Ohio EPA director; and
- a case study to publicize the recipient's proactive approach to environmental stewardship.

E3 GOLD BENEFITS

- all E3 Silver benefits
- the opportunity to work with Ohio EPA on regulatory and permitting flexibility options, potentially including expedited permit review, reporting flexibility, reduced inspection frequency and other options.

HOW TO PREPARE AN E3 SILVER OR GOLD APPLICATION

Applicants need to submit the following items to apply for E3 Silver:

- Your contact information,
- Description of the operations of your business or organization, and
- A narrative describing the activities that are part of an overall environmental stewardship program showing clear, concise, measureable amounts and information on activities that result in environmental improvements

To apply for E3 Gold, applicants need to additionally submit:

- A statement expressing their commitment to maintain compliance with environmental laws and regulations over the next three years and submit an annual progress report for each year of membership.

Contact information: Applicants need to provide the name and address of the entity applying for recognition and the name, title and telephone number of a contact person who can answer questions regarding the organization applying for recognition.

Description of the operations of your business or organization: Applicants need to provide a summary of the organization's business activities and/or functions including the number of employees.

Narrative of environmental stewardship program: Applicants need to submit a narrative describing the activities that are part of an overall environmental stewardship program. This narrative should address each of the applicable environmental stewardship criteria listed below. There is no application form, prescribed format or suggested wording for this narrative. Optional supporting documents, including charts, photographs, news clippings, news releases, publications or other materials may be included. Information submitted will be used by Ohio EPA to publicize your participation in the E3 program. Use your discretion in determining whether to include trade secret or confidential business information in your application. **Questions should be directed to Howard Dong at (614) 644-2130 or our hotline at (800) 329-7518.**

SITE VISIT

Applicants receiving the highest scores based on the evaluation of applications may be asked to host a site visit. The purpose of this site visit is to provide reviewers with a better understanding of the application, to view the activities described in the application in operation and to clarify information provided in the application. A team of two or more reviewers will conduct the site visit. Information collected during the site visit will be used to determine who receives awards. Evaluation criteria for the site visit will be the same as that used for the application. Photographs of the applicant's operations may be taken during the site visit to help promote the Encouraging Environmental Excellence Program and the applicant's activities.

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

Applicants must be in compliance with environmental laws and regulations for a year prior to submittal of their application. E3 Gold members must be in compliance with environmental laws and regulations during their three year membership term. Members can be removed from E3 Gold for not maintaining compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Ohio EPA will perform a compliance evaluation. Additional information on this compliance evaluation is available at: <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ocapp/ohioe3.aspx> or by contacting Howard Dong at (614) 644-2130 or our hotline at (800) 329-7518.

E3 GOLD ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

E3 Gold membership is for a three year term. An annual progress report is required for each year of membership. The first report is due one year after the member has been notified they have been

accepted into E3 Gold and annually thereafter. There is no application form, prescribed format or suggested wording for the annual progress report. However, the information submitted should include the following items and provide quantified results where appropriate.

- Describe environmental stewardship accomplishments over the past year, and
- Describe any new or planned environmental stewardship activities for the next year

Information submitted in annual progress reports will be used to publicize your participation in E3 Gold and discretion should be used in determining whether to include trade secret or confidential business information. Members can be removed from E3 Gold for not providing this information or not maintaining compliance with environmental laws and regulations. ***Annual progress reports should be submitted to Howard Dong using the contact information below.***

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP CRITERIA

Applicants should provide one narrative incorporating the criteria listed below that apply to their environmental stewardship program. Ohio EPA will evaluate your application using the nineteen environmental stewardship criteria below. It is recognized that not all criteria may apply and some descriptions may apply to multiply criteria. E3 Silver or Gold is intended for a specific location of a business or organization in Ohio. All information provided needs to describe activities occurring at the specific location. Provide as complete information as possible. Provide numerical data where noted and describe the methods used to measure progress.

Applications should include information on how the organization or business is a leader in environmental stewardship. The narrative should address the following criteria and systems that the applicant uses to continuously improve upon its environmental performance.

1. **Management commitment**: Describe management's commitment to environmental stewardship. Examples of management commitment may include: having a written goal; promoting environmental stewardship through your policy; rewarding individuals who promote environmental stewardship; and continuously improving environmental practices throughout the organization.
2. **Employee involvement**: Describe efforts to involve employees in the development and implementation of environmental stewardship activities. This may include training programs, recognition and awards, educating employees through the organization's publications, involving employees in re-designing products or processes, or otherwise using individual's ideas to reduce waste.
3. **Continuous improvement**: Describe how you use continuous improvement practices to achieve environmental stewardship. Please quantify results. This may include either incremental (progressive small steps) or breakthrough (giant step) actions.
4. **Environmental management system**: Some organizations use an environmental management system to measure, track, plan and implement activities that impact the environment. An organization may use an EMS to continually improve their environmental program. However it

may not be applicable to all organizations. Describe how you use environmental management systems or similar approach to improve environmental quality and performance.

5. Promotion and dissemination: Describe how information on your environmental stewardship activities is made available and shared with others. Explain how this information is used to promote similar practices to other organizations.
6. Innovation: Describe how the applicant's environmental stewardship activities are innovative and compare it to standard practices being used elsewhere. Provide information on innovative research and development the organization uses to support this activity. Include a description of practices that exemplify outstanding creativity, introduce new approaches or advance emerging technologies.

The applicant's narrative should explain how environmental impacts are reduced using the following criteria.

7. Impact to the environment: Describe and quantify how the use, generation, and/or release of environmental wastes are reduced or eliminated. Describe and quantify how any other environmental impacts are reduced or eliminated.
8. Life cycle analysis: Describe any analysis completed to quantify the environmental impacts of a product or service throughout its entire life cycle. Some organizations use this tool to help them modify their processes and products to realize cost savings and reduce environmental impacts. Describe how your organization uses life cycle analysis to identify opportunities to improve environmental performance and inform decision-makers in your organization. Please quantify environmental improvements from these efforts.
9. Pollution prevention: Pollution prevention is source reduction and recycling. Describe your efforts to complete pollution prevention activities. Please quantify results.
10. Energy efficiency: Quantify efforts to conserve energy and fuel use, use more energy efficient products and/or modify operations to improve energy efficiency. This description should include any costs or savings resulting from these efforts.
11. Renewable energy: Quantify the use of renewable energy and fuels including environmental benefits derived from its use. Describe renewable energy projects at the applicant's location and quantify the environmental benefits. This description should include any costs or savings resulting from these efforts.
12. Renewable, recovered or recycled materials: Quantify the use of renewable, recovered or recycled materials. Describe how these materials are used to reduce environmental impacts.
13. Green building: Quantify any environmental benefits derived from green building infrastructure, designs and materials. Describe how these activities have been used to reduce environmental impacts. This description should include any costs or savings resulting from these efforts.

14. Stormwater best management practices: Describe efforts to minimize stormwater runoff and how the use of best management practices reduces environmental impacts at the applicant's location.
15. Environmentally preferable purchasing: Describe your efforts to buy products or services that have a reduced environmental impact when compared with competing products or services. The use of recycled, renewable and/or reusable products is a key component of environmentally preferable purchasing. This description should include any costs or savings resulting from these efforts.
16. Recycling programs: Quantify your recycling activities and describe how recycling programs are used to reduce environmental impacts. This description should include onsite efforts, use of external recycling programs and any costs or savings resulting from these efforts. Indicate whether quantified recycling information has been reported to your solid waste management district or other organizations.
17. Organics diversion: Quantify your efforts to divert organics from the solid waste stream. Describe how your organics diversion program including composting and anaerobic digesters reduces environmental impacts. This description should include onsite efforts, use of external facilities and any costs or savings resulting from these efforts.

The narrative should use the following criteria to help describe the economic factors used when implementing environmental stewardship projects.

18. Economic benefits: Describe short and long term cost savings. Quantify the investment required, cost avoided, efficiency achieved, and future potential payback.
19. Environmental management accounting: Describe how your organization accounts for environmental impacts and costs when making decisions on internal operations. Please quantify results.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN E3 SILVER OR GOLD APPLICATION

Applications can be submitted in either hard copy or electronic format to:

Howard Dong
Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance
Ohio EPA
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

howard.dong@epa.ohio.gov
(614) 644-2130

Application materials are available at <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ocapp/ohioe3.aspx> or by calling (800) 329-7518. **Applicants are encouraged to call Howard Dong at (614) 644-2130 or our hotline at (800) 329-7518 with questions anytime during the application process.**