



Encouraging Environmental Excellence – Silver Level Award

DRS Environmental Systems

In 2013, DRS Environmental Systems (DRS) received an Ohio EPA Encouraging Environmental Excellence (E3) Silver Level Award. The silver level recognizes businesses and others that have a good environmental compliance record and have completed environmental stewardship activities. The silver level is open to any business, industry, trade association, professional organization or local government of Ohio.

Located in Cincinnati, DRS has more than 100 employees. They design and manufacture integrated trailers and shelter solutions that are structurally and thermally efficient for commercial and military applications. They also design and manufacture broadcast and communication systems for these same applications.

Environmental Management System

The company obtained ISO14001 Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Certification in December 2011. The focus of the company's EMS is to reduce the generation of hazardous waste and consumption of natural resources. DRS management fully supports EMS-related efforts, as demonstrated by the company's commitment to obtain ISO 14001 certification for two large DRS facilities in the same year.

The DRS Green Initiative Team has been successful over the past three years in reducing the facility's carbon footprint, generation of hazardous waste and consumption of natural resources. EMS-related efforts also help reduce costs, allowing the company to be more competitive in their bid process, keeping or creating new jobs to their community. DRS uses its EMS not only to improve daily operations, but also in the design of new programs.

The company has developed very thorough cause-and-effect matrices to identify activities at their facility and their associated environmental impacts. Environmental objectives are identified and their completion status is tracked quarterly. A semi-annual senior leadership review provides continuous feedback on environmental improvements. In addition, DRS is part of the Finmeccanica family of companies, and its EMS-related efforts become part of the annual Finmeccanica Sustainability Report. This report covers information ranging from the amount of green space available at individual facilities to the amount of fuel used to transport product to customers. The goal each year is to reduce the carbon footprint at each facility. DRS was selected as one of the two sites (from more than 40 sites) to undergo a verification assessment from a third party auditor, and received a very positive review.



DRS Environmental Systems is recognized for:

- Completing several projects to promote recycling and reduce hazardous waste generation. These activities have reduced annual hazardous waste generation by approximately 4,500 pounds.
- Making a switch from 55-gallon drums to canisters, using up 100 percent of the material and sending empty canisters back for recycling, eliminating a waste stream.
- Implementing a rain intrusion test that allows recycling of the water used to perform a required rain test.
- Installing a system that contains recycled water that is filtered back into a 3,000-gallon holding tank, reducing water consumption by 72,000 gallons.

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Reducing Hazardous Waste

DRS completed several projects to reduce the generation of hazardous waste, including recycling cleaning rags, paint cans and replacing package containers.

By working with suppliers and completing multiple tests for customers to ensure specifications were being met, DRS was able to switch from 55-gallon drums to canisters that allow the use of 100 percent of the material and then send the empty canisters back for recycling. No waste of Polyfoam A or B was sent for treatment and disposal in 2011 due to this process change. Eliminating this waste stream saved the company approximately \$10,761 per year. Recycling the Polyfoam containers reduced hazardous waste generation by approximately 4,500 lbs. annually. Controlling the use of paint booth filters and debris, and following established preventive maintenance plans have reduced hazardous waste from 26,705 lbs. in 2009 to 4,995 lbs. in 2011.

Water Conservation and Recycling

In 2011, DRS reduced water consumption by 72,000 gallons. This was accomplished by implementing a rain intrusion test environment that allows recycling of all water used to perform the required rain test on all of their shelter and trailer product lines. The company invested \$184,965 to install the system, including a 3,000 gallon holding tank for filtered water. The goal was to improve the testing capability while reducing the amount of water consumed. Additional water reduction measures include installing a rainwater capture system to provide additional make-up water for the rain test system. The company also replaced water toilets at two locations with reduced water/air assist units that reduce water consumption from 3 to 1.7 gallon tanks.

Energy Efficiency and Savings

DRS reduced its electricity use by replacing the entire old high bay lighting in the facility with energy saving T5 lamps in the manufacturing area and T8 in the office area. They are also planning to retrofit paint booths so that the exhaust and heaters are only working when the paint spray guns are activated. If the system is installed on all three booths, there is a potential energy consumption reduction of 30 percent.

For More Information

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For more information about Ohio EPA's Encouraging Environmental Excellence program, contact the Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) at 800-329-7518, or visit epa.ohio.gov/ocapp/ohioe3.aspx.