



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1800 Washington Boulevard ● Baltimore MD 21230
410-537-3000 ● 1-800-633-6101

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Kendl P. Philbrick
Acting Secretary

Michael S. Steele
Lt. Governor

September 5, 2003

Fellow Marylanders:

Attached is the third issue of the Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) publication, *EnviroMatters*.

This issue focuses on compliance assistance and enforcement activities in MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration. By providing information and guidance, the department has helped most of the state's sources of air pollution achieve a commendable record. While MDE always reserves the right to encourage compliance through penalties and litigation, it is clear that having facilities understand and implement environmentally sound practices on their own is the preferred option. Of course more work needs to be done to improve the already impressive records of compliance by Maryland businesses.

We hope you continue to find the information contained in *EnviroMatters* useful, and encourage you to contact us regarding additional information about the topic covered - or if you have a particular topic idea.

In future issues look for articles providing additional information on MDE's environmental initiatives including aquaculture, progress on the installation of biological and enhanced nutrient removal systems at wastewater treatment plants and the state's brownfields reform efforts.

Enjoy this issue of *EnviroMatters*, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kendl P. Philbrick
Acting Secretary

Kendl P. Philbrick, Acting Secretary Maryland Department of the Environment

September 5, 2003

Stationary Sources of Air Pollution Achieve High Compliance Rates

Maryland industries and businesses are doing their part to make sure the air we all breathe is safe. To ensure that Maryland maintains the cleanest possible air, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) through its Air and Radiation Management Administration has developed a strong working relationship with stationary sources of air emissions. These sources continue to achieve nearly 100 percent compliance with Maryland's air quality requirements.

MDE inspectors routinely conduct compliance assistance outreach, site inspections and other compliance evaluations, and, when necessary, take enforcement actions against non-complying companies. MDE's compliance and enforcement actions focus on the largest and most significant potential sources of emissions, which account for more than 95 percent of Maryland's stationary source emissions. With the remaining 5 percent of stationary sources, MDE staff conducts selective random compliance audits aimed at priority source categories that produce the most emissions.

Over the past few years, the largest stationary sources have achieved an exemplary 97 percent compliance rate. "MDE enforcement stewardship ensures that these often complex sources are fully aware of current and pending air quality requirements," said Acting MDE Secretary Kendl P. Philbrick. "They are required to install and properly operate the most up-to-date air emissions control technologies."

Enforcement actions serve several purposes, chiefly to preserve the highest quality of Maryland's air. Enforcement also serves as a deterrent by denying any economic benefit from operating outside of environmental laws. MDE's enforcement and compliance activities recognize and give due credit to sources that have made the appropriate investments to remain compliant with Maryland's air quality requirements.

Small sources (also called area sources) represent a different challenge due to their large numbers. While each individual area source may have small emissions, certain sectors, collectively, can have substantial emissions. MDE's enforcement focuses on two of those sectors - gas stations and dry cleaners - that have significant combined emissions as well as the greatest potential impact on public health. MDE makes the most efficient use of available staff resources to inspect a representative sample, usually about 10 percent (which is consistent with EPA's recommendations for compliance sampling) of small area sources each year. Compliance rates at smaller area sources run a little lower - generally 50 to 70 percent — than at larger sources. However, most of the violations are minor, usually monitoring and record keeping in nature. "MDE continues to work hard on outreach and compliance assistance in these sectors to correct minor violations and improve compliance rates," said MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration Director, Thomas C. Snyder.

In fiscal year 2003, MDE's air quality control program conducted 2,428 regularly scheduled compliance inspections at permitted facilities. In addition, about 800 citizen complaints were received that year, of which 553 merited follow-up, including on-site investigations.

MDE works diligently to assist facilities in understanding and complying with air quality requirements while at the same time taking aggressive enforcement action against those that do not comply. "Proactive compliance and enforcement activities will ensure that Marylanders will breathe the cleanest air possible well into the future," Acting Secretary Philbrick added.

For more information about **EnviroMatters**,
contact: Shirley Garner at 410.537.3006
or email sgarner@mde.state.md.us