

Pollution affects us all

POLLUTION AFFECTS everyone in Nova Scotia by contaminating our air, land and water. It can affect our health, the quality of the environment and make our natural landscapes ugly. We all know where pollution comes from right? Smoke stacks, industrial effluent pipes and “big business”? Well ... not exactly. These can be important sources of pollution but we contribute as well. A surprising amount of pollution comes from small sources – and it all adds up. These sources include waste from the products we choose, emissions from our cars and pollutants in our waste water. The energy used to heat and light our homes and the chemicals we use (and sometimes dispose of incorrectly) also contribute to pollution.

How Do We Deal With Pollution?

Until recently, pollution regulations (laws) in Nova Scotia have focused on “end of the pipe” controls that limited the type and amount of pollutants that can be released to the air, land and water. To comply with these laws, potential polluters use a variety of different methods to remove pollutants from the air emissions and effluent water before it is released to the environment. This method of correcting the problem *after* it has occurred can be very costly.

Recently, emphasis has shifted from controlling pollution to preventing pollution at the source. The Nova Scotia Environment Act identifies pollution prevention as the preferred strategy for protecting the environment.

WHAT IS POLLUTION PREVENTION?

Pollution prevention (**sometimes called P2**) means not creating the waste or pollution in the first place. When you think about it – this really isn’t a new idea. It’s just like the old saying “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”. It’s much easier to prevent a problem than fix the damage once it’s done.

Our choices, at home, at work and in all aspects of our lives can affect how much waste and pollution

we create. Pollution prevention means re-thinking the way we do things and making simple changes to correct the wasteful habits we all have. You can apply the principles of **P2** at home, at work, in business and in industry.

WHAT ABOUT RECYCLING?

Recycling is an important part of Nova Scotia’s Solid Waste Strategy – and it helps to prevent materials that are still useful from going to the landfill. That helps everyone. But recycling waste is still not as effective as preventing waste in the first place. Remember: It’s reduce, reuse then recycle.

POLLUTION PREVENTION IS:
“...the use of processes, practices, materials, products or energy that avoid or minimize the creation of pollutants and wastes, at the source.”

– Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment

Want to Learn More? WE CAN HELP

THE POLLUTION PREVENTION Section provides information research and technical assistance to business, industry, government and community groups. We can help you to identify pollution prevention opportunities, research your options, and develop pollution prevention programs. Visit our website www.gov.ns.ca/envi/ (click on **pollution prevention**) for more information on our programs, publications (many are available on-line) and links to many other useful internet resources. Or contact the Pollution Prevention Section at **1-902-424-5300**.

POLLUTION PREVENTION INCLUDES

- conserving water and energy
- “green” purchasing
- efficient use of raw materials
- replacing hazardous products with less hazardous ones
- modifying processes to reduce waste and pollution



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March 2000

Pollution Prevention

at **HOME,**

at **WORK,**

and in **BUSINESS**



NOVASCOTIA
Department of Environment

p2 at Home

MAKING CHOICES that are good for the health of your community and the environment is not as hard as it seems. The following tips will help you get started.

USE LESS STUFF

- Buy in bulk.
- Avoid single use, single serving and "convenience" products.
- Avoid buying a number of specialty products (e.g. household cleaners) when a single multi-purpose product will do.

MAKE BETTER CHOICES

- Select environmentally responsible products and services.
- For example, look for Ecologo and the mobius loop symbols when shopping.

LOOK FOR THESE SYMBOLS



Contains x%
recycled fibre

MOBIUS
LOOP

- Choose reusable, refillable or durable products.

CONSERVE WATER AND ENERGY

- Install low-flow devices in faucets and toilets.
- Switch to energy efficient lighting.
- Compare the Energuide labels when selecting a new appliance.

p2 is Good for Business

MANY LARGE INDUSTRIAL operations such as car manufacturers, pulp and paper plants and electric utilities use pollution prevention because it is a smart way to do business that reduces operating costs and waste management costs. Small and medium-sized business can benefit from **P2** as well. Effective pollution prevention measures don't have to be complicated or expensive. Many require only minor changes in company policy or operating practices.

FROM LARGE INDUSTRY TO SMALL BUSINESS P2 CAN ...

- Improve worker health and safety
- Cut costs
- Improve efficiency
- Reduce liability
- Improve creditworthiness
- Improve public image

Specific pollution prevention measures are different for each type of business. For more information about implementing **P2** in your business contact the staff of the pollution prevention section. The telephone number is on the back of this pamphlet.

p2 at the Office

APPROXIMATELY 80% of office solid waste is paper. But, packaging waste, styrofoam and disposable food containers are also part of the office waste stream. Resources are also wasted when inefficient office equipment, lighting or plumbing is used. Below are some simple steps for preventing pollution in the office.

DEVELOP GREEN PURCHASING GUIDELINES

- Choose paper with a high post consumer recycled content. Even grades with 100% post consumer fiber will work well in most office machines.
- Look for Ecologo and/or the mobius loop symbols on products and supplies.
- Select environmentally responsible cleaning products.

P2 TIP

Remember your computer screen saver is not a power saver. Turn your system off when not in use.

CONSERVE WATER AND ENERGY

- When purchasing new equipment select models with sleep or power-save modes.
- Switch to energy efficient lighting.
- Install low-flow devices on faucets and toilets.
- Turn off office equipment when not in use especially on nights and weekends.

P2 TIP

Even minor changes can add up to extra dollars in your pocket. A 13W compact fluorescent light bulb produces as much light as a 60W incandescent light bulb, but uses 1/4 as much energy and lasts 10x longer.



REDUCE WASTE

- Use white boards instead of flip charts in meeting rooms.
- When printing promotional material ensure that the finished product will be recyclable.
- Keep ceramic mugs and silverware on hand in the lunchroom.