



Print version



DP 074

2011-11-09

PWGSC ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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1. EFFECTIVE DATE

This departmental policy (DP) takes effect on: 2011-11-09



2. CONTEXT

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) is a common service provider to the departments and agencies of the Government of Canada (GoC), and acts as its principal banker, accountant, central purchasing agent, linguistic authority, real property manager and enabler of access to government services online. Since PWGSC is the government's largest purchasing organization and owns and leases an important portfolio of buildings, the environmental impacts associated with its operations and activities are significant. The *PWGSC Environmental Policy* was introduced in 1999 to ensure that the Department's operations are carried out in a manner that takes into account legislative compliance and the principles of sound stewardship.

Through this DP, the Department, led by the Office of Greening Government Operations (OGGO), seeks to organize how it incorporates environmental considerations into its operations, management and daily activities in a way that reflects an evolving environmental landscape. This is accomplished through a clear focus on two key and distinct areas contributing to the Department's environmental priorities: compliance and environmental commitment.

Compliance is concerned with abiding by all applicable environmental legislation as well as any relevant and binding GoC policies and directives.

Environmental commitment encompasses environmental citizenship and the application of environmental best practices, and departmental guidelines, as well as achievement of any targets (such as PWGSC's targets on greening government operations under the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy [FSDS] as presented in the Department's Sustainable Development

Strategy [SDS]). The FSDS provides an effective overview of the government's environmental goals and PWGSC's SDS targets are to be used to guide the Department's environmental commitments.

Consistent with the requirements put forth in the 2010 Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals, PWGSC's approach to strategic environmental assessments (SEA) is outlined in the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (074-1) issued under this DP.

This DP is to be read in conjunction with applicable legislation and requirements (see References section).



3. POLICY STATEMENT

As part of its mandate and commitment to delivering high quality service and in order to ensure sound stewardship on behalf of Canadians, Public Works and Government Services Canada must:

- carry out its operations and activities in a manner that meets or exceeds all applicable environmental laws, codes and regulations;
- strive for excellence and continual improvement of its environmental performance, particularly in those areas outlined in the Department's SDS;
- commit to the principles of environmental sustainable development and the prevention of pollution.



4. SCOPE

This DP applies to all departmental employees, as well as to all operations and activities of PWGSC which may result in an environmental effect.



5. DEFINITIONS

See [Annex](#)



6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. The Deputy Minister is responsible for:
 1. approving, promulgating and communicating this DP;
 2. ensuring that all PWGSC operations and activities are being performed in a manner that complies with all applicable environmental legislation;
 3. ensuring that all PWGSC operations and activities are being performed in a manner that contributes to the achievement of PWGSC's SDS targets as well as the GoC's other environmental commitments.
2. The Assistant Deputy Minister, Real Property Branch (RPB), in consultation and collaboration with Regional Directors General is responsible for:
 1. ensuring that a comprehensive environmental management framework is in place by developing and updating the Branch Environmental Management System (EMS) to meet RPB's environmental compliance and liability requirements;
 2. ensuring that required tools and databases are in place to advance environmental management and compliance within the Branch.
3. The Director General, Office of Greening Government Operations (OGGO), Corporate Services and Strategic Policy Branch is responsible for:
 1. leading the review and update of this DP, in collaboration with other branches and regions, as required;
 2. leading and collaborating with branches and regions in the development of the required processes, procedures and working tools and making them available to departmental employees to enable the implementation of this DP;
 3. promoting environmental priorities in broader PWGSC strategies and business planning;
 4. monitoring and reporting departmental results related to this DP;
 5. coordinating the quarterly reporting to senior management committees on the status of PWGSC's SDS

commitments and targets.

4. Managers are responsible for:

1. supporting the implementation of this DP within their areas of accountability, including approving and promoting appropriate frameworks consistent with the Policy Statement;
2. ensuring operations and activities under their management are in compliance with all applicable environmental legislation and performed in accordance with an environmental management system, where one exists;
3. including relevant departmental SDS targets / commitments in their business plans;
4. maintaining appropriate records in their areas of accountability to meet departmental reporting requirements of environmental audits, and other reporting relevant to this DP;
5. ensuring that appropriate managers and employees receive adequate training based on the nature of their functions and duties;
6. ensuring that employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities put forth in this DP, and the meaning and implications of "due diligence" as it pertains to their responsibilities, operations and activities;
7. fostering a work environment that is conducive to participating in environmental awareness activities;
8. taking on a leadership role in changing organizational culture and behaviour through commitments to stewardship and environmental awareness in employee performance agreements.

5. All employees are responsible for:

1. carrying out their duties and responsibilities in a manner consistent with this DP;
2. exercising due diligence regarding environmental matters in the course of their duties and daily work-related activities (e.g. reporting environmental hazards as described in *Hazardous Occurrence Investigation, Reporting and Recording [018]*);
3. ensuring that assets, programs and activities for which they are responsible comply with environmental laws and regulations;
4. communicating and consulting with colleagues, suppliers, service partners, and other interested parties in a manner that reflects the Department's concern with, and pro-active stance regarding environmental protection;
5. ensuring that they have undergone mandatory and relevant environmental training in areas specific to their duties;
6. incorporating the principles and practices of environmental citizenship in the course of their duties and daily activities, and particularly in support of PWGSC's SDS.



7. COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING

Monitoring on the effectiveness of this DP for non-regulatory environmental requirements and PWGSC's SDS targets will be carried out by OGGO in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the review of departmental reports (e.g. branch business plans, Reports on Plans and Priorities [RPP] and Departmental Performance Reports [DPR]), of the Deputy Minister Scorecard, and of the input OGGO receives from branches / regions.

Environmental compliance monitoring of PWGSC operations and activities must be undertaken consistent with existing environmental management systems.

Compliance with regulatory environmental requirements is mandatory. Consequences of non-compliance can include any measure allowed by the relevant environmental legislation (e.g. the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, 1999)



8. REFERENCES

Acts and Regulations:

- [*Auditor General Act*](#);
- [*Canada Labour Code*](#);
- [*Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*](#);
- [*Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*](#):
 - [*Federal Halocarbon Regulations*](#);
 - [*PCB Regulations*](#);
 - [*Storage Tank Systems for Petroleum Products and Allied Petroleum Products Regulations \(SOR/2008-197\)*](#);
- [*Environmental Violations Administrative Monetary Penalties Act*](#);
- [*Federal Sustainable Development Act*](#);
- [*Fisheries Act*](#);

- [*Hazardous Products Act and Controlled Products Regulations;*](#)
- [*Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 and Migratory Birds Regulations;*](#)
- [*Navigable Waters Protection Act;*](#)
- [*Pest Control Products Act;*](#)
- [*Species at Risk Act;*](#)
- [*Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992 and Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations.*](#)

Treasury Board Publications:

- [*Directive on Fleet Management - Light Duty Vehicles;*](#)
- [*Framework for the Management of Risk;*](#)
- [*Policy Framework for the Management of Assets and Acquired Services.*](#)

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Publication:

- [*The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals.*](#)

PWGSC Publications and Website:

- Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (074-1);
- [*Emergency Preparedness in Public Works and Government Services Canada \(001\);*](#)
- [*Guideline for the Disposal of Federal Surplus Electronic and Electrical Equipment;*](#)
- [*Hazardous Occurrence Investigation, Reporting and Recording \(018\);*](#)
- [*Integrated Risk Management Policy \(082\);*](#)
- [*Policy on Green Procurement;*](#)
- [*PWGSC Green Meetings and Events Guide;*](#)
- [*PWGSC Policy on Procurement \(099\);*](#)
- [*Real Property Branch Environmental Management System;*](#)
- [*Report on Plans and Priorities;*](#)
- [*Sustainable Buildings Policy \(100\).*](#)

Environment Canada Publication:

- [*Federal Sustainable Development.*](#)

Other Publications / Websites:

- [*GCpedia: Office of Greening Government Operations - Federal Sustainable Development Strategy;*](#)
- [*International Organization for Standardization \(ISO\) 14001 and 14004;*](#)
- [*OGGO Website.*](#)



9. CANCELLATION

This DP supersedes the version dated 1999-10-29.



10. ENQUIRIES

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ANNEX - DEFINITIONS

Due diligence (*diligence raisonnable*) is legally defined as "such a measure of prudence, activity, or assiduity as is properly to be expected from, and ordinarily exercised by, a reasonable and prudent person under the particular circumstances; not measured by any absolute standard, but depending on the relative facts of the specific case". (source: Black's Law Dictionary).

Environment (*environnement*) is defined as the components of the earth, including:

1. land, water and air, as well as all layers of the atmosphere;
2. all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms;
3. the interacting natural systems that include components referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2.

Environmental citizenship (*écocivisme*) is defined as the integration of sound environmental practices and the principles of sustainable development into everyday activities.

Environmental effect [or environmental impact] (*effet environnemental [ou impact environnemental]*) in respect to an activity or operation, is defined as:

1. any change, whether positive or negative, that the activity or operation may cause in the environment, including any effect on socio-economic conditions, on environmental health, physical and cultural heritage or on any structure, site or thing including those of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance;
2. any change to the activity or operation that may be caused by the environment.

Environmental legislation (*legislation environnementale*) is defined as any federal, provincial, territorial and/or municipal act or regulation which regulates the interaction of humanity and the rest of the biophysical or natural environment, toward the purpose of reducing the impact of human activity, both on the natural environment and on humanity itself.

Environmental management system (*système de gestion de l'environnement*) is defined by ISO 14001 as that part of the overall management system that includes organizational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining an environmental policy.

Evolving environmental landscape (*aménagement environnemental en évolution*) refers to changes in the organizational structure, federal and departmental priorities, and legislative and regulatory backdrop which impact the way environmental issues are considered and managed. Such recent changes include, but are not limited to:

1. the creation of the Office of Greening Government Operations;
2. the approval of the *Policy on Green Procurement* by Treasury Board;
3. the passing of the *Federal Sustainable Development Act* and Strategy;
4. the development of the departmental Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (074-1).

Manager (*gestionnaire*) is defined as any person who is responsible for staff or accountable for assets belonging to the Government of Canada. This includes, but is not limited to, assistant deputy ministers, chief executive / operating officer, regional directors general, directors general, regional directors, and directors.

Operations and activities (*opérations et activités*) refer to:

1. any action, new or ongoing, including but not limited to projects, plans and programs;
2. any action undertaken by persons at work, or that is related to their duties.

Prevention of pollution (*prévention de la pollution*) means to avoid, reduce, or control the creation, emission, or discharge of contaminants or waste materials. Pollution must be prevented in order to reduce adverse environmental effects.

Stewardship (*gérance*) is the responsible management of goods and property, including fiscal prudence, as well as respect for the environment and future generations.

Strategic environmental assessment, SEA (*évaluation environnementale stratégique, EES*), means the systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating the environmental effects of a policy, plan or program and its alternatives. A SEA is a two step process involving:

1. a preliminary scan of a policy, plan or program proposal to determine if important environmental effects are likely to arise from its implementation;
2. a detailed assessment of environmental effects, where a preliminary scan concludes that such effects are likely to be important.

Sustainable development (*développement durable*) is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." [Source: World Commission on Environment and Development / The Brundtland Commission].

