

Agency Purpose

The mission of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is to work with Minnesotans to protect, conserve, and improve our environment and enhance our quality of life.

The vision for the MPCA is:

- ◆ clean and sustainable surface and ground water systems;
- ◆ clean and clear air;
- ◆ land that supports desired uses;
- ◆ excellence in operations; and
- ◆ Minnesotans taking responsibility to protect our environment.

The results of MPCA’s efforts are demonstrable: waste has been reduced, recycling levels have increased, and the air, land, and water are cleaner now than they were 30 years ago.

Guiding Principles

MPCA’s mission is implemented through the following guiding principles:

- ⇒ Focus on priorities and manage for environmental results.
- ⇒ Actively partner to leverage knowledge, ideas, and resources.
- ⇒ Rely on data for decision-making.
- ⇒ Integrate economic, social, and environmental sciences when developing environmental policy.
- ⇒ Strive for excellence and innovation in service delivery.

Operations

Effective July 2005, the legislature approved combining the existing staff, authorities and expertise of the MPCA with those of the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA). Combining the OEA and the MPCA has united and focused the priorities of the two organizations, broadened the tools being applied to an expanding range of environmental issues, and given new energy and greater scope to public education and outreach efforts.

The MPCA requests funding according to media: water, air, and land. Multimedia includes activities that cross and combine the three major media. Prevention and Assistance, a new program name, includes many of the activities of the former OEA. Administrative Support enables the delivery of program activities for the water, air, and land media and Prevention and Assistance.

The Commissioner’s Office sets the strategic direction for the MPCA and provides an essential link to stakeholders and partners. In addition to the Commissioner’s Office, the agency is organized into seven divisions. Programs and services are managed and delivered through MPCA offices in St. Paul, Duluth, Brainerd, Rochester, Mankato, Detroit Lakes, Willmar, and Marshall.

The Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division monitors and evaluates the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of Minnesota’s environment. The division identifies potential impacts to human health and the environment, helps set environmental goals, establishes environmental standards, helps develop permit limits, and reports results to staff, stakeholders, and citizens.

At A Glance

- ◆ The MPCA leverages partnerships and resources to address environmental issues and achieve positive results.
- ◆ MPCA uses multiple tools and approaches: technology, financial and technical assistance, prevention, best management practices, regulation and cleanup solutions. A multifaceted approach is typically required to address complex environmental issues.
- ◆ MPCA’s product stewardship program provides an innovative approach to conserving resources, reducing waste, and increasing recycling. The program is currently working on initiatives for carpet, electronics, paint, and mercury-containing products.
- ◆ MPCA performs monitoring at more than 750 sites across the state to determine environmental conditions of air, surface waters, and ground water.
- ◆ MPCA continues to provide resources to local units of government to reduce waste generation and improve the cost effectiveness of recycling, composting and recovery programs.
- ◆ MPCA performs permitting, inspection, compliance determination, and enforcement at sites that impact air, water, and land. These efforts cover 2,800 sites for mobile and point air sources; 44,000 facilities and generators of solid and hazardous waste; and 47,000 wastewater, feedlots and stormwater sites.
- ◆ MPCA oversees state financed clean up at 265 contaminated sites and monitors clean up of an additional 3,000 sites.

The Prevention and Assistance Division provides information and economic, technical, and educational assistance that result in the implementation and increased use of environmentally and economically beneficial behaviors, technologies, and products. The Customer Assistance Center responds to requests for information and assistance from citizens. Small business assistance and pollution prevention services are also based in this division.

The Remediation Division provides emergency response and remediation (clean-up) services for contaminated sites, redevelopment projects and closed landfills. Superfund and leaking storage tank cleanup are also based in this division.

The Regional Division provides for environmental problem solving at the local level. The focus is on building local capacity to restore and improve the environment. Water quality planning and implementation programs are based in this division as well as the clean water partnership, feedlots, total maximum daily load (TMDL) implementation, and basin planning.

The Industrial Division provides regulatory services to industrial sources of air, water, and land pollution. Permitting, compliance, and enforcement for water and air quality, industrial solid waste, hazardous waste, and industrial stormwater are based in this division as well as associated rule-making activities.

The Municipal Division provides regulatory services to operators of publicly owned wastewater treatment and stormwater facilities. Services are also provided to mixed municipal landfills and transfer stations. The regulatory services include permitting, compliance, and enforcement.

The Operational Support Division oversees the MPCA's finances and its business operations (vehicle fleet, equipment and supplies, facilities and leasing, mail and shipping, and more), human resources processes and issues, and communication services. Division staff is mainly located in St. Paul.

The MPCA Citizens' Board acts on significant and controversial environmental issues.

Budget

Twenty or more years ago, environmental fees and taxes were created to fund regulatory programs that addressed point source pollution. More recently the MPCA has identified non-point sources as the major contributors to air and water pollution. Program costs to address non-point pollution do not readily align with the former fee structures. Fund consolidation, authorized by the legislature in 2003, enhanced the MPCA's funding flexibility and ability to direct resources to priority activities.

Authorized appropriations in FY 2006-07 for the MPCA's six programs totaled \$271.6 million. The mix of funding was 10% General Fund, 43% Environmental Fund, 20% Remediation Fund, 16% federal and 11% other sources.

Contact

For more information, contact: Leo Raudys, MPCA Deputy Commissioner, at (651) 296-7305.

In addition, visitors can learn more about environmental issues at www.pca.state.mn.us. The site contains information on pollution prevention, reuse, recycling, responsible waste management, sustainable practices, as well as access to regulatory news and updates, rules, public notices, agency initiatives, details about environmental quality and current "hot topics."

The MPCA's strategic plan can be accessed at www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/reports/strategicplan.html.