

## Using Environmental Management Systems as a Tool to Address Compliance Requirements at the Local Government Level

### Description

This session will focus on the increasing number of local governments demonstrating that an Environmental Management System (EMS) is an effective tool to address the environmental challenges associated with their day to day operations. The session will highlight the EMS as a vehicle to promote environmental and resource efficiency and the ability of an EMS to drive local governments to perform “beyond compliance”. The session will begin with an overview of how an EMS can enhance a local government’s ability to efficiently and effectively meet its compliance requirements. Following this introduction, a case-study demonstration will describe how a partnership between the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Virginia Tech (VIP&SU) [State University] resulted in promoting compliance by local governments. The session will conclude with an introduction/demonstration of the Public Entity EMS Resource Center ([www.peercenter.net](http://www.peercenter.net)) as a resource that can be used by local governments interested in implementing an EMS. The PEER Center evolved directly from two EMS local government pilot project initiatives, building upon the experiences and lessons learned to create this virtual clearinghouse of EMS assistance tools and information.

### Goals/Outcomes

To discuss and identify how an EMS can help an organization meet its regulatory requirements efficiently and effectively; to inform participants of the successful use of a formal training program for local government officials based on educating officials of the risks of mismanagement and the opportunities provided by undertaking an EMS process; and to familiarize participants about the easily accessible, cost effective EMS resources available through the PEER Center.

### Key Questions

- How does an EMS, as a tool, enhance your ability to meet your regulatory requirements and sustain your efforts?
- Where can I go for information about Environmental Management Systems?
- What information does the Peer Center provide?
- How can an Environmental Management System help to get me "beyond compliance"?
- How can partnerships with other organizations enhance implementation of an EMS program?

### Presenters

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