

## FACT SHEET

### Pollution Prevention Programs at Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

#### What is Pollution Prevention?

Pollution prevention (P2) is the practice of reducing, eliminating or even better, **stopping** pollution before it's created, recycled, or disposed. DEQ manages a number of voluntary programs and initiatives to assist businesses, organizations, and communities with efforts to minimize their environmental footprint.

#### What is the Waste Management Hierarchy?

- Illustrates actions we can take that have the biggest impact.
- Recycling and environmental cleanup improve our environment, but...
- Stopping waste before it becomes pollution is even better!

#### What are the DEQ P2 voluntary programs for the public?

- [Virginia Environmental Excellence Program \(VEEP\)](#)
- [Virginia Green](#)
- [Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards](#)

#### What is an Environmental Management System (EMS)?

An EMS is a set of procedures and plans that entities can implement to ensure they follow environmental regulations and their own internal environmental policies. An EMS may include:

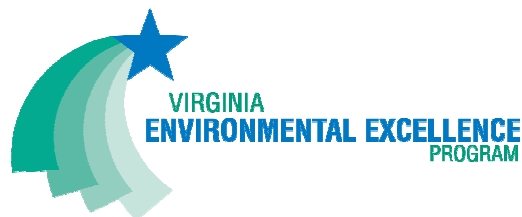
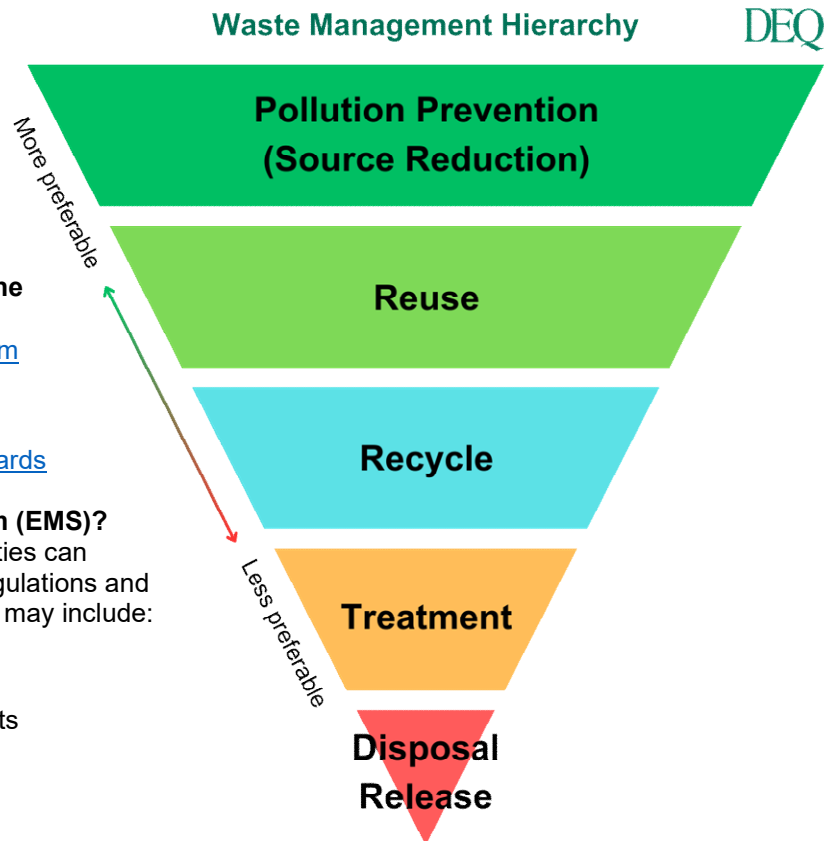
- Analyses and benchmarks
- Goals and implementation plans
- Communication and education components
- Record keeping and audits
- Continuous improvement plans

#### How does DEQ support the Greening of Government?

DEQ leads by example, promoting sustainability across the Commonwealth. Through energy conservation efforts, recycling programs, and advocating for the procurement of recycled materials and climate-positive certified products, DEQ supports both its own operations and helps other state agencies adopt environmentally responsible practices.

#### What are the benefits of P2 for businesses and organizations?

- Technical assistance for implementing pollution prevention measures
- Recognition – Virginia Green Award, Governor's Environmental Excellence Award
- Listing as a VEEP and/or Virginia Green business
- Networking with other businesses that prioritize environmental objectives



## What everyday actions can I take to help prevent pollution?



### Reduce food waste

- Plan meals & how to use leftovers
- Buy only what you can use before it spoils
- Store food to prolong freshness
- Compost scraps & leftovers when possible



### Avoid single-use plastics

- Bring reusable bags
- Use refillable water bottles & coffee cups
- Choose produce & other products without plastic packaging
- Store leftovers in reusable containers



### Conduct energy audit

- Program your thermostat to save energy
- Seal cracks around windows & doors
- Use LED bulbs instead of incandescent
- Choose energy efficient products & appliances



### P2 at the holidays

- Gift experiences & handmade items
- Use recyclable & reusable giftwrap
- Choose eco-friendly decorations
- Plan holiday meals and enjoy the leftovers

## What are some other programs that support pollution prevention and a better environment?

- [Balloon Release Ban](#)
- [Marine Debris Reduction Plan](#)
- [Clean Virginia Waterways](#)
- [Plant Virginia Natives](#)

## Who can I contact with more questions?

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