BALANCING THE BASICS WITH NEW INITIATIVES

A discussion about the state of State waste programs
Shrinking State Budgets
Past, Present, Future
Shrinking State Budgets: 2009*

- Budget cuts: have happened – more than once, in some States of the 19 States responding– resulting in:
  - Reduced or no out-of-state travel
  - Reduced monitoring
  - Reduced staffing (hiring/promotion freezes, staff cuts)
  - Reduced or no purchasing
  - Limited or cancelled contracts
  - Reduced or no training
  - Early retirement
  - Mandatory furlough days

Shrinking State Budgets: 2010*

- 17 of 19 States that responded to the ECOS survey are preparing for FY2010 budget cuts and anticipate:
  - Reducing staffing (hiring/promotional freeze, staff cuts)
  - Reduced or no out-of-State travel
  - Limited or cancelled contracts
  - Reduced or no equipment purchasing
  - Limited or no training
  - Continued mandatory furlough days

Shrinking State Budgets: Discuss

- How has your department or agency been affected?

California DTSC member indicate reduced funding, indicate furloughs and reduced goals. Kentucky: entire agency asked to reduce spending; we have vacancies that haven't been filled, but none that have been completely cut. Maryland: impacts that include a “silly reorganization.” Michigan: indicate not so much a complete hiring freeze as much as a hiring chill. Missouri: “new initiatives have been integrated into existing core functions but without additional funding/resources and such actions have often delayed completion of core function activities.” Montana: “FTE's reduced due to budget and redirected toward better performance management.”
Expanding Initiatives
Expanding Initiatives: Overview

According to the 2009 Annual Meeting survey, which many attendees and some non-attendees completed; several respondents answered no questions.

- 82% (74 of 89) indicate that their organization has pursued new initiatives within the past 5 years:
  - Chemicals of Emerging Concern: 12%
  - Green Chemistry: 3%
  - Performance Measures: 16%
  - Multi-media Inspections: 3%
  - Enforcement Initiatives: 28%
  - Others: 50%
    - Mercury, Coal Combustion Waste, New UST Regulations, Small Quantity Generators, Lead-based Paint, Non-traditional Waste Processing Activities, Hospital Compliance, Sustainability, IT, various new approaches to assessments and clean-ups, Vapor Intrusion, Energy Act, Environmental Justice, et al
Expanding Initiatives: Staffing

- Despite shrinking budgets and expanding initiatives, 68% of respondents to the 2009 Annual Meeting survey indicate no redirection or reduction in staff.
- The 31% who indicate “yes” comment that, in general, that:
  - Vacant positions are being eliminated instead of filled
  - People were or are being moved around; general reorganization; cross-media departments/jobs
  - Job descriptions have expanded or are expanding
  - New hires are going only/mainly to new initiatives, such as Coal Combustion Waste or Climate Change
State Budgets vs. New Initiatives

- 76% of respondents to the 2009 Annual Meeting Survey indicate that no new funding has been established for new initiatives.
- 80% indicate that the staff redirection/reduction has not impacted the achievement of grant commitments, federal grant dollars, or other performance indicators for core programs.
- The 17% who respond “yes” comment, in general, that:
  - Furloughs have affected overall achievement.
  - Only minimum requirements are being met.
  - The draw-down of federal dollars has slowed significantly.
Expanding Initiatives: Discuss

- What new initiatives has your agency undertaken?
- How are they funded?
- How were they staffed (i.e., new hires, additional workload, shifting staff, etc.)?
- Have they affected core programs?

Agencies that undertaken new initiatives: AK, AR, CA, CO, DC, FL, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, ME, MI, MT, MN, ND, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, VA, and several others.

States that established new funding or staffing for these new initiatives: DC, CO, NC, NY, KS, ME, LA, MN, TN, Guam, AR, CA, MA, IN, MT, NE, VT, SC
Mitigation Efforts

Realities and Ideas
Mitigation: Realities

- **State disinvestment**
  - As per ASTSWMO’s 2006 State Disinvestment Survey, disinvestment is occurring in all major program areas

- **Creative funding solutions**
  - Assessing fees for inspections, generators, compliance, etc
  - New taxes/fees on purchase of oils, tires, etc
  - New taxes on industry (i.e., petroleum)
  - Allowing fees to be paid by credit card
  - Partnering with other departments (i.e., Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Agriculture, Public Safety)
  - Using EPA grant money to supplement funding
Mitigation: Ideas

- Respondents to the 2009 ECOS survey* offered these ideas:
  - Requiring more work by the applicants rather than using staff time
  - Shift funding sources
  - Risk-based inspection strategy
  - Reorganization
  - Mandatory furloughs

Mitigation: Support from EPA*

- In March 2009, ECOS developed a handout entitled “Opportunities for Directing State Grant Funds and Work Load Sharing” (unavailable online), which recommends, among other things:
  - **EPA Regional Staff Loan to State Office**
    - NE DEQ has had a Region 7 staff person do a part-time rotation in one of its programs; MassDEP and TX CEQ has used regional staff to help with permit writing; SC DHEC reports having used regional staff to assist with establishing their Title V air efforts; MT DEQ has received assistance with their inspection workload from Region 8 enforcement staff
  - **State-Regional Office Collaboration**
    - NC DENR benefited from Region 4 funding two staff positions for their UST program to meet an unfunded mandate in the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005; Region 7 analyzed samples for NE DEQ; Region 2 analyzes West Nile virus-related water samples from NY DEC.

90% of respondents indicated that support from US EPA would be useful in supporting core programs or pursuing new initiatives.
Consequences

Realities and Potentialities
Consequences: Potentialities

- Respondents to the 2009 ECOS survey* believe reduced budgets could:
  - Impair inspection and enforcement activities
  - Force reduction or termination of programs
  - Delay permit issuance
  - Impact training, due to limited/no out-of-State travel
  - Limit collaboration and information sharing
  - Diminish customer service
  - Increase workload, remove institutional knowledge, and diminish efficiency due to early retirements and hiring freezes

Consequences: Realities: Discuss

- What have been the consequences of the totality of changes occurring with your agency/department?

Only 16% indicated that redirection/reduction in staff and/or funding impacted the achievement of grant commitments, draw down of federal grant dollars, or other performance indicators for core programs.