

## **National Biosolids Partnership - Environmental Management System City of Grand Rapids, Michigan**

### Description

The City of Grand Rapids participated in a National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) Environmental Management System (EMS) project in 2005. The purpose was to improve our Biosolids management practices by implementing a management system which focuses on quality management practices, environmental performance, relations with interested parties and regulatory compliance. The EMS was certified by the NBP in December 2006 and is the first agency in the State of Michigan to meet the rigorous requirements of the program and was the sixteenth agency in the country admitted to the NBP EMS program.

The EMS cost approximately \$25,000 to implement but has saved many times that amount since then as well as improving the overall operation of our Biosolids management.

### Background

The NBP was formed to help agencies across the nation improve their Biosolids management practices. Participation is voluntary but does require a significant commitment to meet the rigorous requirements. The benefits of participating include better trained staff, better defined operational controls, established goals and objectives geared towards continual improvement. Commit to third party independent audits for compliance with all requirements. These audits take 2-3 full days and cover all aspects of your program in great depth. Barriers included getting staff buy in and support from our leadership including the City Commission.

### Results

Please see our website for a wealth of information regarding program successes <http://www.ci.grand-rapids.mi.us/4143>

Part of our EMS requires that we identify goals and objectives each year. These are assigned to staff members who develop implementation schedules and regularly report on progress. For example one goal was to revise

permitting processes we use with our industrial wastewater customers. We wanted to streamline the process which would help us by reducing paperwork and help the industry by making the process less cumbersome. Over the course of a year a team worked diligently on accomplishing this goal with great success.

### Contacts

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