

A message from the Director, Val Siebal

Dear Business Owners:

Effective July 1, 2009, Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) is increasing fees while at the same time striving to contain costs. All our fees are tied to hiring and maintaining a high caliber inspection workforce as well as rising operational costs such as our building lease and fuel. Our fees are comparable to other urban counties with similar programs. EMD is funded solely by fees and must recover all its costs.

Some of our efforts to contain costs include:

- Centralized all staff to a leased office at Mather Field and will sublease remaining space
- Consolidated three divisions into two reducing management and administrative overhead costs to fee payers and bringing new efficiencies to those programs
- Returning fines and penalties as fee credits to compliant facilities in the Hazardous Materials programs. Since 2005, over a million dollars has been returned to businesses as fee offsets. Next year's rebates will bring some fees in this program below 1999 levels.
- Instead of seeking immediate full cost recovery for increased food inspections, EMD is subsidizing a gradual cost increase over five years for our food programs' fees.
- Reducing our department inspectors' fleet of cars by 25% decreasing auto lease costs.
- Cross-training inspectors to conduct inspections in multiple programs. This eliminates the need to hire additional staff or send a second inspector to the same facility, saving fuel and reducing emissions.
- Using computer software to map inspector's routes so they are more efficient, use less gasoline, and produce less greenhouse gas emissions.
- Beginning to record inspection results on laptop computers at the inspection site to eliminate the need to re-enter data and ultimately reducing staff costs
- Implemented a program allowing inspectors to report directly to their first inspection site from their home twice a week. This results in additional inspections being conducted and reduces staffing, air emission, and fuel costs.
- EMD provides discounts to single-owned food establishments with multiple food permits at one location (i.e., markets with a deli and coffee shop) as these can be covered with a single inspection trip which cuts travel time, fuel and emission costs.
- EMD trains and then contracts out some inspections to other county departments that are already inspecting a facility, which reduces hiring needs and travel costs as well as air emissions.
- My top managers and I have taken pay reductions and will not be taking cost of living increases in this next year.

Please call, email, or visit us if you have any questions, comments or suggestions regarding your fees:

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Thank you!