

## **Pollution Prevention**

The article written by Chris Wiant “What is the P2 trend all about, and how are environmental health professionals involved?” discusses the history, objectives and significance of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s pollution prevention (P2) program to the environment and public health. In the early 70s, there was already a conscious effort in protecting the nation’s vital natural resources which was pioneered by Congress. But EPA wanted to expand their strategy in environmental protection which resulted in the birth of the P2 program. The main thrust of the pollution prevention program is to encourage companies to get involved in the community level by taking the initiative in becoming leaders in protecting the environment. In addition, the application of the program has facilitated the identification of its “potential for significant economic benefits by avoiding the need for treatment at the end-of-the-pipe.” Since P2 has been well received by businesses and its positive benefits are eminent, the next challenge is “how to institutionalize P2 as a standard business practice, and 2) how to get businesses and communities to see that P2 can be a pathway to a new partnership between them” (Wiant, 1997, p. 24).

Moreover, the pollution prevention program is not only a directive that is focused on conservation and preservation of the natural resources. It is more directed at the sustainable maintenance of the activities that were already started by companies and the EPA but in a larger scale. The certainty of the success of the program can only be guaranteed if all sectors of the society work hand in hand in order to achieve a single goal which is to reduce the damage inflicted to the environment. Another aspect of the P2 program that is very appealing is its emphasis on preventive measures. Its design of “reducing the emission of toxic substances into the environment, focusing on the manufacturing process as the point in which to control toxin emissions” is an innovative idea that will dramatically trim down the production of harmful substances. Through this approach a potential problem can be

addressed to its initial stage. Instead of using the end-of-the-pipe strategy, businesses can already start with prevention during the manufacturing process. As a result, massive damages to the environment can be avoided and it can also eliminate the risk of inflicting impairment to the public's health. Also, it can significantly reduce the cost for businesses in decreasing their toxic emissions. It is like shooting 2 birds in 1 stone because companies can save a lot of money and time by just implementing the P2 program in their business procedures. By mandating business to utilize the P2 program, changes in common business practices will occur. But this alteration would be for the overall improvement of the policies and procedures of a company. Moreover, in a community that practices such programs, the quality of life of the people will greatly improve and the relationship of coexistence between man and nature will continue to flourish for the better (Wiant, 1997, p. 24)...

#### ...Works Cited

Wiant, C. J. (1997). What is the P2 trend all about, and how are environmental health professionals involved?. *Journal of Environmental Health*, 59, 24.