

# **Spokane IGC Visits Final Report 2001**

## **Project Description**

In June 2001, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) entered into an interlocal agreement with the Spokane Aquifer Joint Board (SAJB). The purpose of this agreement was “to provide technical assistance visits to small businesses that generate hazardous waste. These visits were designed to provide dangerous waste and aquifer protection information, as one mode of aquifer and wellhead protection.” Included in this agreement was a provision for updates and final report.

The Project Description section of the Ecology and SAJB written agreement estimated that 1500 businesses were within 500 feet of a purveyor wellhead or within Spokane County’s Aquifer Protection Area. Of the 1500 identified businesses, approximately 100 businesses were appropriate types of businesses to visit. Ecology identified another 200 businesses through Sewer District business customer lists.

## **Project Summary**

Two Ecology teams conducted business assistance visits from July through November. The teams consisted of two teams: Camille Martin (Toxics Reduction Team Leader) and Luke Cayer (Administrative Intern); and John Blunt and Rolfe Parsloe (Toxics Reduction Specialists). Additionally, through a service learning agreement with Spokane Falls Community College, several chemistry students were observing business assistance visits too. Spokane Community College, Service Learning Program, had approached us to have the students participate in the visits as part of their chemistry course.

<b>IGC’s</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Contacts</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>520</b>
<b>Site Visits</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>239*</b>

*(\*Airway Heights business visits were counted toward total number visits completed)*

Many of the 520 businesses contacted from the county and sewer district lists did not present a threat to the aquifer. The businesses did not use hazardous substances nor generate dangerous waste. These businesses included but were not limited to: vacant lots, fast food restaurants, grocery stores, distribution centers and business office complexes.

The majority of the 239 businesses visited were quite receptive to our technical assistance information. The evaluations received back averaged a score 4.3 on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest mark). There have only been three businesses that have refused to participate in the project since it was initiated in June. One of the three businesses had been inspected recently by Ecology and felt all issues had been addressed. The other two businesses did not generate dangerous waste or use any product that could contaminate the aquifer. (The evaluation form will be handed out and discussed at the SJAB meeting)

There were approximately 15 businesses that need follow up visits due to numerous violations at the sites. The follow up visits have not occurred but will be completed this winter. The majority of businesses had a few minor violations noted during the visits. These violations included but were not limited to: inadequate markings on hazardous substances, inadequate labeling of dangerous waste containers, lack of secondary containment for dangerous waste containers, open containers, venting organic solvents, spillage, to name a few.

**Conclusions**

**Visits**

The original scope of the project was approximately 1500 businesses based on the Ecology-SAJB agreement. However, many of the businesses contacted by Ecology have been determined to be not suitable for site inspections. They do not use hazardous substances nor generate dangerous waste on site in sufficient quantities to present a threat to the aquifer. Approximately three hundred businesses were identified as businesses that were well suited to visit.

The participating 239 businesses benefited by receiving information on: site inspections, dangerous waste regulatory compliance, health and safety information, less costly dangerous waste disposal, new technologies or products that eliminate or reduce the use of hazardous substances and the generation of dangerous wastes.

*Benefit to **Water Districts***

The Water Districts benefited by having the majority of the applicable businesses, in their water district, visited. These visits will significantly improve environmental business practices that in turn will protect the aquifer from contamination. Water districts represented in Ecology’s project were:

<b>Spokane City</b>	<b>Irvin # 6</b>	<b>Whitworth</b>	<b>Hutchinson</b>	<b>Trent. Irrig.</b>
<b>Spo. Co. # 3</b>	<b>Con. Irrig.</b>	<b>Orchard # 6</b>	<b>Moab</b>	<b>E. Spokane</b>
<b>Liberty Lake</b>	<b>Vera</b>	<b>Modern</b>	<b>Airway Heights*</b>	<b>Millwood</b>

*(\*Airway Heights isn't within Spokane Aquifer area but was of interest to Ecology to visit area businesses.)*

**Next Steps**

Ecology’s, Eastern Region Office, Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program’s, Toxics Reduction Unit will continue to complete follow up visits and additional technical assistance visits on a time available basis. We anticipate completing about 10 technical assistance visits per month except no visits will be done December and January. We plan on continuing discussions on aquifer protection to the businesses, in future visits. Significant positive working relationships have been formed, with the businesses that will keep the aquifer safer from contamination. Ecology benefits by continuing to get out into the business community communicating better environmental management practices.