



Texas-Tamaulipas
Partners for Development of a Clean Environment
and
Environmental Excellence Awards

Jointly Sponsored by

The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
Texas, USA

and

The Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology
Tamaulipas, Mexico

“This cooperative program encourages the maquila industry to go beyond regulatory requirements to improve environmental conditions in their communities. We welcome this opportunity to cooperate with Mexico and salute border-area industries for playing a leading role in this effort.”

George W. Bush
Governor of the State of Texas
April 5, 2000



“Tamaulipas and Texas wish to increase the coordination between industry, the community, and government in the achievement of our proposed goals. I support the intention to go beyond existing regulations with voluntary actions to improve the quality of life for our citizens.”

Tomás Yarrington Ruvalcaba
Governor of the State of Tamaulipas
April 26, 2000

Texas-Tamaulipas

Partners for Development of a Clean Environment and Environmental Excellence Awards

Introduction

The Rio Grande/Río Bravo has long been considered a barrier between the United States and Mexico. However, diverse activities and regular exchanges of people, goods, and services along the border have brought together the economies and cultures to a significant extent. The cross-border regionalism along the river defies our old perception of a division caused by the river, and challenges us to discover the true function of the Rio Grande: to unify sister cities and states by means of a common need and natural bond -- the water.

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A Spirit of Environmental Cooperation

In August 1999 the Secretary of Urban Development and Ecology (SEDUE) of Tamaulipas and a Commissioner of the Texas Natural

Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) signed the Texas-Tamaulipas Strategic Environmental Plan: A Framework for Cooperation. That Plan included a commitment to develop a program that would recognize environmental achievements by the private sector. In 2000 the two agencies have collaborated with private industry in establishing such a program.

This new environmental leadership program -- Partners for Development of a Clean Environment -- is sponsored by both the State of Tamaulipas, through SEDUE, and the State of Texas, through the TNRCC. These agencies will publicly recognize those companies that commit to and implement voluntary projects that will positively impact the environment on both sides of the border. These projects should protect, conserve, and sustain the natural resources, improving the environment and the quality of community life along the river.

The Importance of Industry and Environment along the Border

Transnational companies, and especially the maquiladora industry of Mexico, have provided economic growth to many areas of Mexico. By its very nature, this industry is tied closely to companies in other countries, most notably the United States. In addition to these economic ties, there also are cross-border environmental impacts. The

environment recognizes no national or state boundaries. The production process in modern economies inevitably involves uses of resources (such as water, energy, and raw materials) and the generation of wastes (such as hazardous waste, air emissions, or water discharges) that can have negative environmental effects on both sides.

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Recently, many industries have made significant progress in developing environmental management systems and in identifying ways to combine environmental improvements with economic savings. These improvements have included a more efficient use of inputs, which reduces the depletion of raw materials and the generation of waste by-products. In some cases, the improvements have transformed the concept of "waste," by finding uses for these by-products as recyclable inputs into one or another production process.

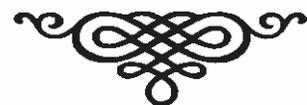
Going Beyond Regulations

Both Mexico and the U.S. have strong environmental laws. But it is in the interest of citizens on both sides of the border to encourage voluntary efforts that go beyond compliance with regulations.

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Toward this end, Tamaulipas and Texas have established a program that offers public recognition for three levels of effort: (1) commitments to projects that will reduce various sources of environmental stress both within a

facility's boundaries and in the neighboring community; (2) fulfillment of the commitments; and (3) the most outstanding achievements among those projects.



Partners for Development of a Clean Environment

Criteria for Membership

To become a member of **Partners for Development of a Clean Environment**, a company must meet five criteria:

- ⇒ The company must have an environmental impact in the border area.
- ⇒ The company must operate in the State of Tamaulipas, in the State of Texas, or in both states.
- ⇒ The company must have all the appropriate environmental permits that are required to do business.
- ⇒ The company must make a commitment to implement a program that will result in at least a 30 percent reduction within its business operations, over a three-year period, in the use of at least one category of resource or the generation of one category of contaminant that is understood to have a negative environmental impact.

Examples of categories that could be reduced are the following:

- ▶ use of water;
- ▶ use of energy;
- ▶ generation of hazardous waste;
- ▶ generation of an air emission considered a contaminant;
- ▶ generation of a water discharge considered a contaminant;
- ▶ generation of a by-product that becomes municipal solid waste.

- ⇒ A company must make a commitment to participate in a three-year community program that will lead to a significant environmental improvement.

Examples of community-related programs are the following:

- ▶ educating the public on the environment;
- ▶ training members of the community or participants in academic programs in specific skills or knowledge that will result in environmental improvement;
- ▶ helping the community develop or improve a recycling program or a program that will reduce the per-capita use of energy, water, or other resources;
- ▶ assisting with a program of land restoration or habitat protection in the community.

Procedure for Applying for Membership

To apply for membership in **Partners for Development of a Clean Environment**, a company must obtain the official application form to the Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology at the following address:

Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology (SEDUE)
Director General of Natural Resources and Environment
13 Guerrero y Bravo #374
C.P. 87000
Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas
☎ (131)5-54-46
E-mail: dirrec_nat@infosel.net.mx

The application should be submitted to SEDUE at the address above, either in person or by certified mail, messenger, or e-mail.

The application form requests contact and location data for the company, a listing of the status of all required environmental permits, and summaries of the two projects (internal and community-related) the company commits to implement, along with baseline data on quantities being measured.

SEDUE and the TNRCC will cooperate in reviewing applications (the lead agency depending on the location of the applicant), based on the criteria described on page 3. The Office of Director General of Natural Resources and Environment in SEDUE subsequently will mail a letter of notification to each applicant, and will send a copy of each approved application package to all members of the **Advisory Committee** for their information (see the last page for a list of the members of this Committee).

Advisory Committee members are free to make comments deemed helpful to any Partner.

Reporting Progress and Renewing Membership

During January of each year, each member company must send a report to the Director General of Natural Resources and Environment in SEDUE with the following information:

- ⇒ The status of all environmental permits.
- ⇒ A brief summary of the progress on its the two program commitments made when accepted into the program (the internal program and the community program). In the case of the community program, the company should include a letter from a

collaborating organization in the community, briefly explaining the status of that project from the perspective of the community.

SEDUE, through the Office of the Director General of Natural Resources and Environment, will review the annual report from the company and consult with appropriate other agencies regarding the environmental status of the company. Membership is maintained if the company has not lost any permits and if the company has made reasonable progress on its two program commitments.

A company must apply for a new membership after the original three-year commitment is fulfilled.

Recognizing Members

Upon being accepted into the **Partners for Development of a Clean Environment**, a company will receive the following types of recognition:

- ✧ Letters of congratulations from the Secretary of Urban Development and Ecology in Tamaulipas and a Commissioner of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.
- ✧ Notices from SEDUE and the TNRCC to the print and broadcast media in Tamaulipas and Texas.
- ✧ An invitation to the annual event during which the Texas-Tamaulipas Environmental Excellence Awards are presented.

After a company successfully fulfills its program commitments, the company will receive the following types of recognition:

- ✧ A certificate of congratulations and appreciation co-signed by the Secretary of Urban Development and Ecology in Tamaulipas and a Commissioner of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.
- ✧ Notices from SEDUE and the TNRCC to broadcast and print media in major cities in Tamaulipas and Texas.
- ✧ An announcement of achievement at the annual event at which the Texas-Tamaulipas Environmental Excellence Awards are presented.

Tamaulipas-Texas Environmental Excellence Awards



Categories and Criteria

SEDUE, in collaboration with the TNRCC, will host an annual event in Tamaulipas in June during which it will present awards for achievements in the following categories:

- ★ **Environmental Award for Continuous Industrial Improvement**, for the most outstanding achievement by a company for an internal company program that has resulted in significant benefit to the environment and that could serve as a model in similar circumstances in other locations.

- ★ **Environmental Award for Community Involvement**, for the most outstanding achievement by a company, or association of companies, for a program implemented in collaboration with partners in the community.

A company must be a member of **Partners for Development of a Clean Environment** in order to apply for an award. If an applicant is an association, each one of its members must be a member of **Partners**.

Applications for the awards will be evaluated based on the following characteristics:

- ⇒ Importance of the completed project with respect to its environmental and social benefits.

- ⇒ Originality, potential, creativity, and degree of innovation.

- ⇒ Ease of quantifying the procedures, methodologies, and results.

- ⇒ Applicability of the project to similar situations in other companies or communities.

- ⇒ Completion of the company's established objectives for the program.

For the **Environmental Award for Community Involvement**, reviewers additionally will take into account how the program strengthens the local culture and environmental awareness.

SEDUE, on the advice of its **Advisory Committee**, may decide not to present an award in either or both categories in any particular year, if it decides that none of the applicants made a sufficiently significant impact on the environment.

Applying for an Award

A company or association that wishes to be considered for one of the awards can obtain a copy of the application form and instructions from the Director General of Natural Resources and Environment at SEDUE (the address, phone number, and e-mail address are on the final page). During the first year of the program (2000-2001), the completed application form and all attachments must be submitted to the Director General between November 10, 2000, and February 12, 2001.

The application form requests contact and location data for the company or association and a summary of the project undertaken and results obtained, addressing the characteristics described above. Depending on the project, more detailed appendices are welcome, and for community involvement projects, testimonials from collaborating persons or groups are required.

All data presented concerning the baseline and accomplishments must be verifiable.

Judging and Recognizing Award Winners

The Director General of Natural Resources and Environment at SEDUE will provide an initial screening of the award applications and then confer with the TNRCC to select finalists in each category. Then the **Advisory Committee** will review the applications of the finalists and make recommendations in rank order to the Director General. The Director General makes the final decision, which is not subject to appeal.

The winners of the **Texas-Tamaulipas Environmental Excellence Awards** will be notified by the end of April.

The winners will receive the following types of recognition:

- ✿ Awards that are presented during an annual event in June. All members of the **Partners for Development of a Clean Environment**, public officials, representatives of the media, and other individuals or groups, as deemed appropriate, will be invited.
- ✿ Letters of congratulations from the Governor of the State of Tamaulipas and the Governor of the State of Texas.
- ✿ Notices from SEDUE and the TNRCC to broadcast and print media in Tamaulipas and Texas.

The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee consists of representatives from the following groups:

- The Directorate General of Natural Resources and Environment, in the Secretariat of Development and Ecology (SEDUE) of Tamaulipas.
 - The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.
 - The Secretariat of Environment, Natural Resources, and Fisheries (SEMARNAP) in Mexico.
 - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
 - A municipal government in Tamaulipas.
 - A maquiladora association.
 - A nongovernmental organization in Tamaulipas.
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For more information, or copies of either the application form for membership or the form for an award, please contact one of the following, depending on the state in which you operate:

Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology
Director General of Natural Resources and Environment
13 Guerrero y Bravo #374
C.P. 87000
Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas
☎ (131)5-54-46
Correo Electrónico: dirrec_nat@infosel.net.mx

or

Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
Office of Border Affairs
Headquarters: MC 121
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087
☎ (512) 239-3600
E-Mail: ba@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Regional Office in Laredo:
☎ (956) 791-6611