

# Coordination of Regional Pollution Prevention Information Centers

## EPA Grant 83375501-0

### Quarterly Report

November 1, 2007 – January 31, 2008

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## Executive Summary

Funding for this grant was not actually received at the University of Nebraska at Omaha until January although the award stated the proposal period began November 1, 2007. Therefore, this first quarterly report covers the time period from November 1, 2007 through January 31, 2008 but primarily consists of one month of work.

There was active involvement with the team evaluating the Pollution Prevention Information Network (PPIN). The eight regional Pollution Prevention Resource Exchange (P2Rx) information centers comprise the PPIN.

- Reviewed and commented upon questions used for center surveys
- Participated in several planning calls with the evaluation team
- Acquired data from a previous subcontractor who helped conduct and analyze a survey of the P2Rx centers in 2004 and provided this data to the current EPA contractor who is conducting the PPIN evaluation
- Supplied raw activity and Web data centers had submitted in the past
- Met face-to-face twice with members of the evaluation team
- Administered a pre- and post-test to EPA P2 Regional coordinators in association with evaluation team presentation at their planning meeting in January
- Anecdotal stories of how center services have been used, how network connections lead to information delivery, center-to-center interactions, and any other information that might be pertinent but not otherwise captured in a measurement system are being collected
- Coordinated P2Rx administrators call in January
- Formed executive committee, marketing/partnership committee, and content/technology committee from P2Rx center directors
- Prepared for face-to-face meeting of P2Rx administrators in February. This included contact with each center director to set the agenda, get ideas for the FY08 PPIN proposals, and communicate about the logic model and EPA's PPIN evaluation.
- Solicited centers to perform the information technology (IT) functions associated with the program coordinator's work, since Prabin Kanel, originally slated to do the IT work has taken a different job

It is worthwhile to note the results of the P2 coordinators pre- and post-tests. First, only 45% the coordinators and headquarters people took the pre-test. Only 10% took the post-test. This audience is invested in this program but it serves as an illustration of the difficulty in getting measurement. The point is only made to emphasize the challenge of showing results. Centers are committed to getting measurement but it will not be trivial to do it. Clearly, centers will need to be creative in measuring outcomes.

# 1. Project Accomplishments

## *1.1. Identify, evaluate, and measure outcomes and outputs from information services and other outreach*

### *1.1.1. Establish P2Rx/EPA measurement workgroup*

An evaluation team was formed by EPA to evaluate the Pollution Prevention Information Network (PPIN). The team of Beth Anderson, Yvonne Watson, Andrea Hramits, Charles Bevington, Hugh Gibson, and Pam Swingle (EPA), Andy Bray, Elizabeth Bird, and Jean Waters (P2Rx) and Abt Associates (contractor), has met on several phone calls. Two face-to-face meetings were held with some of the group present. The evaluation team will serve as the measurement workgroup.

The EPA Regional P2 Coordinators are stakeholders in PPIN. The Pollution Prevention Resource Exchange (P2Rx) centers serve all EPA regions and work closely with the P2 coordinators. A presentation was made to the coordinators at their strategic planning meeting in Washington DC on January 24. The handouts from this presentation are provided in pdf format. Pre-tests and post-tests were given to the coordinators. Summarized results are provided in the appendix.

As an indicator of how difficult it is to collect measurement, it is interesting to note that although the P2 coordinators should appreciate more than anyone the need for measurement and surveys, only six of sixteen coordinators took the pre-test and only two took the post-test. Three of four headquarters people took the pre-test and none took the post-test.

### *1.1.2. Quantify current measures*

Raw data for each center's Web and activity measures collected in the past were provided to Abt, for compilation.

Centers are currently conducting on-line surveys which Abt will compile. Prior to the surveys being posted on the center's websites, comments about the specific questions contained in the survey were provided to the evaluation team.

Weinreich Associates was contacted to get the results from previous surveys. These results were provided to Abt.

A file was begun for centers to contribute anecdotal stories of how their services have been used, how network connections lead to information delivery, center-to-center interactions, and any other information that might be pertinent but not otherwise captured in a measurement system.

### *1.1.3. Workgroup evaluate and recommend measures*

This process is underway. Abt is still collecting information. Beth Anderson, Yvonne Watson, and Andrea Hramits met to discuss possible outcome measures from P2Rx activities. The discussion notes are included in the appendix.

### *1.1.4. Determine gaps in information*

This work has not yet begun.

### *1.1.5. Make recommendations based on information services measurement*

No recommendations will be made until after surveys are analyzed and the PPIN evaluation is collected.

### *1.1.6. Help centers prioritize their work and share components of the overall strategy*

Centers currently have surveys posted on their sites. These surveys were provided centrally from the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA).

## *1.2. Measure and evaluate current networking activities*

Current networking activities conducted by centers are being compiled by Abt. The evaluation results are expected to be complete in April.

### ***1.3. Pursue efficiencies in information delivery***

In preparation for the P2Rx administrative meeting in February, center directors were contacted about their thoughts and possible concerns in moving forward with consolidation of information delivery.

#### ***1.3.1. Centralize the Topic Hub™ database***

Groundwork was laid with center directors to consolidate the Topic Hub database. Scenarios for possible implementation, including the details of how the software would function were discussed.

#### ***1.3.2. Centralize the library databases***

NEWMOA has transferred its virtual library to WRRC. P2RIC is willing to do the same, but has not yet accomplished it. Discussion with GLRPPR shows that further conversations will be needed in order to combine their virtual library with WRRC. In the FY07 proposal, WRRC plans to implement measures on their library site. This leadership will likely provide the impetus for centers to make a similar (or exact) change on their Websites in association with that effort.

#### ***1.3.3. Provide limited web consulting to centers and external partners***

Prabin Kanel, the Information Technology (IT) specialist who was expected to do this work has taken a new job in New York City. Frankly, this is a blow to our organization because of Prabin's extensive history with the program, his IT expertise, and his particular ability of effective teambuilding. Prabin is still available for limited free-lance work.

Centers were asked whether or not they want to perform the IT work. It is expected that GLRPPR and NEWMOA will bid on the job. Both organizations have well-qualified, experienced IT staff. The University of Nebraska at Omaha also has capacity that could be used if necessary. The advantage of working with one of the centers is that they have the history and know the current software and center dynamics. The new IT support should be in place by the beginning of March.

### ***1.4. Facilitate communication among centers***

Several individual contacts have been made with all center directors in preparation for the February administrative meeting.

- Contacted each center director for agenda items; set agenda
- Contacted each center director for PPIN proposal ideas and possible collaboration for FY08
- Contacted each center director about the logic model and EPA's PPIN evaluation

Committees were also combined and center directors split among them so each center director is only on one committee (except the executive committee members are on the executive committee plus one more committee). The new committees are Marketing/partnerships and Content/technology.

Marketing/Partnering committee will develop strategies to broaden our audience and specifically get a business audience and to find and collaborate with external partners who can help us achieve our goals. Include measurement for every activity. Members are Ed Gonzalez (chair), Kevin Dick, Mike Vogel, Lynn Turner, Chris Wiley, Julie Woolsey, Bob Iverson, Rachel Colella (secretary)

Content/Technology committee combines News, Library, Topic Hub, and Web committees. This committee will develop strategies to select and deliver P2 content quickly, accurately, and effectively. Include measurement for every activity. Members are Rick Yoder (chair), Gary Hunt, Andy Bray, Elizabeth Bird, Thomas Vinson (secretary), Scott Butner (Battelle – ex-officio).

### ***1.5. Program Coordinator Evaluation***

An executive committee of Andy Bray (NEWMOA), Ed Gonzalez (WRPPN), and Chris Wiley (PPRC) comprise the new P2Rx executive committee. The committee had two phone calls and some e-mails in January. The committee will be responsible for evaluation of the P2Rx coordinator, among other things.

## 2. Project Task Summary

The project task summary follows the detail of the project strategy.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Evaluate and measure outcomes and outputs from <b>information services and other outreach</b> (Project Strategy 1.1)	<i>Quarter 1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Solicit workgroup</li> <li>▪ compile measures</li> <li>▪ coordinate with EPA consultant on measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publish current measures</li> <li>▪ Meet with workgroup</li> <li>▪ Begin survey or focus group meetings (EPA contractor)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ .Workgroup formed</li> <li>▪ Previous measurement data submitted to contractor</li> <li>▪ Contractor work has begun; center's have surveys posted</li> </ul>
	<i>Quarter 2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ conduct face-to-face workgroup meeting</li> <li>▪ identify gaps in measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publish meeting minutes</li> <li>▪ Publish recommended measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ two face-to-face meetings with workgroup</li> <li>▪ Minutes from meeting distributed to centers and workgroup</li> <li>▪ One face-to-face meeting with EPA P2 coordinators</li> </ul>
	<i>Quarter 3-4</i> compile auxiliary measures obtained from centers	Publish expanded measurement results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contractor has begun compiling center's measures</li> <li>▪ Began a file for anecdotal results</li> </ul>
	<i>Quarter 5-6</i> Analyze measurement results with workgroup and executive committee	Publish recommend changes to information services	Not begun
	<i>Quarter 7-8</i> Help Centers prioritize work and share components of overall strategy	Establish network-wide priorities with center responsibilities	NEWMOA facilitated web posting of surveys for centers

<b>Task</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Measure and evaluate current <b>networking</b> activities (Project Strategy 2.2)	<i>Quarter 1</i> compile networking measures	List current measures	Contractor has begun compiling measures
	<i>Quarter 2</i> Recommend measures; review	Publish recommended measures	Not begun
	<i>Quarter 3-4</i> Assist centers with internet implementation to gather audience statistics	P2Rx Centers implement audience measures	Not begun
	<i>Quarter 5-6</i> Compile information gathered by centers	Publish summary of audience statistics and networking measures	Not begun
	<i>Quarter 7</i> Make recommendations for changes/improvements	Publish recommendation document	Not begun
	<i>Quarter 8</i> Help Centers prioritize work and share components of overall strategy	Establish network-wide priorities with center responsibilities	Not begun

<b>Task</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Pursue efficiencies in information delivery (Project Strategy 1.3)	<i>Quarter 1-4</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Get agreement from centers on hosting site and mechanism of display for Topic Hubs</li> <li>▪ Help centers migrate data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ P2Rx standard for centralized Topic Hubs</li> <li>▪ Produce centralized Topic Hub database</li> </ul>	Conversations with individual center directors have taken place on centralized Topic Hub database
	<i>Quarter 5-8</i> Contact external partners to share Topic Hubs	Topic Hubs displayed with three or more external partners	One external partner has contacted PPRC to display Topic Hubs
	<i>Quarter 1-4</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Get agreement from centers on hosting site and mechanism of display for virtual, centralized library</li> <li>▪ Help centers migrate data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ P2Rx standard for centralized library</li> <li>▪ Produce centralized library</li> </ul>	Conversations among center directors have taken place on centralized library
	<i>Quarter 5-8</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Help centers display library on their sites</li> <li>▪ Find external partners to display library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Library displayed on individual center sites</li> <li>▪ Library displayed with three or more external partners</li> </ul>	Implementation has not begun
	<i>Ongoing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist Centers with web or database issues</li> <li>▪ Provide minimum training on P2Rx products to new web personnel</li> <li>▪ Assist external partners with display of P2Rx products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of documented “bugs” in Bugzilla</li> <li>▪ Number of updates of software in CVS</li> <li>▪ Number of trainings</li> <li>▪ Number of external partners assisted</li> </ul>	Two centers are responding to the request to fulfill the IT work for the program coordinator

<b>Task</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Facilitate communication among centers (Project Strategy 2.4)	<i>Ongoing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monthly conference calls among Center directors</li> <li>▪ Quarterly regional updates</li> <li>▪ Monthly conference calls among web personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Center directors conference call minutes</li> <li>▪ Regional updates e-mail “newsletters”</li> <li>▪ Web developers’ conference call minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Center directors were all contacted in advance of Feb. admin meeting</li> <li>▪ Facilitated January admin call</li> </ul>
Program coordinator evaluation (Project Strategy 2.5)	<i>Quarter 2, 4, 6</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive committee evaluate coordinator with input of all center directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluations posted</li> <li>▪ Response posted</li> </ul>	Executive committee has been formed

### 3. Attachments

- 3.1. [Handouts from presentation to EPA P2 Coordinators Strategic Planning meeting](#)
- 3.2. [Summary of pre-test and Post-test results from presentation to EPA P2 Coordinators](#)
- 3.3. [Discussion notes from meeting with members of the evaluation team](#)