


FOSTTA Facts

The Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Action



If you work for a state or tribal government and are interested in or can influence toxic chemical or pollution prevention programs and policy, then you may want to join FOSTTA!

The Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Action (FOSTTA) is a partnership among state and tribal leaders and the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) in the U.S. EPA. Its mission is to increase understanding and to improve collaboration on toxic chemical and pollution prevention issues among the states, tribes, and EPA.

FOSTTA Benefits Its Members and the Public

FOSTTA members have direct access to the people who run EPA's chemical and pollution prevention programs. They receive timely news and information on EPA plans and programs and have the opportunity to share the same kind of information about their state or tribe with EPA.

Through FOSTTA, EPA sponsors state and tribal members' travel expenses to participate in two to three FOSTTA meetings each year. The meetings provide the participants an opportunity to have in-depth discussions on issues concerning the environment and human health and are typically held in the spring and fall and last for about a day and a half.

Through face-to-face discussions with senior EPA officials, FOSTTA members can pose questions and offer feedback on existing programs and new directions for OPPT. FOSTTA members can also seek advice from OPPT on their own state or tribal initiatives and projects. Over time, active FOSTTA members establish a network of relationships that reaches beyond FOSTTA meetings to improve ongoing communication and sustained collaboration among OPPT, state members, and tribal members.

FOSTTA Members Are Senior State and Tribal Officials

Membership in FOSTTA is open to senior state and tribal officials who can implement or influence state or tribal policy in toxics or pollution prevention. These officials are often employed in a state or tribe's environmental or health agency.

Candidates for membership are typically nominated by federal, state, or tribal agency officials; professional societies; the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS); the National Tribal Environmental Council (NTEC); or the general public. The FOSTTA Coordinating Committee, which is a steering group of the project chairs along with ECOS, NTEC, and EPA staff, selects new FOSTTA members, aiming for a balance of expertise, geographic representation, and



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other important factors. Members are asked to make a two-year commitment to FOSTTA, subject to renewal by the FOSTTA Coordinating Committee.

FOSTTA Projects Make a Difference

FOSTTA is organized into three projects: the Chemical Information and Management Project (CIMP), the Pollution Prevention (P2) Project, and the Tribal Affairs Project (TAP).

CIMP concentrates on chemical testing and evaluation programs, as well as data use, data integration, and chemical risk screening associated with the High Production Volume Challenge Program (HPV) and the Voluntary Children's Chemical Evaluation Program (VCCEP). The HPV program promotes the voluntary testing of and public availability of information on about 2,800 chemicals, while the VCCEP is designed to generate and share key data on chemicals of particular concern to children's health.

The P2 Project promotes the pollution prevention ethic across society, integrating P2 into mainstream environmental activities at both the federal level and among the states, advances new prevention-oriented approaches and technologies, and establishes better prevention information and assistance delivery mechanisms.

TAP deals specifically with issues of concern in Indian Country. TAP provides input on lead-based paint, asbestos, mercury, and other contaminant issues in Indian Coun-

try; EPA's risk assessments; the OPPTS Tribal Strategic Plan; and environmental concerns affecting Native American traditional lifeways.

FOSTTA Is Coordinated by ECOS and NTEC with OPPT

OPPT awarded a cooperative agreement for FOSTTA to ECOS and NTEC. ECOS and NTEC work closely to support FOSTTA by promoting communications and regular dialogue among states, tribes, and EPA about common problems associated with toxics and pollution prevention; by helping to develop agendas for FOSTTA meetings; and by providing meeting logistics, facilitation, and management.

Each project is composed of 15 to 20 state and tribal members and each selects a chairperson who also serves as a FOSTTA Coordinating Committee

member. OPPT has designated a senior official in its program to advocate for each of the projects. An appropriate representative from EPA's regional offices also serves as liaison on each project.

The *FOSTTAGram* newsletter is composed of articles of interest to the FOSTTA states and tribes and EPA. *FOSTTAGram* is intended to disseminate information on the activities and projects of FOSTTA to all the states and the tribes. Members are encouraged to submit articles to be published. The newsletter is distributed to FOSTTA members, EPA staff, state environmental association leaders, public health associations, and others twice a year.



FOSTTA Works with the EPA'S Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT)

OPPT directs EPA's major chemical and prevention policy and program activities. Its mission focuses on promoting pollution prevention, safer chemicals, risk reduction in homes and communities, and greater public understanding of the risks of chemicals. The office, composed of about 360 staff in Washington, D.C., and additional staff in EPA's Regional offices, administers the Toxic Substances Control Act, the Pollution Prevention Act, the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act, the Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Act, and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act.

OPPT actively promotes the use of safer chemicals and processes in all the basic operations of the industrial sector.

It does this through a combination of regulatory and voluntary efforts, including its chemical screening and review program.

Large amounts of toxic chemicals such as lead, PCBs, asbestos, dioxins, and mercury are already in the environment from past activities. OPPT promotes reduction of risk from these substances by implementing aggressive programs to minimize exposure.

OPPT also works to provide understandable, accessible, and complete information on chemical risks to the broadest audience possible. By promoting public understanding, the office supports better public deci-

sions about how to protect human health and the environment.

Finally, since source reduction is the preferred national environmental approach, OPPT advocates pollution prevention as an alternative to end-of-pipe controls through programs and activities to reduce or eliminate waste at its source.

FOSTTA Collaborations Get Results

Here are some examples of FOSTTA collaborations:

Integrated State Toxics Project

This is a pilot grant in which the New England Waste Management Officials' Association fosters coordination between state agencies and collaboration among the states in Regions 1 and 2 in gathering and evaluating information about and develop-

ing control strategies for toxic substances in New England.

Confidential Business Information Pilot Project

The Chemical Information and Management Project recommended a Confidential Business Information (CBI) pilot project to assess the value of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) data to state environmental protection and public health efforts. Through an EPA contract, four FOSTTA members and their respective states reviewed TSCA data for a specific period of time. In the spring of 1996, the analysis was completed and submitted





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to the EPA. Each of the analyses reflected that state environmental protection and public health activities would be materially enhanced if they had access to TSCA data, including CBI.

Risk Screening Environmental Indicator (RSEI) Model

In the earliest stages of the development of the RSEI model, the Chemical and Information Management Project provided constructive feedback to EPA to make sure the model was compatible with the needs of the states. RSEI

is a screening-level tool to evaluate releases of toxic chemicals to the environment and their related impact on chronic human health. The model considers not only the pounds of chemicals released but also their relative toxicity, the degree to which people are potentially exposed to these chemicals, and the estimated size of the exposed general population.

Lead-Based Paint Issue Paper

TAP developed a Tribal lead-based paint issue paper to provide a concise synopsis of lead-based paint issues in Indian country to foster an understanding of the problems encountered by tribes when trying to protect their members from the dangers of lead. Issues discussed included program certification, blood-lead testing, and abatement funding.

POPs Position Paper

To express support of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Treaty, TAP prepared a statement discussing several objectives relating to the ratification of the POPs Treaty.



Tribal Pollution Prevention Portal

The P2 Project is collaborating with the TAP to establish a tribal Internet site (<http://www.tribalp2.org/>) to connect tribes to the P2 Resources Exchange Centers, which provides fast online access to reliable, comprehensive pollution prevention information and services. The website was launched in 2004 by the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable Tribal P2 Workgroup.

The Colorado Mercury Switch Recycling Program

The P2 Project's discussion of the Colorado program has resulted in useful guidance to the Office of Air Quality Planning Standards on implementing such programs.

P2 Project/EPA Multimedia Pollution Prevention Forum

The two groups have held two meetings to discuss specific issues of national concern where P2 could play a very important role. The issues include crematoria, dental amalgams, cement kilns, scrap tires, aluminum smelters, animal wastes, emerging chemicals, multimedia materials management, and small area source/urban air toxics.

For More Information

Find out more about FOSTTA by visiting <http://www.ecos.org/section/projects/?id=653>. If you would like to be considered for membership in FOSTTA, please email or call Margaret Sealey at msealey@sso.org, 202-624-3662; or Darlene Harrod at harrod.darlene@epa.gov, 202-564-8814. ■