

# Land Quality

## Mission

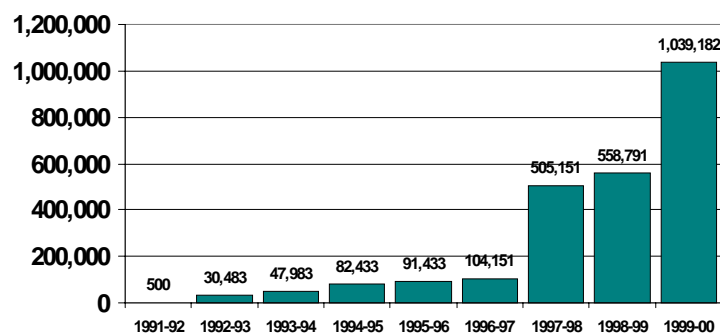
To protect the public health and the environment by ensuring proper handling and disposal of wastes.

## Summary of Activities

The **Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)** Office of Land Quality focuses on prevention of environmental problems. This is accomplished through thorough review and permitting of facilities that manage waste materials and through stringent compliance inspections. IDEM also focuses on industrial waste landfills and farming operations involving large numbers of animals. As of March 1999, all 32 solid waste facilities accepting special waste in Indiana were in compliance with the significant requirements of established special waste rules.

IDEM issues hazardous waste permits to help ensure safe waste management practices at major industrial facilities that treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste. These permits also function to prevent releases of hazardous chemicals into the environment. Eleven hazardous waste permits were issued in 1999. IDEM also registers and inspects waste tire transporters, processing facilities, and storage sites.

**Tons of Materials Diverted from Landfills as a Result of IDEM Projects**



In addition to permitting and inspection, IDEM oversees short-term and long-term environmental cleanup projects. The Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) provides current and prospective contaminated property owners with a mechanism to clean up the property with IDEM oversight and assistance. There are currently 286 active VRP projects. As a partner with the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), IDEM conducts and oversees the cleanup of the most contaminated sites identified by the federal government on their “Superfund” list. The IDEM Site Cleanup Program funds, oversees, and manages the cleanup of sites that do not qualify for the Superfund program.

The IDEM Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) assists the U.S. Department of Defense, in cooperation with the EPA, in the investigation and cleanup of active and closing military bases at which hazardous substances were used, stored or disposed. IDEM also oversees the cleanup of releases from regulated underground storage tanks. The redevelopment of “brownfields” -- abandoned or underused industrial or commercial sites where development is complicated by actual or perceived environmental contamination -- links economic vitality and jobs with environmental protection. During 1999, 64 Indiana communities identified 70 sites to be redeveloped and returned to productive economic reuse. Eighteen sites were identified as requiring some type of cleanup.

IDEM emergency response personnel are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to respond to environmental emergencies. When necessary, state funds can be used to control and cleanup oil spills, hazardous material accidents and releases of other objectionable substances.

## External Factors

Indiana covers an area of 36,300 square miles, requiring broad monitoring and enforcement of land quality. Past waste management practices have caused many significant problems that the state must continue to address, including contaminated sites, leaking underground storage tanks, spills, landfills, and open dumps that can contaminate ground water. Thousands of contaminated Indiana properties require remediation. Many are actively under investigation or cleanup, while others are yet to be discovered. Prospective purchasers of brownfields may be reluctant to purchase the property because of concerns about legal liability from potential contamination at the site.

## Evaluation and Accomplishments

Over the last four years, the state helped the cleanup / redevelopment of two major superfund sites, Continental Steel in Kokomo and the Westinghouse/CBS site in Bloomington. It worked with more than 178 sites across the state to clean up and redevelop brownfields, and cleaned up more than 3 million waste tires from over 50 illegal tire dumps. More than \$677,000 was given to property owners for the removal of 274 underground storage tanks. In total, IDEM evaluated over 600 sites last year to determine their level of contamination, identify hazards to human health or the environment, and review proposed cleanup plans.



The IDEM Emergency Response team responded to this 1998 chlorine gas train derailment in Greencastle, Indiana.

IDEM issued 99% of all permit applications within required timeframes and inspected over 2,300 waste material management facilities with the potential for adversely impacting the environment if not managed properly.

## Plans for the Biennium

IDEM will continue to issue permits on a timely basis and conduct compliance inspections to assure that waste materials are being managed properly. Inspections will be targeted to give the highest priority to sites which represent the greatest threat to public health. A standardized guidance document, which assesses the risk of harm to individuals from contaminated sites, will be developed. This document will help assure consistency among multiple remediation programs in setting the level of cleanup which must be conducted to assure protection of human health and the environment.

IDEM will also continue its partnership with the Department of Defense as that agency permits, constructs, and operates a facility to destroy VX poison nerve gas stored at the Newport Army Chemical Depot. The agency will continue to assist communities with brownfield redevelopment so that properties may be returned to the tax rolls and productive use. Assistance will also be provided to the agricultural community as IDEM implements rules regulating confined animal feeding facilities, which will help prevent the discharge of animal wastes into surface waters.

