

Air & Waste



Management Association

News for people with environmental vision

The Georgia Chapter

First Quarter/2002

What's Ailing the Environmental Profession?

By Richard MacLean, Competitive Environment, Inc., www.competitive-e.com

Adapted from "Feeling Green Around the Gills?", *Environmental Protection*, November, 2001

The environmental industry has overcome many obstacles in the past 30 years – beginning with the creation of the industry to deal with the disasters brought about by a century of industrial progress without concern for waste handling. After the initial crises were handled, the industry settled in for the long haul, but as its practitioners have aged and concern over environmental issues dimmed, some are questioning whether the profession is ready and able to handle upcoming environmental issues.

The environmental industry as we know it was created in the 1970s as the result of the passage of the Environmental Protection Act and the raised public interest in protecting "Mother Earth." Crises such as the Love Canal and Bhopal brought the issue of pollution and its effects to the forefront of the nation's consciousness. Prior to this, environmental professionals were civil engineers who specialized in sanitary engineering and dealt with wastewater treatment. Initially, these engineers, along with staff assigned to "make the issue go away," were the only people addressing the problem.

By the 1980s, most businesses had realized that the environmental problems identified in the 1970s were entrenched and long-term. Due to public and government pressure, significant resources and management talents were focused on environmental issues and solutions. The industry grew.



Continued on Page 3

Are We Reaching You?

In an effort to make our limited funds go farther, especially with respect to publication postage and supplies, we are doing our best to clean up the Chapter's mailing list. Let us know if we're reaching you. If you wish to continue receiving publications and mailings from our Chapter, simply reply by e-mail to tbills@rindt-mcduff.com, or visit the Chapter's web page at www.gaawma.org and subscribe via the Mailing List link. If you would prefer to receive publications electronically, please indicate this in your e-mail message.

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Air & Waste Management Association Newsletter is a quarterly publication of The Georgia Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association.

Our mission is to promote a cleaner, safer environment in Georgia by focusing on air and waste issues. We achieve our mission through information transfer, technology exchange, education and environmental leadership.

Comments or questions about this newsletter or any of the functions of Air & Waste Management Association are encouraged.

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AIR & WASTE MANAGEMENT
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Speakers Wanted - Georgia A&WMA Fall Conference

- Do you have a unique and innovative way that your company addressed an environmental or regulatory issue?
- Do you have information on an upcoming regulation or regulatory trend?
- Do you have insight on how to address an environmental challenge in air or waste?

Then speak up and be a speaker at the upcoming Georgia AWMA 2002 Fall Conference! It's easy to apply. Just submit an abstract of less than one page of your proposed presentation to:

Karen Dorman • Global Environmental Solutions, Inc.
• 2621 Sandy Plains Road • Marietta, Georgia 30066
• (770) 579-6097, ext. 225
kdorman@gesinc.com

Deadline for submitting abstracts is May 17, 2002. Questions should be addressed to Karen Dorman.

Fall Conference Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities

Becoming a corporate sponsor of the 2002 Georgia AWMA Fall Conference is an excellent way for your organization to be recognized as progressive, environmentally aware, and concerned about helping your local community. For a minimum \$250 contribution, your company will be recognized as the sponsor of either the luncheon or a morning or afternoon break, and receive prominent advertising during the conference. Sponsorships are also needed for our Scholarship Awards, given each year to promising graduate students in Georgia, who are pursuing original research in an area relevant to the mission of the Chapter.

For more information on how your organization can become a sponsor, please contact:

Karen Dorman • Global Environmental Solutions, Inc.
• 2621 Sandy Plains Road • Marietta, Georgia 30066
• (770) 579-6097, ext. 225
kdorman@gesinc.com

Scholarship Opportunities

Each year the Georgia Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association seeks to award a scholarship to one or more current graduate students performing research in an area considered to be immediately relevant to the air and waste management industries. The amount of the scholarship varies from year to year and is a function of conference attendance and the generosity of our corporate sponsors. **Last year's winner received a cash scholarship in the amount of \$2,000!** Please share this information with all of the graduate students that you know.

The application requirements are simple. Just submit an abstract describing your research and a resume. This information can be submitted via email to the Education Committee Chair, Joe Rozza, at rozzejp@cdm.com. To be considered for the scholarship, abstracts and resumes must be received by July 31, 2002. The scholarship will be awarded at our annual conference in the fall.

What's Ailing the Environmental Profession?

However, by the 1990s, environmental issues began to decline in importance to both business and the public. The worst sites and abuses had been corrected to the satisfaction of the government and the public, and environmental work became more maintenance rather than prevention and clean up. While, during the 1980s, they were involved with top management in solving the worst problems, environmental professionals never became involved in the core business functions – they remained an ancillary function, isolated from manufacturing and core business operations. Also, since the public furor had died down, proactive environmental initiatives have been harder to undertake. Many environmental professionals today find themselves working for low- to mid-level managers who, like themselves, are under 45 and have little actual knowledge of environmental disasters. In addition, the original environmental professionals are nearing retirement.

Now, after 30 years of living with environmental concerns, the public is complacent and government regulations do not have the same “bite” they had before. However, while the crises of the 1970s may have been handled, there is a growing awareness of global environmental and human health concerns – concerns that could make past environmental issues seem trivial. The environmental profession stands at a crossroads. It is in a transitional state where the profession as a whole is thought to be superfluous when, in actuality, it needs to rally its forces

more than ever to face the challenges ahead.

What does the future hold for the environmental profession? Many within the field think that environmental concerns will eventually push our society to integrate principles of sustained development into all levels of government and business, a goal that will take a lot of work to reach. But since no serious shifts in resources have yet occurred, the notion remains a hazy one. Industry observers say that if the environmental profession is to meet its challenges, its members must develop new skills and forge innovative new programs. But what is happening, more and more often, is that environmental professionals are leaving environmental health and safety issues for more lucrative fields. Professional organizations have noted this exodus in the form of decreasing memberships and smaller-than-usual turnouts at professional functions. In their report, “Occupational Safety Expert Retirements, Departures Prompt Concern for the Future,” the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH) warns that, “the ‘graying’ of occupational safety and health professionals, with mass retirements in the next few years” will deplete the field of its trained professionals.

To remedy this, many believe that a systematic examination of the environmental profession is in

order. As it just so happens, one such examination is in the works thanks to a partnership between the Center for Environmental Innovation and the Wharton School in Pennsylvania. Hopefully this study will offer the ailing profession a prescription of the steps it needs to take in order to return to health. If a resolution is to come about, it is likely that it will involve demonstrating a greater degree of communication with business interests. One observer has pointed out that environmental professionals need to learn the language of business to be able to communicate what’s at stake in terms that everyone understands. This is not an end solution in itself, of course, but it’s a good place to start.

A&WMA Georgia Chapter Financial Statement for 2001

By Jamie Laubenthal, Treasurer

INFLOWS

Member Dues, Conference, Corporate Sponsorships	\$9,095.00
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OUTFLOWS

Brown Bag Lunches	\$913.50
Annual Conference	\$4,983.15
Cash Scholarship	\$2,000.00
Corporate Registration Fee	\$30.00
Publications	\$3,422.45
Web Page	\$663.50

TOTAL OUTFLOWS	\$12,012.60
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OVERALL CASH FLOW	\$(2,917.60)
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Checking Account, 12/31/01	\$2,300.43
Certificate of Deposit, 12/31/01	\$8,268.74

TOTAL CASH ASSETS	\$10,569.17
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Message From The Chair

By Della Ridley
Solvay Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – GA CHAPTER NEEDS YOU!

The GA chapter of A&WMA is an all-volunteer organization. Our success in fulfilling the chapter mission depends on the willingness of each member to contribute their time and talents. Please consider taking an active role in our chapter. Spring elections will be held soon and we need to fill the offices of Vice-Chair (becomes Chair the following term) and Secretary. Additionally, we need volunteers for the Membership Committee and Conference Planning Committee. In addition to the personal satisfaction you get from filling an important role in A&WMA, this is a great way to network and get to know your colleagues! If you are thinking about a position but want further information before making a decision, please call Della Ridley at 770-578-5820.

Last year, the International A&WMA changed the organization's fiscal year and the dates for serving as an officer to the calendar year, instead of April to April. The Chapter Board proposes to make the same changes, for consistency. The date changes require revisions to the Bylaws, to be voted on by the membership. The Bylaws revision vote will be part of the upcoming election. If passed, the 2002 officers will hold a slightly longer term of office, until Dec. 31, 2003. Please vote for this change, as it will simplify the preparation of the annual report and collection of dues.

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For more information see www.gwpca.org or call 770-618-8690.

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To promote a cleaner, safer environment in Georgia by focusing on air and waste issues. We achieve this through information transfer, technology exchange, education, and environmental leadership.



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