ENCOURAGING Environmental EXCELLENCE

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Ohio EPA's Encouraging Environmental Excellence (E3) Program

"If you're doing something great for the environment, we want to know about it. By recognizing Ohio businesses and other organizations, we can create more momentum for improving Ohio's environment though innovation and efficiency."

Craig W. Butler, Director, Ohio EPA

The E3 program targets those who reduce waste, improve efficiency and work to continuously improve as an environmental steward.

The program has a four-level approach to provide recognition to Ohio businesses, trade associations, professional organizations, local governments and others completing environmentally beneficial activities. The goal of environmental stewardship is to reduce the impact of business or organizational activities on the environment beyond measures required by any permit or rule, producing a better environment, conserving natural resources and resulting in long-term economic benefits.

Level Benefits	Achievement	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Encouraging Environmental Excellence decal	✓			
Certificate of Recognition signed by Ohio EPA director	✓	✓	✓	✓
Listing on the Ohio EPA website and highlighted in newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Encouraging Environmental Excellence flag		✓	✓	✓
News release from Ohio EPA with information about your accomplishments		✓	✓	✓
Option for a site visit by Ohio EPA director for photo and publicity opportunities		✓	✓	✓
Opportunity to participate as a case study to publicize your proactive approach to environmental stewardship		✓	✓	✓
Recognition at awards ceremony		✓	✓	✓
Enhanced environmental and financial assistance			✓	✓
Annual E3 Director's meeting			✓	✓
Opportunity to ask what Ohio EPA can change to help you meet your environmental requirements			✓	✓
Encouraging Environmental Excellence Platinum Level flag and award				✓
Award ceremony at your location				✓

E3 STEWARDSHIP CRITERIA

Ohio EPA evaluates E3 applications using the 19 environmental stewardship criteria below. The number of criteria addressed determines the level of recognition achieved. Some descriptions may fulfill multiple criteria.

1. Management commitment
2. Employee involvement
3. Continuous improvement
4. Environmental management system
5. Promotion and dissemination
6. Innovation
7. Impact to the environment
8. Life cycle analysis
9. Pollution prevention
10. Energy efficiency
11. Renewable energy
12. Renewable, recovered or recycled materials
13. Green building
14. Storm water best management practices
15. Environmentally preferable purchasing
16. Recycling programs
17. Organics diversion
18. Economic benefits
19. Environmental management accounting

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL

The achievement level recognizes any organization completing environmentally beneficial activities. Applicants must describe activities completed in **one** of the following E3 environmental stewardship criteria:

- Impact to the environment
- Pollution prevention
- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy
- Renewable, recovered or recycled materials
- Green building
- Recycling programs
- Organics diversion

Achievement level applicants must also briefly describe how they have made progress in **at least six** additional environmental stewardship criteria (from the 19 listed above) and submit a general statement indicating the applicant is in compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

SILVER LEVEL

The silver level recognizes an organization's outstanding achievements in environmental stewardship and efforts to exceed regulatory compliance obligations. Applicants need to submit a narrative describing the activities that are part of an overall environmental stewardship program. Applicants must score a **three** or higher on a five-point scale on **nine** of the 19 E3 environmental stewardship criteria. Applicants must be in compliance with environmental laws and regulations for a year prior to submittal of their application and during the application review process. Applicants may be asked to host a site visit to provide reviewers with a better understanding of the application, to view the activities described in operation and to clarify information provided in the application.

GOLD LEVEL

The gold level recognizes organizations that have comprehensive environmental stewardship programs and exceed regulatory compliance obligations. Applicants follow the same guidelines for submitting a silver level application but must score a **three** or higher on a five-point scale on **14** of the 19 E3 environmental stewardship criteria. Site visit and compliance requirements are the same as the silver level.

PLATINUM LEVEL

The platinum level recognizes organizations that demonstrate how their comprehensive environmental stewardship programs benefit the local community and regional area. Applicants follow the same guidelines for submitting a gold level application and also address the following social sustainability criteria:

- Product or service design
- Community education
- Improving the supply and delivery chain
- Sharing information about environmental impacts
- Local environmental priorities
- Maintaining ecosystems
- Community support

Site visit and compliance requirements are the same as the gold level.

Format: *There is no form or specified format for E3 applications.*

Deadlines: *Silver, Gold and Platinum Level applications are accepted annually. Achievement Level applications are accepted at any time.*

Details: *Examples of successful applications, scoring criteria and instructions are available at:* **epa.ohio.gov/ohioE3**

General questions: *Contact the OCAPP Hotline at (800) 329-7518*