



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S Webster, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
Phone: (608) 266-6790 TDD: (608) 267-6897
www.dnr.state.wi.us www.wisconsin.gov

DATE: October 1, 2002
CONTACT: Mark McDermid, (608) 267-3125
Mark Harings, (715) 831-3263
SUBJECT: 3M Menomonie and DNR sign environmental agreement

Madison, Wis. – Today 3M Menomonie signed a cooperative environmental agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under the state’s Environmental Cooperation Pilot Program.

DNR Secretary Darrell Bazzell, 3M Menomonie’s senior engineer Michael R. Wendt, and 3M Menomonie’s site manager James M. McSweeney signed the agreement, which commits the company to achieving higher environmental standards than required by regulations and reduces excessive administrative workloads for both the state and the company.

“3M Menomonie has proven its dedication to pollution prevention by going beyond simply meeting regulations and taking steps to stop pollution problems before they can start,” said Secretary Bazzell. “This agreement recognizes their efforts and encourages them to continue developing innovative techniques for environmental management.”

The five-year agreement sets demanding environmental management goals for the company while allowing it flexibility and creativity in deciding how to meet those goals. Some of 3M’s goals under the agreement are to reduce hazardous waste levels and to cut VOC (volatile organic compound), solid waste and chemical waste output per pound of “good output” (usable product) by 25 percent compared to the year 2000. The plant will also double the number of projects in its Pollution Prevention Pays program compared to the past five years.

"We, at 3M Menomonie, are pleased for this opportunity," 3M's McSweeney said. "The agreement allows us flexibility in the manufacturing process yet we retain strict standards for site-wide air emissions and the community benefits from greater environmental improvement."

The 3M company produces and supplies consumer and industrial products worldwide. 3M’s Menomonie plant employs about 430 people and occupies a 540-acre site, a good portion of which is leased for agricultural use.

The plant houses nine major operations that manufacture products ranging from reflective sheeting for traffic signs to high-temperature insulating fibers to electromagnetic detection strips used in library books. The plant also hosts a research and development project for new fuel cell technology.

Under the agreement, 3M Menomonie will still be held to existing emission limits and pollution control requirements and will be required to verify that they meet these standards. However, the agreement allows the company more flexibility by reducing administrative requirements for monitoring and reporting while still ensuring ample regulatory oversight. These alternative procedures will save 3M and DNR both time and money while continuing to protect the environment.

Bazzell also commended 3M Menomonie's creation of an interested persons group made up of local citizens and university and county representatives who provided valuable advice as DNR and 3M negotiated the agreement, and who will continue to have input into 3M's environmental management.

The cooperative agreement adds to 3M's tradition of environmental stewardship, which includes receiving the DNR's 2001 John Brogan Environmental Achievement Award, earning ISO 14001 certification on their environmental management system, and establishing the Pollution Prevention Pays (3P) program. Since the inception of 3P in 1975, 3M has developed over 4,800 projects that have prevented an estimated 1.6 million pounds of pollution each year and that saved the company over \$857 million worldwide in the first year.

The Environmental Cooperation Pilot Program, established by the Wisconsin Legislature in 1997, is designed to allow some regulatory flexibility for environmental projects that achieve superior performance at a reduced cost. The program authorizes DNR to enter into agreements with up to 10 businesses statewide by October 1, 2002.

This is the seventh and final agreement to be signed under the pilot program. Six other companies that have signed similar agreements with the DNR are Wisconsin Electric Power Company of Pleasant Prairie, Cook Composites and Polymers Company of Saukville, Northern Engraving Corporation of Sparta and Holmen, Packaging Corporation of America in Tomahawk, Madison Gas and Electric of Madison, and We Energies of Milwaukee.

For more information about the Environmental Cooperation Pilot Program, visit the DNR Web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/>, select "Cooperative Environmental Assistance" from the bureau drop-down menu at the bottom of the page, and click on "Environmental Cooperation Pilot Program."