



Gulf of Mexico Program



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Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP) Wins Gulf Guardian Award for Their *By-Product Synergy Central Gulf Coast*

STENNIS SPACE CENTER, Miss. – The Gulf of Mexico Program recently announced that **Partners for Environmental Progress of Mobile, Alabama** will receive a 1st place Gulf Guardian Award for 2011 in the Business Category. The Awards ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Meeting on August 3, 2011, beginning at 6 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Westin New Orleans Canal Place in New Orleans.

In May 2009, as part of its mission to promote a sustainable Alabama Gulf Coast, Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP) launched its By-Product Synergy Central Gulf Coast (BPS CGC) project in Mobile to realize significant environmental impacts and bring economic value to companies. PEP formed a diverse network of 12 companies to actively seek opportunities to turn one company's waste or by-product into raw materials for another. BPS CGC creates a system where regional businesses can constantly network and systematically review opportunities to reduce their environmental footprint.

“We are honored to be recognized by the EPA with a first place Gulf Guardian Award. By-Product Synergy Central Gulf Coast embodies PEP's mission and core belief that working together, we can strike a positive balance between coastal growth and its impacts on our sensitive coastal environment. Our goal is to help make business leaner, cleaner and greener – more efficient and more sustainable which positively impacts the entire region, economically, socially and environmentally” stated Jennifer Denson, PEP's Executive Director. “This type of innovation and collaboration can only help recruit like-minded, environmentally progressive new industry to the Alabama Gulf Coast.”

By-Product Synergy is the practice of matching under-valued waste or by-product streams with potential users, helping to create new revenues or savings for the companies involved while simultaneously addressing social and environmental impacts. Synergies are not limited to material flows but can include energy, transportation services and best practices. The synergies uncovered can produce added revenues, new business opportunities, cost-savings and environmental and regulatory benefits to the group and to the region as a whole. The initial framework was modeled on a process developed by the U.S. Business Council for Sustainable Development.

During the height of the economic recession, PEP recruited 12 forward thinking companies, willing to invest time, staff and money into a project with no guarantee of financial return: Alabama Power, Arkema, BASF, DuPont, Evonik Degussa, ExxonMobil, Huntsman Advanced Materials, Mitsubishi Polysilicon, Oil Recovery, Southern Ionics, University of South Alabama and Veolia Environmental Services.

The environmental impacts of the BPS project, include, but are not limited to:

- Diverting more than 8,200 tons of materials from landfills, wastewater treatment plants and other disposal sites;
- 5,300 tons of hydrochloric, hydrofluoric and nitric acids are no longer going into waste treatment plants or deep injection wells; and
- 8,800 tons of CO₂ emissions were avoided

The economic impacts are significant, as well:

- \$1.6 million in cost savings of revenue for the companies
- \$3 million injected into the local company
- 50 jobs saved or created

The project continues sharing new data, one time material opportunities, best practices and more. PEP is currently recruiting an additional twenty or more companies to begin the second phase of the project.

The Gulf of Mexico Program initiated the Gulf Guardian awards in 2000 as a way to recognize and honor the businesses, community groups, individuals and agencies that are taking positive steps to keep the Gulf healthy, beautiful and productive. First, second and third place awards are given in seven categories: individual, business, youth environmental education, civic/nonprofit organizations, cultural diversity/environmental justice, partnership and bi-national efforts.

“I applaud this year’s Gulf Guardian winners for their environmental leadership and commitment to protecting and restoring one of our nation’s most treasured natural resources, the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf Guardians are true environmental stewards and protectors of this vital ecosystem,” said EPA Regional Administrator Gwen Keyes Fleming.

The Gulf of Mexico Program began in 1988 to protect, restore and maintain the health and productivity of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem in economically sustainable ways. The Gulf of Mexico Program is underwritten by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is a non-regulatory, inclusive consortium of state and federal government agencies and representatives of the business and agricultural community, fishing industry, scientists, environmentalists and community leaders from all five Gulf States. The Gulf Program seeks to improve the environmental health of the Gulf in concert with economic development.

Gloria Car, Acting Director of the Gulf of Mexico Program said, “This is the 11th year of the Gulf Guardian Awards Program, and I am proud to say that each year the winners in all categories have represented the very best of environmental accomplishments in the Gulf of Mexico. The partnership of the Gulf of Mexico Program works to improve the environmental health of the Gulf, and the Gulf Guardian Awards is an important way for us to recognize these valuable efforts. The 2011 award winners truly exemplify the enthusiastic and committed citizens, communities, governments, and businesses who address complex problems to improve, protect and sustain our regional and national treasure, the Gulf of Mexico.

For more information on PEP or BPS CGC, please contact: Jennifer Denson, Executive Director, Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP) (251) 345-7269

Editor’s Note: For more information about the Gulf Guardian Awards and the Gulf of Mexico Program, call the Gulf of Mexico Program Office at 228-688-3726 or visit our web site at <http://www.epa.gov/gmpo>.