

Morongo Environmental Compliance Assistance

Outcome: For the benefit of residents, employees, and visitors to the Morongo Indian Reservation, Morongo Environmental Specialists will work with tribal entities to identify and correct issues of concern to eliminate environmental risks on the reservation. This is accomplished by conducting assessments, sharing information, and producing documentation. Furthermore, the program advances the sovereignty of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians by eliminating the need for outside consultants and specialists.

Applicable Federal Laws:

Clean Air Act

Regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources

Clean Water Act

Regulates discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and establishes surface water quality standards

National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System

Regulates discharges of pollutants from a point source into navigable waters

Resource Conservation Recovery Act

Regulates hazardous waste from "cradle-to-grave" including the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal; Subtitle I regulates Underground Storage Tanks (UST)

The Morongo Band of Mission Indians, a federally-recognized Indian tribe exercising inherent sovereignty and jurisdiction over the Morongo Indian Reservation, finds that persons living on or doing business within the Reservation at times engage in acts that threaten the health and safety of tribal members and other persons within the Reservation; degrade or pollute the air, water, and land; contaminate the Tribe's aquifers, groundwaters, surface waters, drinking water supplies and other natural resources; and threaten to cause the deterioration of the environment, the Tribe's cultural and historic resources and the quality of life of the Tribe and its members. The Tribe finds that it is necessary to adopt standards and procedures by which the Tribe can take action to prevent such threats, pollution, and deterioration.

**Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Ordinance #12, February 2000**

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Environmental Protection Department*

Morongo Environmental Compliance Assistance

Protecting the air, earth and water.



Puhcha' shrevet, tirvac
ame paac.

In the Serrano Indian Language

Morongo Environmental Compliance Assistance

Purpose: This component ensures Tribal Administration departments, Business Enterprises on the reservation, and any other tribally regulated entity, comply with Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and Tribal environmental protection codes and ordinances.

Component Description: The Environmental Compliance Assistance Component is a collaborative process of working together with Tribal entities, sharing information, developing procedures, and conducting assessments.

MORONGO BAND OF MISSION INDIANS



A SOVEREIGN NATION

Overall, it is designed to recognize and eliminate any environmental risks on the Morongo Indian Reservation.

The Environmental Compliance Assistance Component is integrated into each existing environmental program.

Environmental Specialists assist tribal entities in meeting regulations set forth by EPA as well as Tribal environmental protection codes and ordinances. It is important to note that the program is centered on assistance and not enforcement. All information is kept in-house and is not given to any outside agency without the consent of Tribal Council.

Background: Regulatory Jurisdiction of tribal lands is administered by the tribe and the federal government. In the case of federal environmental laws, the EPA proclaimed “Indian policy” on November 8, 1984, stating EPA or tribes, rather than states will implement federal environmental statutes.

On May 18, 2004, Tribal Council passed a motion to revise a work plan and budget for a 100% funded EPA General Assistance Program Grant (GAP) for capacity building of an environmental department. On October 1, 2004, the department opened its doors located at 47350 Foothill Road, next to the Public Works building. The department has continued to grow and change in response to the Tribe’s needs and environmental priorities.

The Environmental Protection Department programs currently include: Tribal Air, Tribal Water (surface water), Resource Conservation, and Pollution Prevention (solid & hazardous wastes management) program. The department relies heavily on outreach and education opportunities to inform both staff and the reservation community regarding environmental concerns.

Strategy: The EPA publication *Guidance for Issuing Federal EPA Inspector Credentials to Authorize Employees of State/Tribal Governments to Conduct Inspections on Behalf of EPA* established a three-fold curriculum for Environmental Specialists and Technicians.

Training: All Specialists and Technicians complete two basic EPA assessment trainings -

- ☞ Basic Health & Safety
- ☞ Basic Inspector

In addition, Specialists and Technicians complete comprehensive, media-specific training related to their program’s focus.

Tribal Air Program:

- ☞ Clean Air Act (CAA)
- ☞ Indoor Air Quality
- ☞ Morongo Air Quality Protection Code

Tribal Water Program:

- ☞ Clean Water Act (CWA)
- ☞ National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES)

Pollution Prevention Program:

- ☞ Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)
- ☞ Underground Storage Tanks (UST’s)
- ☞ Hazardous Wastes & Hazard Communication
- ☞ Morongo Solid and Hazardous Waste Disposal Code



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