ID # (assigned by CSG): 12-S-03-FL

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: __ FLORIDA __

Assign Program Category (applicant): ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Use list at end of application)

Program Name: Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator Outreach Training Program
Administering Agency: Florida Department of Environmental Protection-Northeast District
Contact (Name and Title): Melissa M. Long, P.E.; Water Facilities Program Administrator
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Web Address: FDEP - Northeast District

1. How long has this program operated (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old as of April 5, 2012 to be eligible for this year’s award.

   It has been operating for over 3 years. We developed this program during 2008 and launched it in January 2009.

2. Describe the program:
   - Why was it created?

   As part of a “LEAN” review of our wastewater compliance program:

   a. We were finding too many deficiencies during inspections and many were repeated over again from inspection to inspection.

   b. We found that operators and facility personnel receive little training on regulatory requirements—most training they received focused primarily on technical and operational issues.

   c. We also wanted to create more consistency among our inspectors, so that they understood our regulatory requirements.
• Why is it a new and creative approach or method?

  a. We changed the approach of traditional training, instead of focusing on plant operations. The focus is now primarily on the regulatory requirements and the expectations of a compliance inspection. We are attempting to make our inspection process more transparent and show the operators what is required for an inspection, and point out what common deficiencies are typically seen during an inspection. Also, we explain to the operators how to properly document what they are doing, from lab calibrations and verifications to the required operating and monitoring reports, which demonstrate they are properly operating and managing the facility.

  b. We tailored and revised the program to meet the needs of the operators as well as address the key deficiencies found at facilities during inspections.

  c. Additionally, we conducted the training programs in the regions where the operators worked to allow maximum participation with minimal travel. Working through FDEP’s WWTP operator licensing group, we were able to provide licensed operators with 0.3 to 0.4 CEUs per training session, at no cost to them. This was a substantial cost savings for a WWTP operator who must earn 2.0 CEU’s every two years to maintain his/her license.

• What are the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order?

  a. Please refer to the attached document for all of the specific activities that have been conducted in the past 3 years.

C&E-Staff Outreach Summary 2009 to 2012.doc

• Is it effective? Provide tangible results and examples.

  a. Through the outreach training, the inspectors were able to encourage WWTP operators to proactively correct many of the repeated common deficiencies that were being found during inspections at wastewater facilities.

  b. As a result, communications greatly improved with the facilities’ operators, and operators call more frequently for compliance assistance outside of an inspection setting. The NED Wastewater Compliance & Enforcement staff is becoming more of a compliance assistance asset rather than just a traditional enforcement agency.

  c. Additionally, our junior inspectors have been better trained and the consistency among all inspectors has improved.

  d. Most importantly, the “significant non-compliance” rate has been reduced from 11% to 4%.

3. Did this program originate in your state?

  Yes
If YES, please indicate the innovator’s name, present address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

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4. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

No

If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

5. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter when attempting to adopt this program?

a. They will need to tailor the program to the specific issues that pertain to how their state regulates WWTP's and licenses WWTP operators and to what subjects WWTP operators would like to be better informed.

b. There is a significant investment of staff man-hours required for initial development.

Please refer to the following presentation that summarizes the program we launched:

WW-C and E operator outreach

CSG reserves the right to use or publish in other CSG products the information provided in this application. If your agency objects to this policy, please advise us in a separate attachment.
Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate Program Category for your state’s submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

**Infrastructure and Economic Development**
- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

**Government Operations and Technology**
- Administration
- Elections
- Information Systems
- Public Information
- Revenue
- Telecommunications

**Health & Human Services**
- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

**Human Resources/Education**
- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

**Natural Resources**
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

**Public Safety/Corrections**
- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

Save in .doc or rtf. Return completed application AND video (if applicable) electronically to innovations@csg.org or mail to:

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