

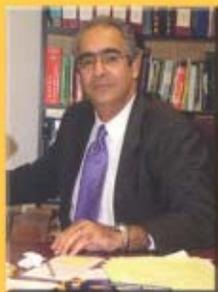
# MARYLAND

## Department of the Environment

*TAKING THE LEAD:*

*PROTECTING MARYLAND'S ENVIRONMENT*

### ANNUAL REPORT 2004



*Fellow Marylanders:*

*One of the Five Pillars of the Ehrlich-Steele Administration is Health and the Environment. Together with our commitment to fiscal responsibility, education, public safety and safer neighborhoods and commerce, this pillar is essential to the well-being and prosperity of the state and its citizens.*



*Every day, the Maryland Department of the Environment takes responsibility for protecting the air we breathe, the water that is important to our daily lives and our recreation, and the land on which we live. A staff of dedicated scientists, engineers and technicians find effective solutions to the most complex environmental problems we face. Thanks to their work, Maryland's environment is cleaner and safer than it was even a few years ago. And, as the Bay Restoration Fund comes on-line, we are poised to take even greater strides.*

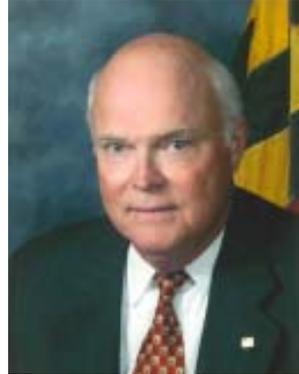
*I hope you find the department's annual report as valuable as I did. It reflects our commitment to the environment and provides a convincing demonstration of how effective government can be.*

*Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.  
Governor*

## ***Taking the Lead: Protecting Maryland's Environment***

*The theme of this annual report is **leadership**.*

*Fiscal 2004 saw Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. reassert Maryland's leadership in cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. It saw Maryland assert its leadership in finding a solution to the problem of out-of-state pollution that fouls the air in Northeastern states. The fiscal year just ended saw the Ehrlich Administration set the stage for far-reaching changes in Maryland's Brownfields Program. In addition, it saw the Maryland Department of the Environment turn the concept of environmental justice into an action plan through its Environmental Benefits District Initiatives.*



*In the pages that follow, the Governor's Bay Restoration Fund and other initiatives will be highlighted. But it is important to remember that the complexity of environmental issues is mirrored in MDE's wide-ranging efforts to protect and improve Maryland's environment, from cleaning up the thousands of gallons of heating oil spilled as a result of Tropical Storm Isabel to the on-going effort to prevent lead poisoning among children. For the hundreds of scientists, engineers and technicians at MDE, every task is vital to the health of our environment.*

*It is important, too, to remember that, for all the complexity of the environment and of our efforts to protect and restore it,*

*our success relies on one simple component: leadership. A note about the organization of the report: In 2003, the department adopted five initiatives that reflect the main focus of MDE's responsibilities and serve as a guide in protecting the environment and serving the people of Maryland. Those initiatives are –*

- Land redevelopment and community revitalization*
- Water quality restoration and protection*
- Air quality restoration and protection*
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness*
- Stakeholder relations and outreach*

*Those five initiatives provide the structure for our report on the accomplishments of the Maryland Department of the Environment to the people of Maryland.*



*Kendi P. Philbrick  
Secretary of the Environment*

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## TOWARD A LIVING BAY

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Fund is the single most important piece of environmental legislation enacted in Maryland in the past quarter-century – and perhaps ever. By 2011, it is anticipated that the amount of nitrogen flowing into the bay from wastewater treatment plants in Maryland will be cut



***Nitrogen and the bay – Nitrogen fuels the growth of algae in the bay and its tributaries. When they die, the algae sink to the bottom, where their decomposition robs the water of dissolved oxygen, without which aquatic life cannot live.***

nearly in half – an annual reduction of 7.5 million pounds. With its passage, Maryland took an enormous step toward restoring a living bay.

The 66 largest plants in the state, which account for 95 percent of effluent going into the bay and its tributaries, will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology (known as enhanced nutrient removal, or ENR) that will reduce nitrogen in the effluent to 3-4 milligrams per liter, a goal long advocated by environmental experts. Upgrades will be financed entirely from the Restoration Fund.

As proposed by Governor Ehrlich, starting in 2005 all households would pay a small monthly fee (\$2.50). Fees assessed on businesses would be tied to their impact on the sewer system. The fees will generate an estimated \$66 million a year, which will allow the Maryland Department of the Environment to sell bonds to pay for the \$750 million to \$1 billion required to upgrade all major wastewater treatment plants. After the 66 major plants are operating with ENR technology, the fund will be used to upgrade smaller plants.

Distribution of funds will begin in 2005. The order in which plants are upgraded will take into account a number of factors, including readiness to begin construction and the impact of the upgrade on the bay's health.

The fund was amended in the General Assembly to impose the same fee on septic systems beginning in 2006. Proceeds from the septic fees would be used to pay for cover crops on farmland and upgrades to individual septic systems.

# WATER QUALITY RESTORATION & PROTECTION

## *Wastewater Treatment*

Governor Ehrlich's Bay Restoration Fund, passed in the 2004 session of the Maryland General Assembly, will bring enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) technology to the state's 66 major wastewater treatment plants by 2011. With this state-of-the-art technology in place, the flow of nitrogen from wastewater treatment plants into Maryland waters will be reduced by nearly half (3-4 milligrams per liter).

Before these plants can reach ENR levels, however, they must upgrade to biological nutrient removal (BNR). During Fiscal 2004, MDE successfully completed negotiations with the owners of all major wastewater treatment facilities. One facility began operation with BNR (Seneca wastewater treatment plant in Montgomery County), two plants began construction (Celanese in Allegany County and Poolesville in Montgomery County) and five facilities have signed new agreements to begin planning studies for Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology (Chesapeake Beach in Calvert County, Cumberland in Allegany County, Bowie in Prince George's County, Easton and St. Michael's in Talbot County, Indian Head in Charles County and Conococheague in Washington County).

## *Overview Of Water Quality Capital Programs*

In FY 2004, the department committed \$278 million in capital funds (grants and loans) to local governments - \$257 million for wastewater projects, \$19 million for drinking water projects and \$2 million for nonpoint source pollution control. The wastewater funding includes BNR upgrades and other improvements to wastewater treatment plants and collection systems to ensure compliance with federal and State permit requirements and to eliminate overflows of sewage from undersized or broken sewer lines and pumping stations.

MDE received commitments from 10 local governments and the State Highway Administration to treat up to 24,000 acres (approximately 37 square miles) of paved surfaces to provide better water quality in affected streams, rivers and estuarine waters. These improvements included educational programs, “best management practices” such as increased street sweeping, and the construction of storm water management facilities.

A total of \$856,000 in state grants was provided for 10 projects to control runoff from 150 acres, create 300 acres of wetlands, and restore over 15,000 linear feet of stream corridor.

### **Water Resources Management**

The drought of 2002 reminded Marylanders of the importance of protecting the state’s water supply. To ensure that the state continues to enjoy a reliable and safe supply of drinking water, Governor Ehrlich appointed the Advisory Committee on the Management and Protection of the State’s Water Resources, chaired by M. Gordon Wolman.

The committee’s recommendations were delivered to the Governor on May 31, 2004. Among them:

- Continue the state’s observation well and stream gauge monitoring program.
- Continue the on-going assessment of watersheds and aquifers through out the state.
- Improve coordination between Maryland and Virginia regarding water allocations from the Potomac River.
- Increase state support for local water and sewer planning.
- Begin a public education program on water issues.

The recommendations of the committee provide a foundation for local and state water policy and planning in Maryland.

## *Wetlands*

In FY 2004, over 1,200 acres of wetlands were created, restored or enhanced in Maryland. Since 1998, about 14,800 acres have been added in Maryland. The department actively seeks federal grants to assist in the evaluation and restoration of the state's wetlands. In FY 2004, the department was awarded two EPA grants to help the



department assess the health of wetland ecosystems in order to better manage these resources. MDE also entered into a memorandum of understanding with the University of Maryland—College Park to study the effectiveness of shoreline erosion

techniques using wetland vegetation. The department also entered into an MOU with the University of Maryland-Horn Point to measure the success of wetland mitigation projects. All of these efforts will help the department enhance its regulatory and non-regulatory activities related to the protection of wetlands.

## *Sediment, Stormwater And Dam Safety*

In addition to major repairs to four dams in the state – Loch Raven, Lake Marian, Liberty and Lake Linganore – the department completed work on a computer data system that will greatly improve the state's ability



to inspect dams and respond to problems at the over 350 dam structures in Maryland.

### **Compliance**

The department entered into a consent agreement with the town of Centreville to prohibit growth in the community until a new wastewater treatment plant is on-line and shown to be operating properly. MDE also worked with Centreville Town Council to develop a capacity management plan that would ensure the new plant does not exceed capacity.

At MDE's request, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency joined the department in conducting major inspections at three wastewater treatment plants. EPA reported that the Maryland Department of the Environment's oversight of wastewater treatment plants met the highest standards.

### **Wastewater Permits**

The Wastewater Permits Program reissued 17 NPDES permits for major dischargers (one million gallons a day or more). These permits included nutrient goals in keeping with Maryland Tributary Strategies and the Chesapeake Bay Program. The percentage of administratively extended permits was reduced to 3 percent, well below the target agreed to with the EPA.

Staff concentrated on reissuing minor NPDES permits during the last two quarters of the fiscal year. As a result, 131 minor industrial and municipal renewals were issued, reducing the backlog to approximately 15 percent; the MDE-EPA target is less than 10 percent for all surface water discharge permits.

## ***Mining***

During Fiscal 2004, the Bureau of Mines reported several major accomplishments:

- Extinguished an abandoned mine coal refuse fire that had been burning for 10 years at the Kitzmiller mine and stabilized approximately 200,000 cubic yards of refuse that was eroding and sliding into the North Branch of the Potomac River.
- Began installation of an emergency cut-off trench to protect a 6-inch pressurized natural gas line and a local road from the Jackson Mountain mine fire, which has been burning for many years. While it is not currently feasible to completely extinguish the underground fire, this effort will prevent a potentially hazardous situation.
- Conducted an innovative consolidated permit review for the Chase surface mine application in Howard County. Several permits needed for the project were presented for review and comment at a single public hearing. This approach streamlined the review process while maintaining the same high level of analysis to protect the environment.



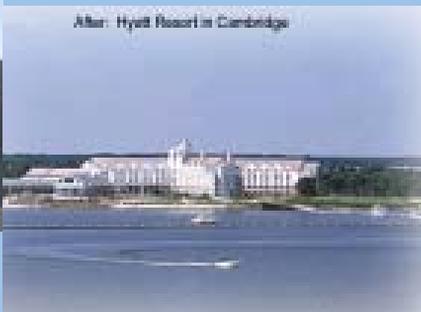
# UNLOCKING ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

It is an essential part of the governor's Priority Places initiative – restoring unused properties in established communities. It can be as simple as turning an abandoned lot into a community soccer field, or as rich in economic potential as building a resort complex on once-contaminated land on the Eastern Shore. During Fiscal

Before: Brownfields Site at Closed State Hospital in Cambridge



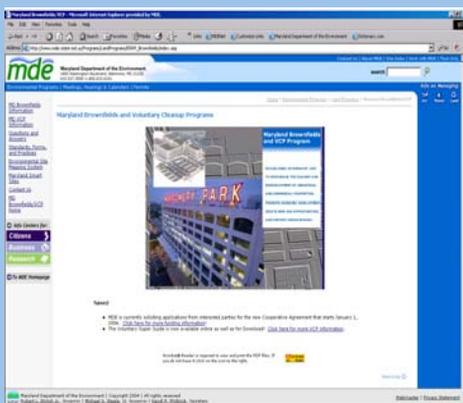
After: Hyatt Resort in Cambridge



2004, brownfields restoration and redevelopment became one of MDE's highest priorities.

In November 2003, Governor Ehrlich announced administrative reforms that simplified and streamlined the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) application – from 22 pages to eight pages – made the process more user-friendly, improved communications between MDE and

applicants, and created a comprehensive website for VCP customers. In addition, the Department created the position of Community Redevelopment Coordinator to promote the program and work with communities to clean up brownfields sites.



At the same time the

administrative reforms were being developed, MDE joined the departments of Planning and Business and Economic Development, legislative leaders and stakeholders to develop legislative reforms to the brownfields and voluntary cleanup programs. Among the changes proposed by the stakeholders in drafting the legislation and enacted by the General Assembly:

- Applicants can enter the VCP after an initial (Phase I) investigation of a potential brownfields site. Previously, Phase II investigation was also required before application could be made to the program. The change will allow applicants to have MDE's input on the scope of investigation and sampling.
- Review time for projects has been reduced.
- New requirements for public notification and public informational meetings will increase citizen awareness and participation in the review process.
- More sites will be eligible for participation, including sites contaminated with oil and sites under active enforcement.
- Liability protections for program participants were increased.

***Brownfields – real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.***

The legislative reforms also increase protections for workers on cleaned-up sites, allow MDE to seek treble damages when clean-up orders are ignored, and expand eligibility for the state's Brownfield Revitalization Incentive Program.

# LAND REDEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

## *In The Wake Of Isabel*

Tropical Storm Isabel spilled tens of thousands of gallons of home heating oil in September 2003. MDE crews began the painstaking task of cleaning up the spilled oil within hours of the storm's passage. By the end of September 2003, the department had removed more than 50,000 gallons of oil from the environment.

MDE also forged an innovative agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to remove oil-contaminated soil from homeowners' properties. FEMA and Maryland invested \$3.25 million in this project, ultimately removing 600 tons of contaminated soil and replacing it with clean topsoil at over 170 properties in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Dorchester, Harford, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, and Talbot counties.



At the center of this successful cleanup: MDE's Waste



Management Administration (WAS) and the Emergency Response Division, part of the Technical and Regulatory Services Administration (TARSA). WAS is responsible for regulating all oil-related activities in Maryland (storage, transportation and spill cleanup), solid waste and hazardous waste management, recycling, lead poisoning prevention and brownfields. The Emergency Response Division is the

lead state agency for petroleum and hazardous material releases.

### **Helping Renters Find Lead-safe Homes**

MDE and the National Center for Healthy Housing delivered a valuable tool to families looking for rental housing in Baltimore. A new Web site (<http://www.lead safehomes.info/>) will make it easier for people to identify rental housing that is registered and has had lead risk reduction treatments – first for properties in Baltimore City, and soon for properties statewide. This will assist prospective renters in evaluating the lead poisoning risk before they decide where to live. Baltimore was one of three cities nationwide to offer the information.

### **Combating Childhood Lead Poisoning**

Maryland’s aggressive campaign to eliminate lead poisoning among children has been effective. Childhood lead poisoning has steadily decreased and continues to decline, both in total number and percentage of children poisoned.

The fact that there are fewer cases does not mean we can become less vigilant, however. Blood lead testing continues to expand (in excess of 85,000 children are tested annually) and we have increased our outreach activities with the counties and Baltimore City. An important result: tracking of blood lead poisoning cases has improved.

We conducted 1,691 inspections (compared with 1,605 the year before, and between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004, MDE took 394 enforcement actions against non-compliant property owners.



A grant from the National Centers for Disease Control allowed us to develop an outreach campaign with TV stations on the Eastern Shore. And the department created a poster with information about lead poisoning and lead risk reduction and distributed it to paint retailers statewide.

### *Scrap Tire Program*

A measure of the department's commitment to cleaning up the environment can be seen in the record of scrap tire cleanups over the last dozen years. Since the inception of the Scrap Tire Program in 1992, over 8.1 million scrap tires have been recovered from stockpile cleanup sites. Thirty-four illegal scrap tire stockpile sites were cleaned up in FY2004 and approximately 480,000 tires were recovered and recycled from those cleanups. Approximately 95 percent of all stockpile site cleanups accomplished in FY2004 were achieved by using administrative means, allowing responsible property owners to perform their own cleanups, rather than using the State Scrap Tire Cleanup and Recycling Fund. In addition, a total of 582 new and renewal scrap tire licenses were issued with a total of 3,109 licenses currently valid. There were 675 licensed and unlicensed scrap tire sites inspected during FY2004.

MDE, the Maryland Environmental Service (MES) and the Maryland State Department of Education partnered to construct and/or renovate playground facilities at various Maryland public schools using scrap tires. MDE and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) coordinated a project to replace the asphalt surface at the playground at the Charles Carroll Barrister Elementary School in Baltimore City with a safety surface made of recycled tires. These playground projects not only improve public school facilities, but educate students and the public on the usefulness of recycled tires and scrap



tire-derived materials recycling technology. MDE, MES, and DNR also continued to repair and improve scrap tire playgrounds constructed in state parks since 1994.

### **Voluntary Recycling & eCycling**

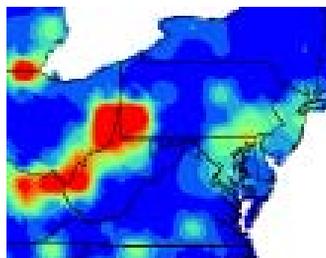
What once seemed an ambitious goal – achieve a statewide voluntary diversion rate for solid waste of 40 percent by 2005 – has become a reality in Maryland. The most recent figures show that Marylanders voluntarily recycle over 39.5 percent of the waste they generate. That translates to almost 2.6 million tons of materials recycled annually.

Our next priority: developing an effective eCycling program that will divert used electronics, many of which contain hazardous materials, toward reuse and recycling options and away from landfills where they pose a threat to the environment. Nearly 5.7 million pounds of unwanted electronics have been collected for recycling since eCycling began in Maryland in October 2001. Recognizing the importance of recycling these materials and removing them from the waste stream, legislators passed a bill during the 2004 Session requiring MDE to convene a workgroup of stakeholders to develop recommendations for a funding mechanism to implement an electronics waste collection and recycling system in Maryland. The workgroup began its work in August 2004.



## COMBATING AIR POLLUTION

In a decade and a half, Maryland reduced polluting emissions from local sources by forty percent. Only Delaware among Northeast states has lower total emissions. Of cities in the Northeast that still struggle with



pollution problems, Baltimore has the lowest emissions. Our program to reduce airborne pollutants is among the most aggressive and effective in the United States. And yet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says that the Baltimore-Washington region still does not meet the standards of the federal Clean Air Act.

Why?

Coal-fired power plants in states west and south of Maryland have failed to reduce emissions and are sending millions of pounds of pollutants into Maryland. The pollutants are transported hundreds of miles on prevailing westerly and southwesterly winds; on the hottest days of the summer, these pollutants contribute as much as half the ozone in Maryland's air. They also pollute the Chesapeake Bay and other waterways.

Maryland has joined forces with other Northeast states to persuade the EPA and Congress to tighten controls on Midwestern and Southern

*Testing the air – For the last half-dozen years, MDE and the University of Maryland have been measuring airborne pollutants that blow into Maryland from other states, gathering solid evidence that power plants hundreds of miles away are responsible for air pollution here. Then, last summer, we got the strongest proof ever: when Midwestern power plants shut down during the blackout of 2003, Maryland's research plane scrambled into the air and found ... nothing. The high levels of ozone expected on a hot summer day were not to be found because the pollution source, Ohio Valley power plants, had shut down.*

power plants. Indeed, Maryland has played a leadership role among the thirteen jurisdictions that comprise the Ozone Transport Commission, or OTC. With the other the states, we have proposed multi-pollutant control program for power plants across the Eastern United States that would serve as a consensus position at the national level. Maryland and the OTC states are calling for stronger controls on four damaging pollutants – nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, fine particulate matter and mercury – and we are pressing Washington to require polluting power plants to achieve greater reductions in emissions on a faster timetable than presently required.

## AIR QUALITY RESTORATION & PROTECTION

Maryland has one of the most aggressive air pollution control programs in the United States. In a decade and a half, Maryland has reduced polluting emissions from local sources by up to forty percent. Measures such as strict vehicle emissions testing, the requirement that gas pumps be equipped with vapor recovery systems, a ban on open burning, rules for household consumer products and controls on power plants and large industrial sources have contributed. As a result, when EPA issued its new eight-hour standard for ozone, the quality of the air in the Baltimore-Washington region was upgraded from severe to moderate.

### *Helping Baltimore Schools*

To address air pollution violations at a major energy source, MDE negotiated a settlement with that included a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) which is providing funding to improve efficiency and reduce air emissions from boilers at one or more Baltimore City Schools. The SEP, currently ongoing, is valued at \$40,000. The number of schools addressed by this SEP will be determined by the cost of improvements at each school. The project is to include an analysis and assessment of the operational condition of the school's boilers, with follow-up maintenance and repair work to improve efficiency and reduce air emissions. The project will result in cleaner air for the city's school children to breathe.

### *Clearing The Way For Transportation Planning*

MDE completed revisions to State Implementation Plans (SIPs or clean air plans) for the Baltimore and Washington, D.C. areas and Cecil County. These revised plans allow for transportation planning in those areas to continue without conflict and demonstrate continued progress in reducing emissions of air pollutants.

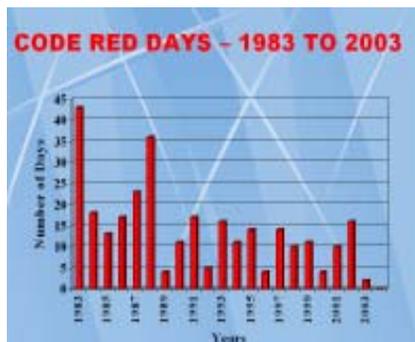
## Kent And Queen Anne's Meet One-hour Standard

Kent and Queen Anne's counties achieved attainment with the one-hour federal ozone standard. As a result, Maryland has requested that these two counties be redesignated as an attainment area by EPA.

## Steady Progress

For the first time, the department analyzed two decades of air quality trends in Maryland. The impact of the state's aggressive efforts to reduce emissions were evident:

- Airborne lead is virtually nonexistent because lead has been eliminated from gasoline.
- Carbon monoxide levels are within federal standards because of the use of oxygenated fuels.
- Course particulate matter, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide remain well below federal standards.
- And ozone levels, while still problematic, are on the decline. Where once Maryland could expect high levels of ozone every time the temperature went above 90 degrees, there is a clear indication in the trend data that hot days no longer bring high-ozone "code red" warnings.



## HELPING PEOPLE MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS ABOUT SEAFOOD

Fish is a valuable part of a healthy diet. But the presence of PCBs and other contaminants in fish and other seafood require consumers to make informed decisions about what and how much they eat. For two decades, the Maryland Department of the



Environment has provided valuable help in making those decisions. Over those two decades, the department has accumulated and refined analyses of contaminants found in crabs and fish caught by recreational fishermen in Maryland. We have the ability to provide detailed species- and area-

specific information to fishermen and their families. In some cases, the knowledge we have gathered has led us to issue strong warnings against any consumption; we discourage the eating of fish and eels caught in Baltimore Harbor, for example. Striped bass caught in the Chesapeake Bay, however, poses little risk for the average fisherman who follows our guidelines.

During Fiscal 2004, MDE issued new guidelines, including – for the first time – information about the safe consumption of striped bass caught in the bay and its tributaries. New data from Baltimore Harbor affirmed the high levels of PCBs in fish caught there. And we notified Marylanders that crabmeat by itself is not a significant source of contaminants – good news for crab lovers.

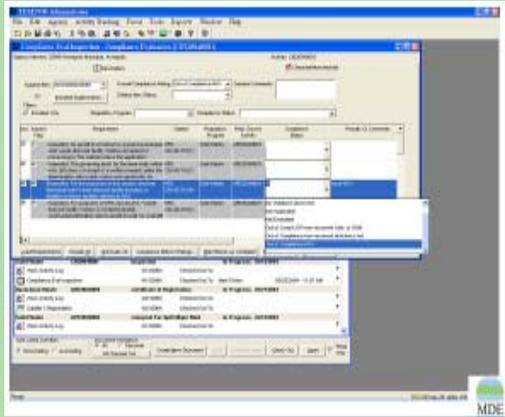
As important as the information we disseminated is our renewed commitment to educating consumers. We continued to post areas of high risk and provide one-on-one information to Baltimore fishermen as we have in the past. We created and distributed a harbor-specific brochure on consumption levels. Women and children, however, became the focus of a new campaign. For those populations, we developed a separate brochure to educate mothers and

families about the effects of PCBs and mercury and recommend consumption levels lower than suggested for the general population. These brochures are available in health clinics, doctors' offices and other places where women of child-bearing age visit. Perhaps most important, we have invited community and scientific leaders in the Baltimore region to join MDE in developing new outreach strategies so that we effectively reach these most sensitive populations.



## IMPROVE EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

When resources are scarce, there are two options: do less, or become more efficient. Doing less is not an option at MDE. The issues are too important, the stakes too high, the importance of a clean, healthy environment absolute. There are opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness in virtually everything we do. What follows are some highlights of a year in which the Maryland Department of the Environment ratcheted up its efficiency.



### *Database Will Make MDE More Efficient*

It doesn't exactly roll off the tongue: Enterprise Environmental Management System. EEMS, for short. But when this agency-wide database system is fully operational in a few years, it will bring a department that requires vast information resources to perform effectively into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Gone will be separate legacy databases, most of which are incompatible with each other. In their place will be a single source of records and data that will streamline operations. Aside from making MDE more efficient, EEMS will allow the department to shift staff to important regulatory and enforcement duties. Operations will begin coming on-line as early as 2005.

### *Intelligent Enforcement*

MDE is responsible for oversight of over 170,000 regulated entities large and small, from drycleaners and auto body shops to power plants, wastewater treatment plants and landfills. With an enforcement staff of fewer than 160 people, that translates to nearly 1,100 inspections per

inspector. Not only is it impractical to send inspectors to 1,100 sites; it is unlikely to result in effective enforcement.

The solution, one that has proven to be highly effective, is known as “intelligent enforcement.” In this approach, inspections are a function of risk and experience. Large facilities, which represent the potential for major environmental impact, are targeted for closer scrutiny. Industries where violations are problematic are targeted for closer scrutiny. Individual operations with a record of violations are closely monitored. The result is an effective and flexible enforcement program that is able to maintain close oversight of major industrial and wastewater treatment operations and at the same time have a significant impact on the actions of smaller operations.

### **Compliance Assistance**

Fines are one measure of the department’s effectiveness. Another measure, one that more accurately reflects MDE’s emphasis on building partnerships with regulated entities rather than adversarial relationships, is the number of instances in which we provided compliance assistance. During Fiscal 2004, the department continued to work with auto body shops in the Park Heights neighborhood of Baltimore, teaching operators and their employees environmentally sound practices and offering help in the sometimes daunting task of record-keeping. This outreach targets small and medium businesses.

Related to our ongoing emphasis on compliance assistance is our commitment to supplemental environmental projects (SEPs) as an alternative or complement to fines for violations. For example, the department negotiated a SEP in Baltimore that is improving the efficiency of and reducing air emissions from boilers at Baltimore City schools. The project will result in cleaner air for the city’s school children to breathe.

## STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS & OUTREACH

Two activities from the past year define the range of MDE's stakeholder relations and outreach. In the first, the secretary and his senior staff members met with business, industry and government leaders in Western Maryland and on the Eastern Shore. The second involved a grassroots effort to improve the environment in Maryland communities.

The trips to Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore were part of a new outreach effort intended to build relationships between the department and the regulated community. While MDE's field offices work closely and effectively with the thousands of public and private entities regulated by the department, there is a substantial benefit in headquarters staff having first-hand knowledge of the issues and problems faced by the regulated community and for managers and operators to have access to high-level decision-makers. Both trips included dialogue with elected and government leaders. One immediate result: After a conversation with the mayor of Cumberland about a potential brownfields site in an area of economic growth, MDE agreed to conduct a brownfields assessment to determine if there were any contamination issues at the site.

### *Environmental Benefits Districts*

The grassroots outreach targeted different stakeholders in Prince George's County and the City of Baltimore. In Prince George's County, the department is working with community leaders in the Little Washington area to help them find solutions to environmental concerns. And we are working with two area schools to assist them in identifying and addressing environmental issues as well as provide resources for teachers. In Baltimore, the department used an EPA grant to buy clean-burning diesel fuel for Maryland Transit Administration buses serving East Baltimore and successfully helped three communities successfully apply for EPA grants for local projects.

Our efforts in both communities are part of an MDE environmental justice initiative that we call Environmental Benefits Districts (EBDs). EBDs are communities where residents are focusing their energies on eliminating crime and neighborhood rebuilding and may not have time to work on other issues. As envisioned by MDE, one state agency or a team of state agencies will bring their resources to bear to solve a range of problems.

### *Reaching Out*

The effects of MDE decisions and actions are far-reaching, and they involve and/or affect many groups, from county health officers to business executives to environmental leaders. A hallmark of the Ehrlich-Steele Administration's approach to government is an emphasis on inclusion – everyone has a place at the table. During Fiscal 2004, MDE played host to many groups and individuals who are affected by what we do or who have an interest in our decisions and actions. The groups have been diverse, but all the meetings have been characterized by genuine dialogue, with people on both sides of the table having the opportunity to be heard. The response has been extremely favorable.

At the same time, the department has worked closely with and made its resources and expertise available to communities that require assistance. While much of the responsibility for cleaning up after Tropical Storm Isabel resided with other departments, we were visible and active in affected counties. The department helped the town of Centreville to develop a sewer allocation plan to manage growth. And we continue to help communities balance the demands of growth with the legal requirements for adequate infrastructure.

## A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

For Maryland's environment, the past year has been an historic one. With the governor's signature, we made a commitment to reduce by nearly 50 percent the amount of nitrogen that flows into Maryland waters from wastewater treatment plants in the state. Not since the state banned phosphorus from laundry detergent a quarter-century ago has a single action had such far-reach consequences.

Responsibility for implementing the Bay Restoration Fund belongs to the Maryland Department of the Environment. The people of Maryland have given the department a broad charge for protecting and for cleaning up the environment – air, water and land. But this delegation of responsibility is necessarily limited. While the department is and will continue to be an effective guardian of the environment, the ultimate caretakers are citizens themselves. By their votes and with their voices, they set the standards that all of us must meet; the will to restore the bay, the most visible symbol of our commitment to the environment, comes from the people. But citizens must also take personal responsibility if we are to have clean air, healthy waters and land free of contamination.

Every day, we make decisions that are small in themselves but that, multiplied by almost six million – our population – have a huge impact. The cars we drive, the tools we use, the planning decisions we approve, actions as simple as fertilizing our lawns, all directly affect the environment. By setting the same high standards for ourselves as individuals as we set for ourselves as a society, we can have an impact that matches and perhaps even exceeds the most far-reaching efforts of government. By setting the same high standards for ourselves as individuals as we set for ourselves as a society, we will surely succeed in eliminating the scourge of pollution and the harmful effects it has on us and the world in which we live.

**MDE Staff Pictured On Cover:**

*Top - Left to Right: Saeid Kasraei; Jim Carroll; Marcia Ways*

*Bottom - Left to Right: Joe Beaman; Andrew Sawyers; Ginny Kearney*

**Some Photos Courtesy Of The Chesapeake Bay Program**





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