



The Virginia Regional Environmental Management System Partnership *Partnership Benefits and Examples of Success*

Augusta County • Businesses for the Bay • Central Virginia Waste Management Authority • Chesterfield County • Chesterfield Fleet Management Services • City of Charlottesville • City of Hopewell • City of Portsmouth • City of Richmond • Columbia Gas (NiSource) • Crater Planning District • Defense Supply Center Richmond • DuPont, Spruance Plant • EPA Region 3 • EPA Solid Waste HQ • Federal Highway Administration • Fort A.P. Hill • Fort Belvoir • Fort Lee • Fort Eustis • GETF • Henrico County • Honda • Honeywell • Hopewell Cogeneration Facility • Hopewell County School Bus District • Hopewell Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility • James River Association • Langley Air Force Base • Philip Morris • Qimonda • Quantico Marine Corps Base • Richmond Regional Planning District Commission • Richmond City Public Schools, Pupil Transportation • Ridefinders • The Sustainability Park • Tyson Foods • Ukrops Supermarkets • US Army • US Army Corp of Engineers • US Army Environmental Center • US Navy • VA Army National Guard • VA Clean Cities • VA Department of Conservation and Recreation • VA Department of Environmental Quality • VA Department of General Services • VA Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy • Virginia Port Authority • VA Sustainable Building Network • Virginia Tech • VA US Department of Agriculture • Wal-Mart

V-REMS Overview

The Virginia Regional Environmental Management System (V-REMS) joins public (federal, state, county, and local) and private organizations to address complex community and environmental issues through an innovative partnership approach. The V-REMS partnership takes the EMS approach and framework one step beyond traditional implementation by moving it from individual facility fence lines to a community of participants, in this case the greater Richmond area. Thus, the partnership addresses cross-boundary community and environmental issues. Specifically, the partnership strengthens community relationships and reduces air, water, and waste emissions, promoting environmental sustainability in the areas where its partners operate. The V-REMS partnership also provides specific benefits to each of its partnering organizations by helping them to improve environmental performance, enhance cost-efficiency, and develop collaborative opportunities with their communities.

V-REMS Origins

Originally sponsored by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Department of Defense in 2003 as a pilot program to develop an EMS-based regional approach to environmental and community challenges, the V-REMS partnership's success has led to its continuing support by the Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR). The DSCR finds value in the V-REMS partnership because it enhances the facility's mission readiness and provides significant benefits to its local community.

V-REMS into the Future

Since 2003, the V-REMS partnership has grown from four public organizations in the Richmond area, to a group of over 50 public and private organizations based mainly in greater Richmond but increasingly from other parts of the Commonwealth of Virginia as well. In the future, the V-REMS partnership plans to continue addressing its partners' priorities in the greater Richmond area while also meeting the needs of and leveraging opportunities for its partners throughout the Commonwealth.

V-REMS Benefits

A Cleaner Environment

Based on best practices sharing and leveraged information through the V-REMS partnership, V-REMS partners have implemented initiatives that have led to cleaner air, a reduction in stormwater impacts, and reduced solid waste streams.

- V-REMS joined the Richmond and Hopewell School Districts to successfully apply for an EPA Clean School Bus USA grant for \$286,000 to retrofit school buses with cleaner technologies. The project will improve air quality for over 20,000 children in the Richmond and Hopewell School Districts.
- V-REMS partners demonstrated a demand for E-85 and planned over \$1.2 million financing (cash and in-kind) to install up to 19 E-85 fueling stations. The use of these stations will help reduce smog and ozone forming emissions. Increased E-85 fuel consumption will help to alleviate dependence on foreign oil.
- In response to Governor Kaine's Land Conservation Initiative, several V-REMS partners, mainly military installments, plan to contribute over 1,300 acres of land to the state program.
- Over half of the V-REMS partners are members of the DEQ's Virginia Environmental Excellence Program (E2, E3, E4).
- Eight V-REMS participants won Chesapeake Business for the Bay Excellence Awards for their effort to improve stormwater management and effluent discharge into the Chesapeake Bay.
- Four V-REMS participants are involved in the EPA's distinguished Performance Track program.

Enhanced Cooperation among Federal, State, County, Local Governments, and the Private Sector

By initiating a community dialogue, the V-REMS partnership develops trust between its community partners and allows them to develop a “common language” to address environmental issues. The V-REMS partnership anticipates and identifies community challenges and then develops and shares solutions across the partnership that minimize the partners’ environmental risks.

- The V-REMS partnership established trust between the DSCR and its community and allowed the DSCR to address its local stakeholders’ concerns regarding remediation issues at the facility.
- The V-REMS partnership has facilitated healthy and trusting relationships between its participants and the Virginia DEQ, an active participant in the V-REMS partnership. The Virginia DEQ views the V-REMS partnership as a critical tool for providing the region with a common approach to environmental challenges.
- The V-REMS partnership has created a new working relationship with its participants and the Virginia DCR in an effort to stay abreast of water quality and stormwater regulations and policies.

Cost Savings

Through the V-REMS partnership, participants leverage the collective knowledge and best practices of over 50 public and private organizations that are all working to improve their environmental performance and cost-efficiency. Accordingly, by serving as a crucial resource for information exchange and collaborative opportunities, the V-REMS partnership helps its participants save time and money.

- The Hopewell Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility implemented stormwater management solutions that helped the facility increase revenue by \$500,000 annually while also reducing pollution in stormwater effluents.
- V-REMS participants leverage best practices and information from each other about energy efficiency improvements (e.g., fluorescent bulb retrofitting), green purchasing (e.g., products and practices) stormwater management (e.g., bio-retention ponds issues), air emissions (e.g., alternative fuel options), hazardous materials management (e.g., underground storage tank issues), and other environmental issues (e.g., pesticide use reduction) that have led to measurable improvements in the participants’ management of environmental issues and cost savings.

A New Approach to Regional Issues

The V-REMS partnership provides public and private organizations with a successful and innovative model designed to address complex community and environmental issues with a Regional Environmental Management System (REMS) approach. By developing and sustaining the V-REMS partnership, the participants demonstrate that it is an effective model that can be replicated in communities across the country.

- V-REMS participants and the DSCR won the 2005 White House Closing the Circle Award for its leadership of the V-REMS partnership. The award recognizes Federal facilities for outstanding achievements in promoting environmental stewardship and underscores the importance that the government places on replicating the REMS approach across the country at Department of Defense facilities that would like to improve cooperation with their local communities.
- In at least two different states, Fortune 100 companies are developing REMS partnerships modeled after the V-REMS approach.
- The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), through the DOD Sustainability Workgroup, recognized the REMS approach that V-REMS has modeled as an innovative way to address regional environmental challenges and to achieve sustainability. ECOS regularly tracks the V-REMS partnership and evaluates its progress as a model of sustainability.
- The recently launched V-REMS website (vrem.org) showcases the V-REMS partnership replicability. The website highlights the many benefits of the V-REMS partnership, welcomes interested parties to learn more about and join V-REMS, shares V-REMS related accomplishments and publicly available documents such as the V-REMS annual report, and provides an overview of the V-REMS workgroups.

Program Sponsors:

U.S. Department of Defense
Defense Supply Center Richmond
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