

Camden Enforcement Initiative

Responding to citizen concerns and reinforcing the commitment to provide equal protection to New Jersey's urban communities, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) conducted an unprecedented, weeklong environmental enforcement initiative in the city of Camden. Working with county officials, the New Jersey State Police, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the department mobilized more than 70 inspectors targeting over 700 facilities to ensure city-wide compliance with laws addressing water quality, solid and hazardous waste, air pollution and illegal land use activities. The strike began October 3, 2002 and ended on October 10, 2002.

At the direction of Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell, Assistant Commissioner of Compliance and Enforcement Lisa Jackson set out to design and implement a weeklong, multimedia enforcement effort in the City of Camden. The effort included all enforcement media in the department as well as representatives from the Department of Law & Public Safety, Community Affairs, Camden County, the City of Camden and the EPA all had input in both the planning and execution of the strike.

The goal of the strike was to inspect 100% of the targeted facilities and perform multimedia inspections where initial inspections raised other program concerns. Each program was involved in the selection of facilities targeted for inspection. Selection was based on citizen complaints, facilities which had not been inspected recently, and facilities with a history of compliance problems in one media that had not been previously inspected by another. Programs also targeted facilities that were at the time unknown to the department. This list of facilities was obtained from EPA who searched their Dun&Bradstreet database and consisted of all businesses in the City of Camden. Where multiple media targeted the same facility for inspection, the programs agreed on a lead program. The lead program was responsible for conducting the initial inspection and referring follow-up inspections to other media if warranted.

Multi-Media Participation List

DEP Representation

- Compliance & Enforcement
 - Air, Water, Waste, Land Use and Pesticides
- Environmental Regulation
 - DPC & Right to Know
- Land Use Management
 - Watershed Management
 - Water Monitoring & Assessment
- Site Remediation
 - Community Relations
 - Underground Storage Tanks
 - Emergency Response
- Natural & Historic Resources
 - Parks & Forestry
 - Fish & Wildlife
- Policy & Planning
- Press Office
- Environmental Justice

Law & Public Safety

- Criminal Justice
- NJ State Police

Camden County

City of Camden

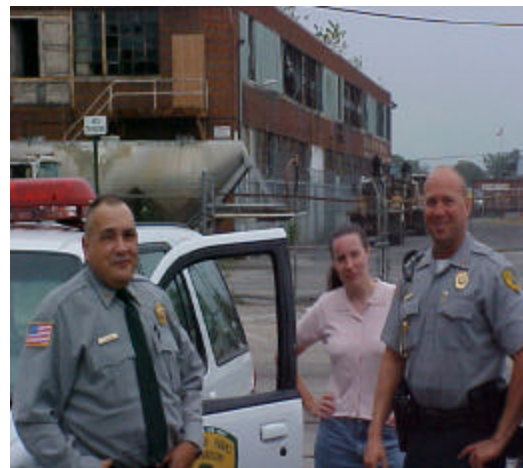
US EPA

The first day of the strike, 10/3/02, began with a “kick off” meeting to rally the troops, disseminate information, and to assign the tasks for the day. Inspection checklists were distributed and security concerns reviewed.



Assistant Commissioner Jackson addressing the inspection team

Throughout the week, multi-media inspections were conducted using a standardized multimedia checklist developed by the programs. The lead program performed the initial inspection and if other media concerns were observed, referred the facility for follow-up inspection by another program. In addition to using the multimedia checklist, some programs used their routine single-media checklists during the inspections.



Inspectors on the job

A Community Availability Session was held on October 7, 2002 at the Malandra Hall Community Center in the Fairview Section of Camden. The Community Availability Session was an opportunity for community members to receive information about the Camden Initiative as well as the department's enforcement efforts and program areas. The session provided an opportunity for residents to state their environmental concerns. Some of the facilities identified by the community were added to the inspection target list for the strike. Over 20 Department representatives were present at various tables throughout the room to answer questions. In addition, representatives from the Camden Department of Public Works, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, United States Environmental Protection Agency and the State Police Community Outreach were available. Approximately 40 people from the community attended.



DEP works with the community

Results

As a result of the Camden Initiative, the Department and its county and federal counterparts conducted 764 inspections and found 98 facilities in violation, 63 of which had major violations. No violations were discovered at 498 facilities and 168 facilities were found to be no longer in business. Follow-up referrals resulted in over 270 inspections at 116 facilities.

Overall 118 major violations were discovered during the strike. The majority of the violations were air, site remediation, and water quality violations. They ranged from unregistered underground storage tanks and failure to install air monitoring and emissions equipment, to illegal treatment and storage of hazardous wastes and unpermitted stormwater discharge activities. Findings from the different environmental inspection areas such as air, land-use, water, and waste included the following:

Air

Based on 136 air compliance inspections, the Department found a total of 30 violations for failure to receive proper permits for equipment. Once these facilities obtain the proper permits, the Department will have a better understanding of the total amount and type of pollutants being emitted from the various facilities in the Camden area. Out of the 136 inspections, 19 violations were issued for operating equipment improperly or for not monitoring and providing records in accordance with existing air permits. These violations may increase air pollution emissions from the improperly used equipment. As such, the Department is requiring the violating companies to corrective actions immediately.



Non-operating strip chart

Hazardous Waste

The Department's Hazardous Waste Program conducted 189 inspections and found 14 major violations. CWS Industries, an unpermitted plating operation which improperly accumulated and stored waste including cyanides, acids, and metals received 6 of the 14 violations. The Department issued the company Notices of Violation for illegal treatment, storage and disposal. They were also issued notices for container management violations and personnel training requirements. In addition, the Department's Emergency Response Program issued a directive ordering CWS to label and store all containers of product/waste according to local, state, and federal regulations. Substantial penalties will be assessed in this case. Another 6 of the 14 violations were issued for used oil violations at 3 auto parts or repair facilities – in each case oil was being directly discharged to the ground, contaminating soil and potentially groundwater. No penalties will be issued at this time but follow-up inspections are planned.



The Hazardous Waste Enforcement Program also conducted an inspection at Camden High School and Camden Vocational High School. Although only minor violations were observed, additional instruction on how to better manage disposal of hazardous waste is necessary. The Department is scheduling follow-up visits to Camden area high schools to conduct compliance assistance inspections.

Land Use

The Department's coastal and land-use enforcement officers, conservation officers and park rangers toured the Delaware and Cooper rivers by boat to determine if unpermitted or illicit activities were occurring in waterfront development and tidelands areas, wetlands and areas adjoining the watersheds. The Coastal and Land Use Enforcement Program conducted a review of all permit applications currently under review and/or



Salt pile near river



Abandoned piping and barge

issued by the Land Use Regulation program for sites located in Camden and along the Cooper and Delaware Rivers. Inspections found general compliance with pending and issued permits. Several citations for violating waterfront development statutes were issued, including the illegal stockpiling of materials within 100 feet of the mean high water line and the illegal abandonment of barges, steel pipes and fill along the shoreline.

Lead-Based Paint

EPA conducted seven lead-based paint inspections. No major violations were found.

Underground Storage Tanks

A joint Underground Storage Tank Inspection Program was conducted between the Department and the EPA Region 2. Penalties ranged from \$200 to \$2,000. A total of 35 inspections were conducted. Of the 27 sites found with existing tanks, 24 were issued a Notice of Violation and/or an EPA Field Citation for major compliance issues. Of these 24 sites, the tanks at five sites were "Red Tagged," which establishes a delivery ban to the tanks at those facilities. Of the five red tagged tanks, four returned to compliance within a week of the inspection. Observed discharges at two sites require the completion of an environmental investigation and follow up report to the Department. The major identified violations at the 24 sites include; active sites with unregistered tanks; failure to perform release detection monitoring for tanks and/or pipe lines; failure to have and/or to test the corrosion protection systems; and the absence of no spill or overfill protection.

Water Quality

The Department's Water Program inspectors targeted 12 scrap metal processing and motor vehicle dismantling facilities. Five of the twelve inspected facilities were issued a Notice of Violation for unpermitted discharges and were required to take corrective action by obtaining a permit requiring Best Management Practice controls. Water inspectors also discovered two facilities lacking proper backflow prevention devices for potable water system protection. Without backflow preventors, non-potable water can flow into the potable water supply. Since one of these facilities was a hospital, the Department is planning follow-up outreach to other hospitals and medical facilities located throughout the state. Overall the entire week the Water program performed 152 inspections.

On October 10, 2002, a press conference was held to discuss the weeklong strike and its results.



Commissioner Campbell and Asst. Commissioner Jackson addressing the Press

The Camden effort was a landmark achievement in several respects. First, the department focused on a community that has long been neglected in terms of health and environmental protection. DEP was able to build trust with residents who continue to push a federal lawsuit against DEP alleging that environmental protection was sorely lacking in their community during the previous Administration. Input from local residents and businesses shaped the Camden initiative, rather than dictates from Trenton. For example, one facility had drums of hazardous substances in easy reach of workers

and the public, but because the facility had no prior permits the problem might have continued unchecked without the help of community and business input.

The initiative was also an example of smart government. The DEP made use of all enforcement resources, including Rangers from Parks & Forestry and Conservation Officers from Fish & Wildlife, demonstrating the benefits of cross-training and cross enforcement. No other State has deployed its parks and wildlife officers in this way, and this innovation allowed us to field 70 enforcers and performing more than 700 inspections over the course of a week in a concentrated area. By changing the way Trenton does business, the department showed support of Governor McGreevey's commitment to strengthen environmental enforcement in spite of tough budget times.

Finally, by focusing on the entire universe of facilities in a single community, the DEP had a broader picture of the types of violations that may be occurring at similar sites in communities across the state. For example, the Camden initiative has shown a need to focus more on scrapyards and auto repair facilities. Unpermitted boilers and heat exchangers are another very real urban issue. This type of discovery allows the department to address potential problems at facilities statewide more pro-actively, and to work cooperatively with the regulated community to highlight problems that may have been missed in the past before the public is put at risk.

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