



2000 Annual Report Summary

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

WHO ARE WE?

- Free technical and compliance assistance delivered by a nonregulatory program
- Programs operate in 50 states, 2 territories and the District of Columbia
- Each program is designed to meet the specific needs of local small businesses
- Established by Congress and implemented through the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
- Support and coordination provided by the US EPA's Small Business Ombudsman in Washington, DC, and the Air Office in Research Triangle Park, NC

We've helped over **3,000,000** small businesses in the last five years with environmental issues, through on-site visits, hotline calls, workshops, general information requests, and specific technical assistance.

Program staff are on the phone and on the road to help small businesses understand the Clean Air Act requirements and how to implement them. Staff also protect small business interests in the rule making process.

HOW ARE WE FUNDED?

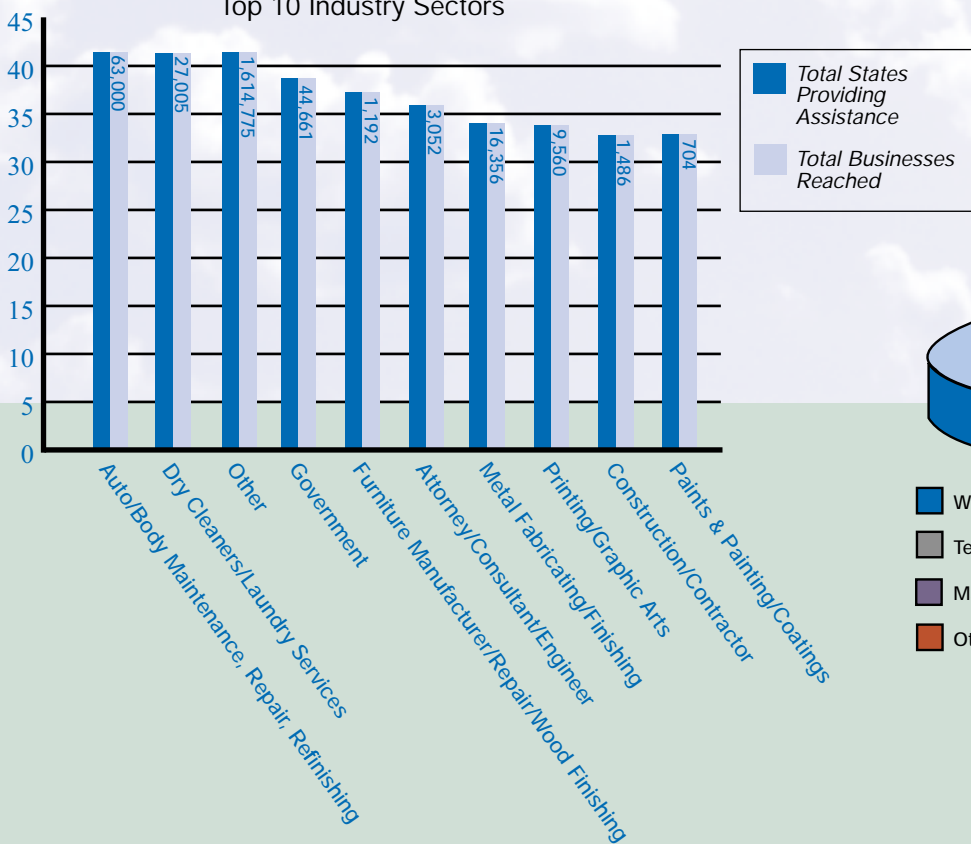
- Programs receive no federal funding
- Supported by state air permit fees
- Budgets range from \$0 to \$2 million
- Average program budget: \$145,000
- Staffing ranges from 1 person to 40
- Average staffing is 2.5 full-time employees

HOW ARE WE DOING?

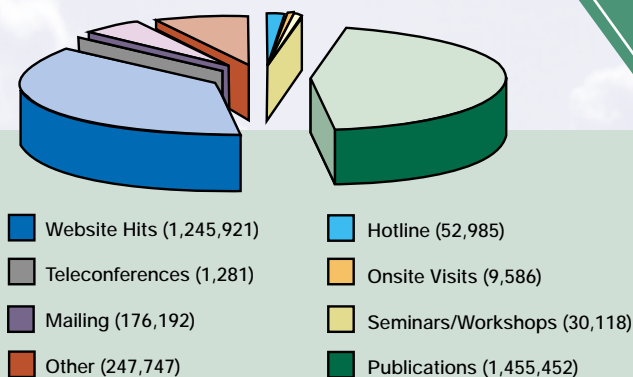
- In 1995, we helped 75,000 businesses
- In 2000, we helped 850,000 businesses, an increase of 1,100%

WHO DID WE HELP?

Top 10 Industry Sectors



Assistance Provided By Type



EVERY PROGRAM A PARTNERSHIP

Each program is comprised of three parts:

- A technical assistance component to provide the detailed help that small businesses need
- An ombudsman to advocate on behalf of small businesses within the regulatory environment
- A Compliance Assistance Panel made up of small business owners and representatives to consult and advise on program content

Locally and nationally, programs build working partnerships to include:

- Trade Associations
- Pollution Prevention Programs
- Small Business Development Centers
- Other state and local agencies

PROGRAMS HELPING PROGRAMS

Through many different mechanisms and efforts, Small Business Assistance Programs share their various experience and resources to assist businesses all around the country at very little cost.

2000 HIGHLIGHTS:

Shared Resources

One state developed a Dry Cleaners' Compliance Calendar that explained environmental regulations, simplified reporting requirements and provided a record keeping mechanism—all done in an easy-to-understand format. In cooperation with the state's trade association, the calendar was widely distributed within the industry, and has now become a vital compliance assistance tool across the country. Many states have adapted the original material to meet local requirements and are using it with their dry cleaners. No one had to reinvent this wheel!

Communication and Coordination

Every national program faces the challenge of interweaving federal and state program delivery. The Small Business Assistance Programs responded to this challenge by crafting a National Steering Committee to serve as a hub for communication and program advocacy. Each region of the country selects a representative and an alternate to serve on the Committee with their peers and representatives from the US EPA. To facilitate communication, the Steering Committee holds monthly conference calls and utilizes email distribution lists, listservs and small business websites. In 2000, Steering Committee subcommittees planned the annual training conference, prepared promotional materials and explored issues critical to the program's success. This work is supported by the US EPA Small Business Ombudsman and relies heavily on the commitment of state program staff time above and beyond regular duties.

Training and Networking

Every year, the national network of Small Business Assistance Programs comes together to learn from small businesses, technical experts, trade association representatives and each other. The conference content includes a range of issues and topics: latest regulatory updates from the US EPA, communication strategies for programs with limited budgets, detailed review of specific regulations and how they impact particular sectors, strategies for cooperation with other assistance providers, web site design, and basic overviews for new staff. Additionally, similar meetings are held throughout the ten regional areas for localized emphasis. In 2000, 47 states were represented at the annual conference held in Missoula, Montana.

Find out what is going on with your state's Small Business Assistance Program by visiting www.smallbiz-enviroweb.org or calling 1-800-368-5888.