

[www.pca.state.mn.us/](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/)

**AT A GLANCE**

- 900 employees in FY2016: 665 in St. Paul and 235 in seven regional offices; 33 of total are student/seasonal.
- Limit pollution to protect human health by issuing more than 16,700 permits.
- Monitor the condition of air, water, and land at more than 2,000 sites across the state.
- Protect non-polluted waters and restore waters that do not meet standards.
- Inspect and license more than 40,000 sites that involve hazardous waste, feedlots, and storage tanks.
- 250,000 people annually visit MPCA’s Eco Experience exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair.
- 2013 Eco Experience exhibit received “People’s Choice Award for Best Attraction” at the Minnesota State Fair.
- Seek guidance and approval on environmental issues from the MPCA Advisory Committee.
- Offer 13 online services with more launching soon.

**PURPOSE**

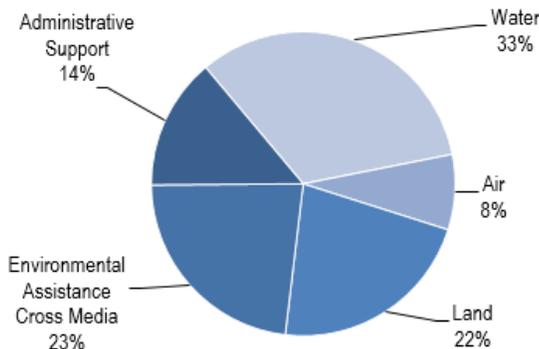
The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) monitors environmental quality, offers technical and financial assistance, and enforces environmental regulations. We find and clean up spills or leaks that can affect our health and environment. We develop statewide policy, support environmental education, and help ensure pollution does not have a disproportionate impact on any group of citizens. Our mission is *to protect and improve our environment and enhance human health.*

We work with many partners — citizens, communities, businesses, government, environmental groups, and educators — to prevent pollution and conserve resources. Minnesota is a national model for environmental protection. Our air, land, and water are cleaner now than 40 years ago, even with a growing population and rising industrialization.

We play a key role in contributing to the following statewide outcome: **A clean, healthy environment with sustainable uses of natural resources.**

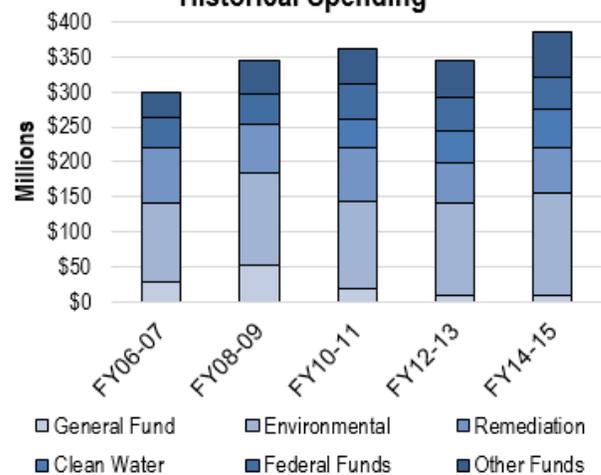
**BUDGET**

**Spending by Program  
FY 15 Actual**



Source: BPAS

**Historical Spending**



Source: MAPS IA Warehouse and SWIFT

Our budget is funded from multiple state government funds and federal grants. General Fund monies have decreased over this 10-year timeframe, and in the FY 2014-2015 biennium accounted for less than 3% of our spending.

The Environmental Fund accounts for 38% of our spending, and Remediation Fund for 18%. The Clean Water Fund, a Legacy fund created by constitutional amendment in November 2008, was new to our funding mix in FY 2010-11 and now represents 15%. Federal grants pay for 12%, and other state funds cover the remaining 15%.

## STRATEGIES

Limiting pollution caused by businesses, organizations, and individuals is fundamental to our mission. We develop and enforce regulations, and provide education and technical assistance to help meet these regulations. Increasingly, our focus is on preventing pollution rather than just controlling or cleaning it up.

Our range of activities includes:

- Setting a data-driven environmental vision, goals and objectives through testing and research to identify environmental problems.
- Establishing strategic operational focus areas and corresponding goals in order to track progress on environmental objectives, including:
  - Water: Minnesota's clean water supports aquatic ecosystems, healthy communities and a strong economy
  - Air: Minnesota's clean and clear air supports healthy communities and strong economy
  - Land/Waste: Minnesota's Land supports healthy ecosystems and sustainable land uses
  - People & Approaches: Minnesotans and MPCA take action to protect our land, air and water
  - Operations: MPCA demonstrates excellence in operations
- Implementing key work systems and processes in prevention, management, clean-up, monitoring and assessment, and operations.
  - Monitoring environmental quality across the state and providing access to that data and information to citizens.
  - Setting standards, rules and policies that protect the environment and public health.
  - Providing assistance, partnerships and education to prevent pollution. For example, we train and certify wastewater operators, landfill inspectors, tank operators, and household hazardous waste facility staff and work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations.
  - Issuing permits or licenses and enforcing environmental regulation.
  - Finding and cleaning up contamination or pollution that affects our health and environment and responding to emergencies.
  - Operational support, including HR, fiscal, data governance, communications and continuous improvement.

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter, 114D <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=114D>, Chapter 115 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=115>, Chapter 115A <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=115A>, and Chapter 116 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=116> provide the agency with its main authorities to provide regulatory, monitoring, and assistance services.

**Program: Water**[www.pca.state.mn.us/water](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water)**AT A GLANCE**

- Nearly 2,000 locations monitored for water quality.
- 2,894 water-related permits issued annually.
- 227 water quality compliance actions annually.
- 80 major watersheds being evaluated for water quality.
- 187 grants and contracts totaling \$15.9 million awarded to local partners in FY2015 – FY2016.
- \$6.4 million in loans awarded to 20 counties and watershed districts for local improvement projects in FY2015 – FY2016.

**PURPOSE & CONTEXT**

Our water program works to ensure that Minnesota has clean water to support aquatic life, healthy communities, and a strong economy.

Components of the program include:

- Monitor, evaluate, and communicate lake, stream, wetland, and groundwater conditions.
- Reduce and prevent water pollution from all Minnesota sources such as cropland, wastewater, stormwater, septic systems, and feedlots.
- Work cooperatively with local partners to implement activities that protect Minnesota waters.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

We conduct activities to ensure that the state's lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater are clean, healthy, and sustainable. These activities fall into three major categories:

**Monitoring/Assessment**

- Monitor watersheds to identify water quality trends through state and local efforts, remote sensing, and volunteers.
- Monitor groundwater quality.
- Assess data to understand the water condition and identify causes of stress on a water body and its aquatic insects and fish.
- Track effectiveness of protection and restoration activities.
- Assess wastewater collection and treatment systems for improvement.

**Management**

- Develop water quality standards to protect Minnesota's waters.
- Issue permits, conduct inspections, provide compliance assistance and take enforcement regarding wastewater, stormwater, septic systems, and feedlots.
- Issue construction and operation permits to Minnesota businesses and municipalities, and determine compliance with those permits, federal regulations, and Minnesota laws.
- Help business, local governments, and citizens reduce the amount of water they use and increase the use of low-cost water quality protection measures.
- Help communities and citizens understand their local water resources and what may impact the quality of these resources.
- Partner with counties and local health boards to address imminent health threats due to improperly constructed or operating septic systems, particularly for low-income households.

**Protection/restoration**

- Work with local partners to develop Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategies for all 80 major watersheds.
- Award grants and loans to local partners for water quality improvement projects.
- Provide technical assistance to regulated facilities, communities, and citizens.
- Facilitate and oversee grant, contract, and loan awards to local partners for water quality improvement projects.

## RESULTS

Minnesota has  
80 watersheds

Watersheds with  
monitoring  
complete

69

Watersheds with  
assessment  
complete

49

### Results performance measure: Surface water protection and restoration

Over the last 8 years, we have increased our monitoring efforts. To date, 86% of major watersheds have been intensively monitored. By 2019, we expect to have all watersheds monitored. In 2019, the cycle starts again to help us see if water quality has improved. We use the information to determine if water quality standards are being met to protect public health, recreational use, and aquatic life. In general, 60% of our lakes and streams meet standards.

Watersheds with  
restoration and  
protection  
strategy projects  
underway

80

Watersheds with  
strategy plans  
completed

8

### Results performance measure: Number of Water Restoration and Protection Strategy reports completed or publicly noticed

Once we know where the pollution is coming from and how much it needs to be reduced to meet standards, we create a detailed restoration and protection strategy. This is a primary information source for water quality improvement projects and local water plans.

### Results performance measure: Percent of water permits issued within 150 days

The MPCA has worked hard to process permits more quickly without compromising our environment. We are now able to issue 91% of all permits within 150 days.

### Results performance measure: Percent of lakes getting clearer

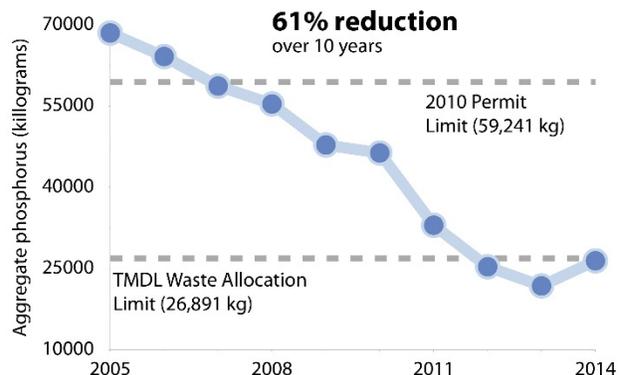
Clarity is improving in almost a quarter of lakes. A smaller fraction has seen a decline in clarity. Hundreds of volunteers help the MPCA measure water clarity to detect signs of degradation to a lake.

In the last 10 years: measurements show that lake clarity has:

- improved in 24% of lakes
- declined in 10%
- not changed in 66%

### Results performance measure: Amount of phosphorus being released into the Minnesota River by wastewater treatment plants

The MPCA regulates the amount of phosphorus discharged from wastewater treatment facilities. Over the last 10 years, it has decreased 61% percent, driven in large part by tighter permit limits and good compliance from community wastewater treatment plants. Phosphorus contained in sediment runoff from cropland is a persistent problem. Excess phosphorus stimulates growth of algae, which can make waters unsuitable for swimming and fishing.



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**Program: Air**

[www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/air/index.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/air/index.html)

**AT A GLANCE**

- Track air quality at 53 locations in Minnesota.
- Conduct air quality permitting, compliance determination and enforcement for over 2,000 larger pollution sources.
- Provide grants to reduce air pollution from small sources, such as cars, trucks, and lawn and construction equipment
- Minnesota experiences 5-10 unhealthy air quality days each year.
- MPCA and Minnesota Department of Health estimate approximately 2,000 premature deaths each year due to air pollution.
- The impacts of air pollution fall disproportionately upon those living in poverty and people of color, especially in the Twin Cities.

**PURPOSE & CONTEXT**

The MPCA's Air Program has two primary goals: that Minnesota's outdoor air is healthy for all to breathe, and Minnesota reduces its contribution to regional, national, and global air pollution. Our efforts support human health and contribute to strong economies in Minnesota communities. We provide leadership for air quality protection by implementing the Clean Air Act.

The MPCA's work to regulate air pollution from facilities that need an air quality permit has resulted in a significant reduction in emissions from these sources. Now, nearly 75% of air pollution in Minnesota is released from sources not traditionally regulated by the MPCA, such as cars, trucks, construction equipment, commercial operations and residences.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

We monitor air quality and collect information about the pollution released from large and small air pollution sources; from the largest coal fired power plants, oil refineries, and taconite plants, to automobiles, lawnmowers, and backyard fire pits. This is critical for deciding how to reduce harmful pollution. We also notify the public through a variety of channels when air pollution increases to unhealthy levels.

The services we provide fall into three categories: assessment, management, and restoration/improvement.

**Assessment:**

- Monitor for the Air Quality Index and compliance with air quality standards using 162 monitors located at 53 sites statewide.
- Provide technical assistance and quality assurance for 30 monitors at 7 industrial locations.
- Measure toxic air pollutants at 19 facility and neighborhood locations to assess long-term trends in the Twin Cities and Duluth.
- Conduct short-term monitoring in neighborhoods to evaluate the potential for disproportionate risk from air pollution.
- Develop annual emission inventories for more than 2,100 companies.
- Conduct and review air modeling analyses and conduct air risk analysis for about 30 industrial emission sources each year.

**Management:**

- Issue construction and operating permits for new and expanding facilities and federal and state air quality operating permits.
- Review compliance with air quality rules, regulations, and permits.
- Take enforcement action when warranted.
- Maintain daily air quality index for Brainerd, Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Ely, Grand Portage, Marshall, Red Lake, Rochester, St. Cloud, Virginia and the Twin Cities and issue alerts when air quality is expected to exceed health benchmarks.

### Restoration/Improvement:

- Develop plans, strategies, and tactics for maintaining and improving air quality.
- Reduce emissions that contribute to regional haze, ozone, fine particulate, and toxic air pollutants.
- Reduce emissions that contribute to greenhouse gases.

## RESULTS

### Results performance measure: Levels of key air pollutants

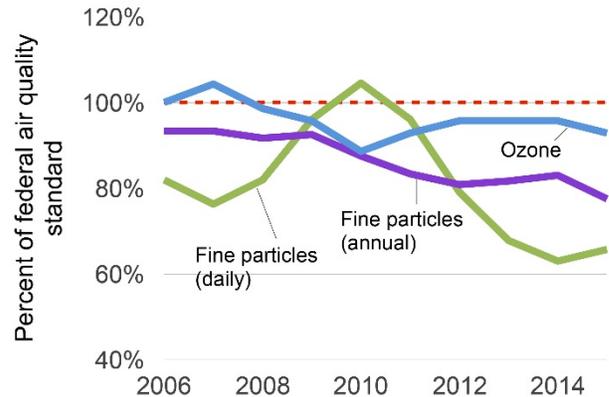
The MPCA monitors air pollution such as fine particulates and ground-level ozone (smog) and compares them to federal standards set to protect our health. Overall, air pollution levels in Minnesota have improved over the last 10 years. But standards have tightened over this same time period, reflecting new knowledge of how these pollutants affect us.

### Results performance measure: Compliance rates for permit holders

Percentage of permittees complying with requirements in 2015

- Air — 99%
- Land — 98%
- Water — 99%

### National Ambient Air Quality Standard: How the Twin Cities compare

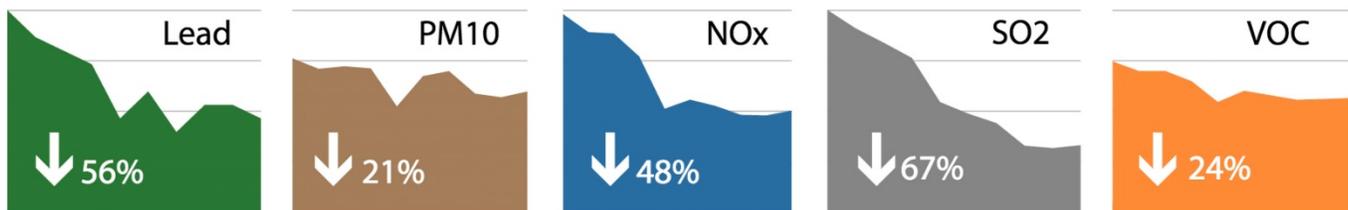


The line for each pollutant represents the worst air quality readings among the many sites that are monitored.

### Results performance measure: Improvements in air pollution from regulated sources

The amount of air pollution coming from sources such as factories and electric utilities — which are subject to regulation and hold MPCA permits — has decreased significantly over the past 10 years, largely due to government and industry efforts to reduce smokestack emissions. In contrast, much of the air pollution in Minnesota comes from cars, trucks, construction vehicles, and fuel combustion for things like home heating — where there are few regulations.

### Regulated source emissions 2004–2014



*Lead means elemental lead. PM10 is fine particle pollution 10 microns or smaller. NOx is nitrogen oxides. SO2 is sulfur dioxide. VOC stands for volatile organic compounds.*

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**Program: Land**

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/waste/index.html>

**AT A GLANCE**

- 48% of the state's solid waste is recycled.
- 30% of the state's solid waste is landfilled.
- Approximately 80,000 acres of contaminated land have been cleaned up and returned to productive use since 2003.
- 507 solid waste facilities are permitted and tracked.
- Approximately 6,500 hazardous waste generators are licensed and another 6,500 are small enough that they do not need licensing.

**PURPOSE & CONTEXT**

Our Land program protects the environment and public health by managing solid and hazardous waste and petroleum products. We encourage waste prevention, minimization, and mitigation through waste reduction, recycling, and reuse. We manage risks at contaminated sites through site cleanup and restoring contaminated land to productive use.

We work with a large and diverse group of public and private entities, including developers, counties and cities, industry consultants, state and federal partners, and citizens.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

The MPCA works with public and private partners to protect Minnesota's environment, public health, and quality of life through the proper management of solid and hazardous wastes and petroleum products. Preventing contamination of land and groundwater is a priority, and is preferred over cleanup. Cleaning up contaminated land and groundwater, while costly and time consuming, is another important part of this program.

The services we provide fall into three categories: assessment/planning, management, and cleanup.

**Assessment/Planning**

- Create statewide plans and policies to reduce solid waste and improve its management through prevention, recycling, reuse, and waste-to-energy.
- Work with local government to develop effective solid waste management plans.
- Track waste generation and final deposition of the materials (for example: reused, recycled, waste to energy, landfilled).
- Work with railroads, industry, and local fire and police to develop plans to prevent and respond to spills.

**Management**

- Partner with counties, businesses, and industry to prevent waste and improve reuse and recycling rates.
- Distribute funds to counties and provide assistance to public and private entities involved in recycling, waste reduction, reuse, and household hazardous waste programs.
- Oversee disposal of debris from natural and man-made disasters.
- Issue permits and inspect compliance at solid and hazardous waste facilities.
- License hazardous waste handlers and monitor the movement of hazardous waste.
- Provide training to prevent the release of harmful materials into Minnesota's soil, groundwater, and surface water.

**Cleanup**

- Oversee land cleanup at contaminated sites and recover costs from responsible parties.
- Conduct cleanups and operate and maintain cleanup systems at closed landfill sites.
- Help developers return contaminated sites to productive use.
- In the event of a spill, we assist local responders and oversee cleanup.

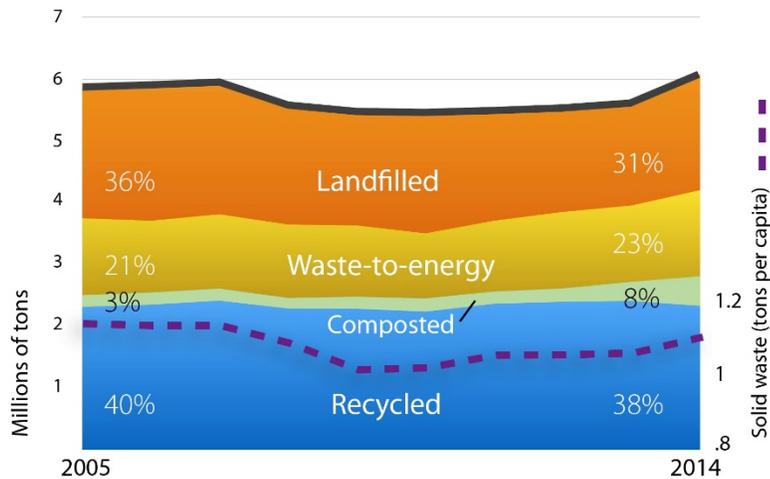
## RESULTS

### Results performance measure: Reducing the amount of solid waste going to landfills

The MPCA prioritizes waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and resource recovery over landfilling. About one-third of Minnesota's waste is still sent to landfills.

Studies show that more than 70% of waste landfilled could be recycled or composted, saving resources and conserving landfill capacity.

### Disposal of solid waste



### Results performance measure: Amount of polluted land being returned to productive use

Putting abandoned, idled, or underused industrial and commercial properties back into productive use can be complicated by actual or suspected environmental contamination. The MPCA helps make this land available for development by investigating and cleaning up these sites.

#### Land cleaned up through Petroleum Brownfields and Voluntary Investigation & Cleanup programs

	2005	2015
Cleaned up acres	54,584	79,676

#### Superfund sites and closed landfills

	2005	2015
Identified sites	768	954
Cleaned-up sites	486	636

#### Petroleum remediation sites cleaned up

	2005	2015
Identified sites	15,801	19,424
Cleaned-up sites	13,580	18,454

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## Program: Environmental Assistance and Cross Media

[www.pca.state.mn.us/](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/)

**AT A GLANCE**

- Provide nearly \$1 million in grants and loans each biennium to promote environmentally innovative projects.
- Enable Minnesota companies through the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) to save operating costs, prevent waste through reduction or reuse, and conserve water. Every \$1 granted to MnTAP results in \$3 of annual savings for Minnesota businesses.
- Assisted nearly a total of 10,000 small and large manufacturing and service businesses across the state with MnTAP since its establishment in 1984.

**PURPOSE & CONTEXT**

The Environmental Assistance and Cross Media Program provides support for regulatory and assistance programs that cross multiple media (air, water, land) with a given activity. Program activities include feedlots, environmental review, solid waste and wastewater training, and community and business assistance.

We provide technical assistance and financial resources to help local governments, businesses, and individuals comply with the regulatory system and implement pollution prevention activities. We work with businesses, local governments, communities, and citizens by providing financial assistance to counties for waste management efforts, and grants and loans to reduce diesel emissions. We assess the environmental impact of our regulatory and cleanup project decisions through monitoring oversight, setting limits that control wastewater plant discharges to streams and lakes, monitoring air quality, assessing risk, and investigating fish-kills.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

We develop partnerships with businesses, communities, local units of government, citizens, and other public and private interests to understand trends and emerging environmental issues. These partnerships include technical expertise and financial incentives to implement activities, approaches, and technologies to conserve resources, prevent pollution, and protect the environment. The partnerships also include voluntary assessment of our air and water. From these approaches and resulting data, we promote environmentally sound business development, community development, waste-as-a-resource, clean energy, clean water and safe air, and provide educational and technical support to our customers.

**Monitor**

- Collect and analyze data on the condition of the environment, describing trends and stressors and make data available to our agency, policymakers and citizens.
- Complete environmental reviews that guide project approvals at the local and state level regarding potential environmental protections that should be incorporated into projects and be considered in the approval process.
- Collect data from Minnesota businesses regarding the amount of toxic chemicals used, measuring progress in manufacturing sectors toward eliminating the use of toxins.

**Management**

- Use data to set standards and remediation criteria for protecting our water, air, and land.
- Conduct risk evaluations and provide technical support to regulatory activities.
- Provide data analysis, and develop reduction and pollution prevention strategies.
- Develop administrative and technical rules.
- Partner with other organizations to host the EcoExperience at the Minnesota State Fair. The 250,000 annual visitors experience environmentally friendly products and technologies, including the latest in clean energy, transportation alternatives, stormwater best practices through rain gardens, green buildings, and composting.

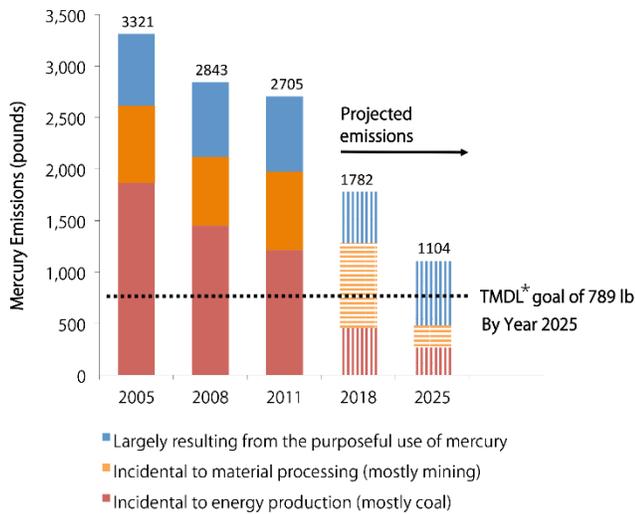
- Assist Minnesota businesses in using a multi-faceted approach to pollution prevention. This includes providing financial assistance for businesses and institutions seeking ways to reduce waste and offering technical assistance through our Small Business Assistance Program and our technical assistance partnerships.
- Provide resources to individuals and businesses on pollution prevention, reuse, recycling, responsible waste management, and sustainable practices.
- Provide information and hands-on assistance to communities through GreenStep Cities and Minnesota GreenCorps programs.

**Protection/restoration**

- Work with businesses to develop alternative products that are free of toxic chemicals.
- Facilitate and oversee grant, contract, and loan awards to reduce air emissions, implement innovative waste reduction activities, and develop alternative management options.

**RESULTS**

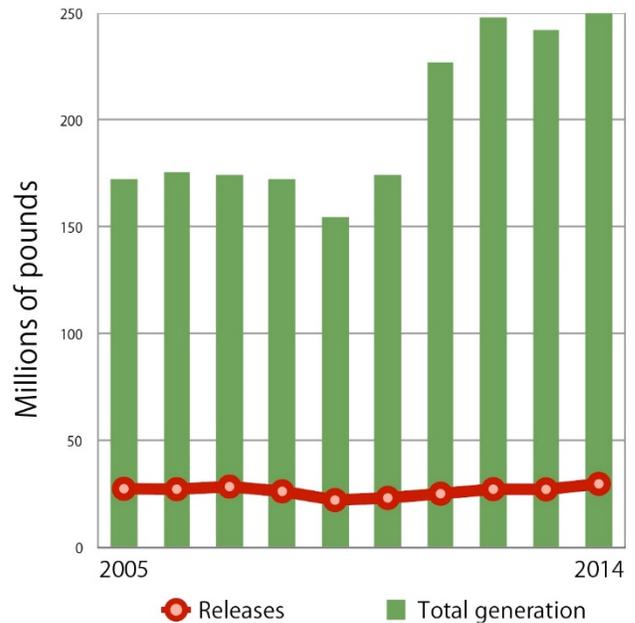
**Results performance measure: Mercury emissions**



**\*TMDL: The total maximum daily load of a pollutant a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards.**

**Results performance measure: Generation and release of toxic chemicals**

Industrial facilities that use one or more of the chemicals in the Toxic Release Inventory are required to report their use. About 420 facilities report in Minnesota. Most of them are manufacturing-related.



**Results performance measure: Environmental outreach**

Visitors to Eco Experience

Year	Number of visitors	Percent who reported learning something	Percent for whom info will affect future choices
2011	278,799		
2012	251,936		
2013	246,833	96%	84%
2014	262,775	97.1%	92.8%
2015	253,934	96.8%	83.6%

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**Program: Administrative Support**

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us>

**AT A GLANCE**

- 310,026 page views of environmental information through our website in FY2015 – FY2016
- 28 continuous improvement projects were completed in FY2015 – FY2016
- 5,201 information or data practices requests were processed in FY2016
- MPCA offices in St. Paul, Brainerd, Duluth, Detroit Lakes, Mankato, Marshall, Rochester, and Willmar

**PURPOSE & CONTEXT**

Administrative Support includes: the Commissioner's Office; legislative relations; legal services; financial management; internal controls and risk assessment; human resources; communications; organizational improvement; data systems management and online services; data analysis; document and records management; continuity planning; and, support for the MPCA Advisory Committee.

- We set agency strategic objectives and collaborate with MPCA environmental programs and partners to achieve excellence in operations.
- We directly serve our environmental programs by managing resources, providing business services, and assuring compliance with laws, standards, and policies.
- The MPCA Advisory Committee makes important decisions with broad environmental impacts.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

We provide leadership and strategic direction to protect and improve the environment and enhance human health.

- Provide leadership and strategic direction for the MPCA to achieve our mission through the Commissioner's Office.
- Collaborate with partners, including local governments, state and federal agencies, and environmental groups to accomplish our work.
- Provide strategic communications planning, including media and community relations, risk and crisis communications, use of multi-media tools, outreach events and public participation, and publications management.

We enable public access to environmental information and decision-making processes.

- Ensure public participation in key environmental decisions and complex pollution problems through the MPCA Advisory Committee upon request of the Commissioner.
- Enable public participation in decision-making through public meetings, outreach and rule hearings.
- Enable public access to agency operations and information through video conferencing and web broadcasts of meetings, and training events.
- Provide useful information through our website about Minnesota's environment, regulatory news and updates, rules, public notices, details about environmental quality, and information on how individuals can help protect the environment. This includes location-specific environmental information and data via the "What's in My Neighborhood" feature.

We manage operations and business services to effectively and efficiently support the agency's environmental work.

- Promote cost-effective and environmentally sound business practices, such as purchasing alternative technology vehicles, buying recycled office supplies and environmentally preferred products, supporting agency-wide recycling efforts, and using web conferencing technology to reduce travel.
- Use continuous improvement tools to improve processes and achieve environmental outcomes more effectively.
- Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, volunteers, and visitors.

- Respond to thousands of data practices and information requests each year to allow for timely redevelopment or construction.
- Attract and retain a high-quality workforce by using the assets and qualities of our workplace and the merits of our mission.

We maintain effective, secure, and efficient data and document management systems and tools.

- Upgrade and improve the efficiency of our aging data systems. We will offer more online services, reducing paper transactions, and eliminating data duplication. We are committed to improving the quality of our data and making it easier to share with citizens and regulated parties.
- Develop mobile technology for use in monitoring, site investigations, inspections, and permit reviews. Improvements give staff more time to help our customers and solve their problems by enabling staff to submit and access data from the field.
- Offer regulated parties the option to pay certain fees and permits online.
- Maintain environmental data and make it accessible to agency staff, regulated parties, and the public.
- Protect non-public data entrusted to our care.

## RESULTS

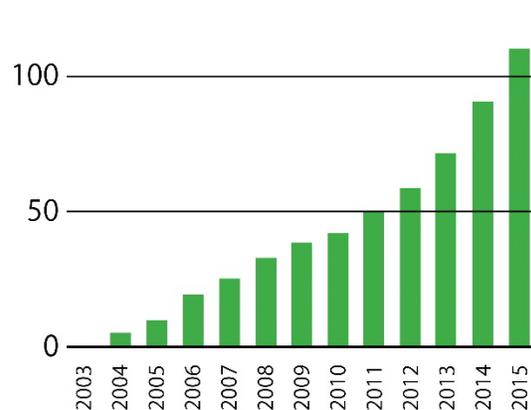
### Results performance measures

MPCA focuses on reviewing, improving, and designing more effective and efficient processes through continuous improvement (CI) projects (right), improving customer satisfaction with contracts (below), and increasing the number of online services to allow regulated parties and partners the convenience of self-service (below).

#### Customer satisfaction with MPCA contracts

Fiscal year	Satisfaction with overall process	Satisfaction with final product
2014	34%	70%
2016	61%	79%

#### Number of continuous improvement projects



#### Online services

We are currently providing 20 online services including:

- Daily electronic wastewater monitoring reports
- Voluntary responsible party applications for remediation programs
- Hazardous waste generator license applications

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