



Meet Your Match

Michigan ByProducts Synergy Program

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The Michigan ByProduct Synergy (BPS) Program matches byproduct streams from one facility to another facility's needs. It creates revenues and savings, and addresses social and environmental impacts. Essentially, it is not your typical waste management program!

BPS stimulates organizations to think about waste in new ways. By repurposing what has been traditionally considered "waste" Michigan organizations and businesses can:

- Reduce emissions.
- Reduce energy, raw materials, and disposal costs.
- Improve productivity, profitability, regulatory compliance and community relations.
- Develop new products and materials.
- Protect the environment and our natural resources.

Directly or indirectly, the resulting innovation, cost savings and social applications benefit everyone in Michigan. The environment benefits from landfill diversion, CO2 reduction,

energy savings, hazardous waste reduction, water use reduction, and reduction in virgin material use.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission facilitates and staffs this program and is using it as a tool for groundwater protection. It is the next step in a regional wellhead protection program that began over 20 years ago. Offering organizations a unique opportunity to improve their operations is a positive way to support the economy and the environment, including groundwater.

Funding has come from multiple sources including the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Wellhead Protection Grant Program. Current grants are being used to identify and work with organizations within wellhead protection communities who may benefit from BPS. Almost any type of organization can participate in the Michigan BPS Program including: manufacturing, agriculture/food production, mineral recovery, transportation, processing, distribution/construction and

professional offices. A sample of current participants:

- General Motors
- Dow Corporation
- Lansing Board of Water and Light
- East Lansing/Meridian Water and Sewer Authority
- Michigan Packaging Company
- Working Bugs, LLC
- Goodwill Greenworks Detroit
- Detroit Dirt
- Wacker Chemical

On September 18, 2013, 15 organizations and businesses came together in East Lansing, Michigan to see if they could find their match. The event started with breakfast and a brief program, which included cases studies for participation from Dow Corporation and Working Bugs, LLC. It then moved into a speed-dating format. Each entity rotated through five five-minute "dates" with other organizations. The dates allowed them to make introductions and exchange information about their byproduct streams and materials needs. The results equaled 10

potential synergies, which were identified in 30 minutes. After the speed dating concluded additional time was allotted for further networking. Due to this success, another event is planned for January 2014.

The keys to successful BPS have been:

- Collaboration – producers and consumers share what they or others might value.
- Motivation – project stakeholders must be able to see the potential in BPS and make it their own.
- Communication and participation – this must permeate all levels of an organization.
- Evaluation – to measure and understand environmental metrics.

If you would like to learn more about the application of ByProduct Synergy as a tool for groundwater protection please contact Christine V. Spitzley, Chief Environmental Programs Planner, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 517-393-0342 or cspitzley@mitcrpc.org.