
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOR THE GREATER VANCOUVER WATER DISTRICT (GVWD)

Effective Date: April 29, 2022

Approved By: GVWD Board

Policy No. UT-016

PURPOSE

This Policy commits the Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD) to implement and maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) conforming to ISO 14001, to systematically and proactively identify, prioritize, and manage environmental risks related to the utility's infrastructure and operations to achieve the following outcomes:

- Protect the environment
- Reduce pollutants and greenhouse gases, prevent waste, and conserve natural ecosystems
- Reliably fulfill compliance obligations
- Continually improve decision-making to mitigate risks and improve environmental performance

Achievement of these outcomes will be assessed through continual monitoring and measurement of performance information and data, based on the *GVWD Environmental Performance Goals*.

POLICY

The Greater Vancouver Water District's strategic commitments to the environment are set out in the *Board Strategic Plan, Ecological Health Framework, Climate 2050 Strategic Framework, Drinking Water Management Plan* and other existing corporate documents. GVWD commits to integrating environmental principles and performance objectives into all decision-making processes to enhance the environmental performance of the utility. This will be accomplished by developing strategies to identify and mitigate potential adverse environmental impacts, protect and enhance the natural environment, prevent pollution, reduce waste generation and improve its management, optimize energy use, and proactively continue to adapt GVWD's infrastructure and operations to climate change.

Environmental Commitments

GVWD commits to the following, with respect to land management and the development, operations, and maintenance of the utility's infrastructure:

- Protect the environment
- Prevent pollution
- Stay abreast of regulatory changes, meet regulatory and other compliance obligations, demonstrate due diligence, and respond to legislative change
- Continually improve GVWD's EMS as a mechanism to improve environmental performance in the areas outlined in the *GVWD Environmental Performance Goals*, namely:
 - Drinking Water Supply, Treatment, and Transmission

- Ecological Health and Function
- Air Emissions, Energy Use, and Climate Change
- Water Infrastructure and Operations – Resources, Materials, and Waste Management

Environmental Management System

An Environmental Management System provides the framework for fulfilling compliance obligations, demonstrating due diligence, and tracking environmental performance. It is a risk-based, systematic, and iterative approach to planning, doing, reviewing, and taking preventative and corrective action.

As part of this approach GVWD will:

- Develop and implement an EMS conforming to ISO 14001
- Determine and document significant environmental risks and related compliance obligations
- Set, prioritize, and annually review performance objectives for all significant environmental risk areas considering practicality, feasibility, efficiency, stakeholder impacts, and affordability
- Develop, implement, and continually improve operational and maintenance plans, programs, procedures, protocols, and practices, along with training and communications, to enhance performance in the significant environmental risk areas
- Incorporate knowledge of potential impacts of identified environmental risks into asset management and capital infrastructure planning
- Provide environmental performance information to staff, and empower them to generate solutions that deliver desirable outcomes
- Regularly report on and review progress in meeting the environmental performance objectives by:
 - Defining and monitoring metrics for the *GVWD Environmental Performance Goals*, based on the performance objectives established for the significant environmental risk areas
 - Performing audits of the Environmental Management System or any of its programs

Communication

GVWD will ensure the Environmental Policy is communicated to all persons governing or working for or on behalf of the utility.

This Environmental Policy is publicly available.

Application

This policy covers all activities GVWD controls or influences.

Related Document

[GVWD Environmental Performance Goals](#)