



State of Oklahoma and ITRC

“ITRC – Promoting better decisions while shaping the future of regulatory acceptance for innovative environmental technologies and approaches”



The Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC) is a state-led coalition working together with federal partners, industry, academia and stakeholders to achieve regulatory acceptance of innovative environmental technologies and approaches. Through the development of consensus-based tools and resources ITRC’s state-led technical teams provide information to facilitate confident technical decision-making on environmental issues in the states. The ITRC was created in 1995 by the Committee to Develop On-Site Innovative Technologies under the Western Governors’ Association. Today, ITRC is a committee formed under the bylaws of the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS), which is the research and educational arm of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS).

As a participating member of the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC), Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality DEQ has joined forces with other states, federal agencies, industry, and citizen stakeholders to overcome barriers that impede the use of innovative technologies for hazardous waste site cleanup and monitoring. ITRC, which endorses the use of innovative technologies at sites where new technologies are more protective of human health and the environment and more cost-effective than conventional approaches, gives state regulators the tools and understanding to make informed decisions about the appropriateness of an innovative technology for cleaning up a particular site.

ITRC tools and resources help Oklahoma save time and money:

- ***ITRC resource materials are used by DEQ staff to speed up the decision making process*** - Consultants for Vance Air Force Base proposed the use of phytoremediation to remediate JP-4 contaminated soils. Using the ITRC document titled “Phytotechnology Technical and Regulatory Guidance Document” the DEQ was able to quickly assess the appropriateness of the technology and approve the work plan for remediation that was both protective of the environment and cost effective.
- ***Guidance Documents Provide Key Information, Review Process reduced by 20%*** - One way ITRC is raising the comfort level of regulators and others about using new technologies is through the group’s production of technical/regulatory guidance documents that specify the critical information needed to make appropriate, expedited decisions regarding the use of environmental technologies. ITRC encourages state regulators to use the documents as a resource when evaluating technologies that have been proposed for cleanup projects. Adoption of these guidance documents by states is making the permitting process more efficient and is helping technology vendors and consultants have a more predictable pathway to technology acceptance in each state where innovative technologies are proposed for use. By using ITRC resource documents when reviewing work plans that propose an alternative technology, regulators in Oklahoma find they can reduce the review process by as much as 20 percent.

- ***ITRC documents help the DEQ achieve a significant cost savings*** - Interest in alternative landfill cover requirements within Oklahoma prompted the DEQ to examine the possibility of preparing a guidance document on the subject. Instead of independently preparing the guidance document, the DEQ joined ITRC's Landfill Covers team and helped develop the ITRC document titled "Technical and Regulatory Guidance for Design, Installation, and Monitoring of Alternative Final Landfill Covers". After concurring on the document following its December 2003 publication, the DEQ utilized this document in lieu of preparing an independent document, saving over \$63,000 of DEQ staff hours.
- ***Small Arms Firing Ranges Work helps cleanup at Tinker Air Force Base*** - A work plan for remediation of soils at a small arms firing range in Tinker Air Force Base was presented to DEQ using the ITRC reference document titled "Characterization and Remediation of Soils at Closed Small Arms Firing Ranges" to prepare its report. The DEQ project manager reviewed and approved the plan, including the proposed soil-sampling technique, also using the ITRC reference document. The information found in the ITRC document assisted Tinker AFB prepare a clear and accurate work plan and assisted the project manager to make informed decisions with a higher confidence. This resulted in a rapid approval, ultimately saving time and money.
- ***ITRC Training promotes DEQ learning at No Cost*** - Another way ITRC has impacted DEQ staff is by structuring and delivering a series of one- to two-day classroom-training workshops based on the technical documents that it has produced. These are available at no cost to state regulators. With limited travel budget available and being offered at no cost, the two-hour, internet-based courses also enable regulators and others access to "live" audiocasts and training materials from their desks.
- ***DEQ Staff Saving Real Dollars in Training*** - DEQ staff members regularly attend ITRC training, both classroom training and online training. The DEQ has estimated a savings of approximately \$600 per employee for each classroom-training event and up to \$400 per employee can be included for each online training event attended. The DEQ can reasonably estimate a savings of over \$10,000 over the course of three years, a significant benefit to the state of Oklahoma.
- ***Institutional Innovations*** - The State of Oklahoma actively participates with ITRC to overcome barriers that impede the use of innovative technologies for hazardous waste site cleanup and monitoring. Through the examination of emerging technologies that may be more protective of human health and the environment and more cost-effective than conventional approaches, ITRC provides tools and understanding to help regulators make informed decisions about the appropriateness of an innovative technology for cleaning up particular sites.

Through ITRC Oklahoma leverages resources from across the country:

- Oklahoma's environmental experts receive free on-line training – 127 participants trained in Oklahoma including 49 state and local government participants
- Classroom training, free to regulators, brings hands-on tools to better prepare environmental professionals to make better decisions- 32 trained from Oklahoma
- Oklahoma shares expertise by participating on 7 ITRC technical teams and in return has access to a national network of experts. In addition, the state has a member on the ITRC Board of Advisors as a result of her position as State Engagement Coordinator with the 43 state Points of Contact in the ITRC.

Oklahoma's use of ITRC resources leads to better decision-making:

- Improved permitting processes
- ITRC information leads to faster cleanup decisions
- ITRC experts provide knowledge transfer and guidance on complex issues
- Members dedicated to optimizing state resources and reducing compliance costs while protecting human health and the environment

ITRC creates a cultural shift in the way cleanup is planned & implemented:

- Reduces regulatory barriers for the use of innovative technologies for environmental remediation through guidance documents and sharing of technical expertise
- Leads a culture change in environmental decision-making, replacing long-standing adversarial relationships with collaboration, consensus and concurrence

To take advantage of the resources ITRC offers to help the regulatory community make quality, expedited decisions, contact your ITRC state Point Of Contact, Jarrett Keck (jarret.keck@deq.state.ok.us) or consult the ITRC Web site.

Additional Information:

www.itrcweb.org

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