



# Newsletter

## Environmental Connection

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Sponsored by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality

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### **DEQ Seeks Feedback on 4-day Workweek**

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is asking its stakeholders and the public about whether the compressed 4-day workweek is working for them. On the front page of DEQ's website [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov) visitors are asked to "Click here to let us know what you think about the "Working 4 Utah" Initiative."

"We are interested in hearing from individuals who have either had a positive or negative experience with DEQ related to the 4-day workweek," said Rick Sprott, executive director of DEQ. "This feedback form can help us collect comments from our customers that will help us gauge whether the Initiative is achieving its objectives and how we can improve."

Starting Aug. 4, many state agencies shifted to a four, 10-hour workweek as part of Governor Huntsman's plan to extend services to the public four days a week. Shutting state office buildings on Fridays is expected to save energy costs and improve the environment. The adjustment is in effect until September 2009, at which time it will be evaluated and determined whether to continue the adjusted hours.

The "Working 4 Utah" Initiative has caught the attention of other states and cities as they consider shifting government offices to a 4-day workweek as well.

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## DEQ Teams with Mayors on “Idle-Free” Campaign

Schoolchildren are telling their parents to turn it off when it comes to leaving their vehicles running while waiting to pick them up from school.

It’s all part of an anti-idling campaign, “Turn Your Key, be Idle Free,” that Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker and Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon jump started this fall.

“Most people don’t think anything about idling while they’re talking to someone, dropping someone off or picking somebody up,” Becker said at the press conference. “They don’t even think about the fact that they’re wasting gas and contributing to air pollution.”

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) joined Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County and Moms for Clean Air to encourage people to change that habit of leaving their vehicles running for an extended length of time.

DEQ created a Web site, <http://www.idlefree.utah.gov>, to provide facts about the problem of idling vehicles.

Take this, for instance: A single vehicle dropping off and picking up kids at one school puts three pounds of pollution into the air per month. Vehicle exhaust is hazardous to human health, with children being most vulnerable because of their developing lungs. Asthma symptoms increase as a result of car exhaust.

“What we’re really trying to do is change behavior,” said Stacey Adams, environmental consultant with DEQ’s Office of Planning and Public Affairs. “People have a lot of assumptions about turning their car off. Our website is geared to give people the facts about idling and encourage them to do what works for their lifestyle. Not idling isn’t going to solve all of our air quality problems, but it is a step in the right direction. It also has a significant impact on the quality of air you breathe in the cabin of your vehicle.”



*From left: Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon, Hawthorne Elementary School Principal Marian Broadhead, and Division of Air Monitoring Center's Bob Dalley*

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## DEQ Water Managers Recognized Nationally

A national environmental organization gave Kudos to Patti Fauver, a manager in the Division of Drinking Water, for her efforts to coordinate revisions to a drinking water rule.

Ben Grumbles, assistant administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Water Programs, publicly thanked Fauver for her work at a recent meeting with the Environmental Council of States (ECOS).

ECOS is a national non-profit, non-partisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders dedicated to improving the human health and environment.

"Patti was recognized for helping facilitate discussion and getting consensus on the Total Coliform Distribution System Federal Advisory Committee," said Bill Sinclair, deputy director of the Department of Environmental Quality who attended the ECOS meeting in Branson, Mo.

Fauver, rules section manager for the Division of Drinking Water (DDW), worked with 14 other members of the Committee, representing a diverse set of stakeholder groups to agree to elements of the proposed revisions to the Total Coliform rule.

"This rule is considered by all states as the primary rule in public health protection as it addresses the microbial quality of the water and affects every one of the nearly 160,000 public water systems nationwide," said Fauver. "The original and revised rule sets a baseline standard for the microbial quality of the water within the water system and serves as an indicator for any breach in the facility and system barriers that would impact the quality of the water. The proposed changes the focus of the rule from monitoring and public notification to monitoring, investigation and corrective action. The changes were seen by the stakeholders as a more proactive approach to public health protection."

For more information on this rule, visit

[http://www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/tcr/regulation\\_revisions\\_tcrdsac.html#members](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/disinfection/tcr/regulation_revisions_tcrdsac.html#members)

"I'm pleased with Patti's work here and especially pleased with the partnerships she formed with key EPA headquarters' staff," said Ken Bousfield, director of DDW.

Bousfield was recently recognized by the Intermountain Section of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) for his longstanding dedicated service to the water industry. He received the Charles W. Wilson award which is given annually to individuals who, through a career of more than 20 years, have mentored people in the drinking water industry and made major contributions to the industry.

"Ken has sought to strengthen the Division's partnerships with the water industry and the individual water systems to ensure that the residents of Utah receive a safe and reliable supply of drinking water," said Alane Boyd, executive director of AWWA.

Another water manager was also recognized nationally.

ECOS awarded Leah Ann Lamb, assistant director of the Division of Water Quality, the prestigious President's Award for her superior work in environmental protection, including protecting children's health.

“Leah Ann brings enthusiasm, energy dedication and knowledge to any issue she tackles,” said David Paylor, past president of the Environmental Council of States (ECOS). “She epitomizes the contributions that state staff makes both at home and to ECOS.”

Lamb has represented Utah at ECOS since 1995. Previous to her position in Water Quality, she was the director of Planning and Public Affairs where she represented Utah on various issues related to pollution prevention, planning and issues related to reducing federal burden on states.

“For ECOS, Leah Ann has been involved with the National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS), children’s health, enforcement, pollution prevention, planning, toxics, burden reduction, information management, and many other issues,” said Paylor. “She was the co-chair of the Performance and Partnership Workgroup for ECOS for two years, and is a member of the Exchange Network Leadership Council.”

DEQ Director Rick Spratt applauded the recognitions.

“I am pleased these individuals are recognized for their dedicated work,” he said.

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## **Recycling on the Rise, DEQ Survey Shows**

Utahns are more apt to recycle today than five years ago and would even like to see recycling expanded to include glass, more Household Hazardous Waste drop-off sites and electronic equipment disposal, according to a Dan Jones and Associates poll conducted for the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste (DSHW) during July and August.

“This survey shows an overwhelming support for recycling and could serve as a catalyst for increased recycling in Utah,” said Dennis Downs, director of DSHW.

The survey of 803 Utahns statewide showed 87 percent think recycling is important. Another 94 percent said their attitude towards recycling is more positive than it was five years ago. Although access to recycling has improved, 66 percent of the respondents wanted more than what’s currently available. Only 43 percent of the respondents have access to Household Hazardous Waste drop-off sites.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents live along the Wasatch Front while 24 percent of them live in rural Utah. The majority – 66 percent – is willing to pay to have electronic equipment recycled. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percent.

The results have produced a list of recommendations:

- Make it simple. Increase recycling access either curbside at convenient drop-off locations.
- Improve availability to glass, Household Hazardous Waste and electronic waste collection programs.
- Provide up-to-date information about recycling to residents.
- Make recycling as cost effective as possible to keep fees low.
- Coordinate the recycling activities of state, local governments and private businesses.

Sam Schroyer, recycling coordinator for DSHW, said he was pleased with the results.

“I think it shows support for recycling is high, much higher than expected,” he said. “The majority of residents prefer locally organized recycling programs over state controlled, but many comments indicate a desire for state assistance or oversight if it can help the programs be more efficient.”

Initially, DSHW wanted to conduct a survey focused on its Used Oil Program in an effort to collect trends and activities associated with do-it-yourselfers (DIYer), those people who change their motor oil in vehicles rather than take it to a service center. Since 1993, the used oil has been collected and recycled as part of the Used Oil Program and the survey was needed to determine if DIYer trends were changing. The survey was later expanded to include more questions about recycling in general.

Only 20 percent of the survey respondents changed their own oil. However, many indicated a desire to do it themselves in the future.

“We anticipated a low percentage of do-it-yourselfers in the survey,” Schroyer said. “What we didn’t expect is the possibility the number to increase in the future, which reverses a decreasing trend over the last couple of decades. This could be due to economic conditions and a desire to save money.”

For a complete look at the survey results, visit:

[http://www.hazardouswaste.utah.gov/recycling\\_survey\\_2008.pdf](http://www.hazardouswaste.utah.gov/recycling_survey_2008.pdf)

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## **South Valley Sewer District Placed 2nd in the Nation in Wastewater Pretreatment Category**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the South Valley Water Reclamation Facility in West Jordan second place for its outstanding achievements in wastewater treatment and pollution prevention.

South Valley was recognized for its Pretreatment Program with 6 to 21 Significant Industrial Users (SIUs) as part of EPA’s National Clean Water Act Recognition Awards presented to winners on Oct. 20 at its Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference in Chicago.

The Pretreatment Program is a part of the Division of Water Quality’s (DWQ) Utah Pollution Prevention Elimination System (UPDES) surface water permitting program. Pretreatment is designed to protect publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) from pollutants discharged into the sanitary sewer system that might damage the wastewater treatment processes. Under the general pretreatment regulations, any POTW that receives industrial pollutants that pass through or interferes with the operation of the sewer system, or receives discharges from industries subject to “Federal Categorical Pretreatment Standards” are required to develop a state approved Pretreatment Program. Essentially all POTWs with a capacity of 5 million gallons per day or more are required to develop a Pretreatment Program.

Jennifer Robinson, environmental engineer for DWQ, nominated South Valley’s program because of its outstanding compliance to the federal Clean Water Act.

“South Valley has a good compliance history for regulating pretreated wastewater from SIUs. There are no outstanding issues from previous audits,” Robinson said. “I worked with Al Garcia of EPA Region 8 to submit the nomination.”

State water agencies and EPA regional offices make recommendations to headquarters for the national awards. The EPA's pretreatment awards recognize municipalities that effectively implement the regulatory program that ensures industrial wastewater is being treated before entering waterways. Award recipients implement measures that go beyond the basic pretreatment program that prevents harmful pollutants that could make their way into the nation's waters.

"Federal, state and local partnerships are central to the successful implementation of the program," said John Whitehead, assistant director of Water Quality.

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## Yoga Helps Workers Breathe Easier: DEQ Employees Getting Some Real Flex Time

Governor Huntsman's 10-hour workday 4 days a week inspired Jacob Myers to provide the Department of Environmental Quality some flex time. So the financial analyst for the Division of Environmental Response and Remediation started half-hour yoga sessions, hoping asanas would ease the workplace stress and energize frazzled, burned out and exhausted workers.

"I was doing my 15-minute walk with my co-worker Tino Valles when I came up with the idea. We were talking about how in the wintertime yoga would be a good alternative and a much needed break in a 10-hour workday," Myers said. "So I solicited DEQ employees about whether there was an interest in a beginning yoga class," he added. "The response was tremendous. The first day after my email went out, 16 people responded with interest. I was very excited."



*From left: Valerie Warr, Jacob Meyers, Meagan Gardner, and Robin Kelly*

Myers' list is 33-employee strong and growing. Every day, he looks to find if Rooms 101 or 201 are vacant for a 30-minute time slot. He then sends out an email to those interested and available employees to let them know when it is yoga time.

Robin Kelly, a purchasing agent for DEQ, had never bothered with the ancient art of yoga until Myers' first class this fall.

Now she's a big fan and a happier person. "I always had wanted to do it but now it's convenient for me. My energy level has increased and flexibility improved."

According to national studies, workplace stress can lead to illness, friction between co-workers and lower productivity.

“Yoga teaches you to breathe right,” said Meyers. “When you get stressed you breathe very shallow, but if you control your breath, you can control your mind and body.”

Meyers recognizes that not every pose in yoga is for everyone. “It’s a beginner’s course. Everyone goes at his or her own pace,” he said. He uses videos produced by top yoga masters like Baron Baptiste and others that participants provide. “It’s become a collective effort,” he said.

Yoga is on the rise. People often turn to yoga when they are injured because they want gentle exercise that’s easy on the joints. It also improves flexibility and restores energy. It’s also a great way to introduce exercise to non-active people.

A few weeks in the practice, Webmaster Brandon Smart says the yoga classes help him gain mental clarity and reduce the stress caused by staring at a computer all day. “I’m not only less stressed and more flexible but enjoy my job more,” he said.

For Meyers, yoga has improved his circulation. “I definitely feel better. I have more energy and am more refreshed.”

Not only does yoga stretch out the kinks in one’s body and untying the stressful knots in the neck, there is something to be said for having everyone touting around yoga mats in their sweats.

“It is such a welcome break in the day,” said Meagan Gardner, financial manager with DEQ’s Office of Support Services. “I like it a lot. It’s a good, healthy break.”

For more information on dates and times, visit: <http://www.yoga.uissco.com/>