



State of Utah

Department of
Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE

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Utah Report on the Environment 2011

DEQ turned 20; Improved Efficiencies in 2011

Salt Lake City, Utah – The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) today released its annual state of the environment report that shows significant achievements in safeguarding Utah’s air, land and water.

In 2011, DEQ marked a 20-year milestone of environmental progress by laying the foundation to improve its regulatory process for future landmark achievements.

“As the statistics in this annual report indicate, Utah’s environment continues to improve,” said Amanda Smith, executive director of DEQ. “Finding ways to work more efficiently and produce better results is critical to businesses and industries subject to our oversight. It is also critical to enhancing the quality of Utah’s environment.”

This past year DEQ utilized “Lean Six Sigma” business management strategy – a process that involved the public and stakeholders to fully review the administrative process – in order to become more effective in protecting human health and the environment.

This technique is being applied to streamline the handling of permits in the Divisions of Air Quality and Radiation Control, and to better coordinate emergency response in the Division of Environmental Response and Remediation. It’s also being utilized to help meet environmental challenges ahead, such as tackling the air quality issues in the Uintah Basin.

Given the importance of energy to Utah’s economy and environment, energy is afforded its own section in this web-based report, available at: <http://www.deq.utah.gov/envrpt/index.htm>. In 2011 the Utah Legislature created the Office of Energy Development, an independent agency that works cooperatively with DEQ to achieve goals outlined in the Governor’s 10-year strategic plan.

“I’m pleased with the achievements outlined in this report,” said Governor Gary Herbert. “A healthy environment in conjunction with energy development is crucial to Utah’s economy and quality of life.”

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