Success Story Guidance Document

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Working with EPA, state government, industry, and the Zero Waste Network, WSPPN and other P2Rx Centers maintain a growing database of success stories. This document describes the goals of the success story database, the success story identification process, and guidance on the types of stories we seek to include in the future.

Goals

P2Rx Centers and the Zero Waste Network works with partners in industry and government to develop success stories. These success stories are used to:
- Encourage companies to adopt P2 by showing real world examples.
- Identify technologies and techniques that were successful.
- Measure the effectiveness of P2 projects by quantifying pollution reduction, money savings and other benefits.
- Promote environmental performance beyond the industry standard

Procedures for Collection of Success Stories

1. Types of Stories to Include

Success stories are accepted based on their ability to forward the goals of the database project.   To this end, a success story should include an innovative practice that exceeds current industry standards. Types of success studies included in the database are:

1. **Source Reduction–** Most of the success stories are based on tools and technologies that reduce pollution prior to generation. Source reduction success stories are preferred.
2. **Reuse of Materials –** Success stories that describe identifying new markets for materials that would have been disposed are also preferred. These stories should document savings, barriers overcome and any potential legal concerns addressed.
3. **Recycling/Waste Minimization –** Recycling success stories should be about an innovative or new market for recycled materials. Success stories about commonly used recyclables, such as aluminum cans and cardboard are already in the database and should not be added. If a company finds a new use for tires or other material where market development is a challenge then that story would be included.
4. **Control –** In general pollution control stories are not published in the database. However, if a new, and innovative use of a pollution control device can be shown

to be economically beneficial, and beyond minimum compliance standards, it may be considered. If you are considering including a story on pollution control, including flaring, combustion with a thermal oxidizer, capture in a scrubber or bag house, please discuss with the Zero Waste team or your regional P2Rx center.

5. **Compliance** – Stories of how a company complied with environmental regulation are only accepted within the framework of an environmental management system (EMS). So a story of installing a thermal oxidizer to meet a new MACT requirement would not be accepted. However a story detailing the use of an aspects and impact analysis to anticipate and react to future regulations in an efficient and effective manner may be appropriate. An EMS does not necessarily need to be ISO-certified, as long as it is a management system applied to environmental issues. As with control, it is advised to discuss these potential stories with Zero Waste staff prior to development.

6. **Reduction Type and Amount -** Some success stories include large reductions from projects at industrial facilities. Others may only document small changes in one building. The amount of pollution reduced should factor into consideration when developing a success story. However, if the technique or technology is widely transferable, a success story with small reductions will be accepted.

> **Case Studies vs. Success Stories**
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> A **success story** is a brief description of achievements by a facility. Success stories provide brief descriptions of tools, technologies and techniques used to enhance performance.
>
> A **case study** is a more detailed description of a facility's efforts. It can be used as guidance for other companies. It describes barriers overcome, specific techniques, detailed cost accounting etc.

7. **Non-repetitive** – Ideally, success stories should represent a new approach. Reviewers should check to see if the technology or technique is already documented in the database. If several entities are submitting similar stories a more detailed case study should be developed.

2. Vendors and specific technologies

Often vendors will ask to be included in the success story database. Our policy is to include only stories from facilities that used the technology and are able to demonstrate results. The story should emphasize the activities of the company, and not the benefits of a particular technology. Although you may mention a vendor or product by name, the success story should not, under any circumstances, endorse the use of a particular product. Even the appearance of endorsement should be avoided.

3. Review Process

- Success stories are collected through the on-line system managed by Zero Waste Network and on a regional basis from most P2Rx Centers including WSPPN.
  - Enter case studies online at:
    http://www.zerowastenetwork.org/success/addstory.cfm
  - For WSPPN Region 9, please send stories to Zach Yeager at zyeager@unr.edu.
- When a success story is submitted, the administrative function notifies a team of reviewers from the P2Rx Network and state programs.
- Zero Waste maintains control over the administrative functions and can issue passwords to partners.
  - If the success story is put in by a partner, they may review and approve it for publication using the administrator. Partners must have at least two reviewers look at the success story.
  - If a second reviewer is unavailable, Zero Waste can assist.
- Reviewers should check for the following
  - Obvious grammatical errors, and spelling mistakes
  - Stories which are promoting a specific product; stories should not give the appearance of advertisement.
  - Stories which advocate unsafe or non-compliant practices
  - Stories which do not meet the criteria for types of success stories submitted.
- Reviewers should not make changes without the approval of the facility. The facility representative has final authority over the story.
- Entities within the success story database have a variety of cultures and grammatical styles. Reviewers are encouraged to keep the wording and grammatical style of that industry.
- Upon completion of review or revision, the company should be notified that the story has been posted.
- Partners are linked in the lower left hand corner of the success story as "Source".

4. Format of the Success Story Database

- Reductions should be broken out by data element. Including information in the discrete data fields of substance reduced, dollars saved and amount of reduction will help the Zero Waste Network expand its ability to help customers find solutions to pollution problems and report on the overall effectiveness of environmental performance programs.

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  - **Substance Reduced** - Enter the common name for the pollutant you reduced as a result of this project.
  - **Amount** - Put in a number
  - **Unit** - Select the unit from the drop down menu. (Tons and Barrels will be auto-converted to Pounds and Gallons for all reports)
  - **Type of Pollutant** - This is a general pollutant category. see definitions
  - **Savings** - Enter the dollar amount of savings. This is an estimate of the savings per substance. If you don't know this value you can leave it blank.

  Your reductions will appear below.

Pollutant	Amount	Unit	Category	Savings	Edit | Delete

  Enter Your Reductions Below:

Substance Reduced	Amount	Unit	Type of Pollutant	Savings (dollars)
		Select Below:	Select Below:	$

  If your information doesn't fit the above format or if you have additional comments, enter them here.

  [Enter Another Reduction]

  or
  PROCEED TO THE NEXT STEP

  Internet | Protected Mode: O

- Some success stories are expressed as percentages.   While this is good information to have in the notes field, program specialists and reviewers should work with the company to get quantifiable data on amount and unit.

5. Users of the Success Story Collection

Technical service providers – Technical assistance programs use success stories as a core part of training, publications and investigation of alternatives for a business.   If, for instance, a manufacturing specialists wishes to promote a sustainability project, they can search case study databases to find an example of how companies reduce electricity, waste or other pollutants to save money.

Businesses – In their widely acclaimed book "Green to Gold" Estey and Winston listed success stories as a key factor in implementing an effective environmental program. Success stories help businesses quantify their savings which serves as an internal driver for promoting source reduction projects.   In addition analysis of Zero Waste's web traffic show that success stories are often found by company name; this leads to the conclusion that success stories present a positive image for the company that goes beyond "green washing".

Government - Success stories support several core functions described in the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990. They help EPA and the state grant funded programs meet their mission under the P2 Act which states: *"The Administrator shall establish a Source Reduction Clearinghouse to compile information including a computer data base which contains information on management, technical, and operational approaches to source reduction."*

When properly indexed, facilities can find targeted information about their sector. It also provides a means to document successful practices and disseminate them to businesses for whom lack of information is a barrier. These activities are specifically listed as a core activity of state programs funded under the P2 Act grant program. "[state grant funded programs shall] Target assistance to businesses for whom lack of information is an impediment to source reduction."

Success stories contain numerical data about the effectiveness of a source reduction technique which helps EPA meet measurement requirements of the P2 Act.

Disclaimer: "Specific technologies and vendor information contained in this report are meant only to raise awareness. Publication on the Zero Waste website or the other P2Rx websites does not imply endorsement, certification nor a recommendation for a particular approach, technology or technique. Similarly, collection of success stories by TCEQ, EPA or other Zero Waste Network partners does not imply endorsement, certification or recommendation by the partner agencies.

While every effort is made to keep information accurate and up-to-date, P2Rx, the Zero Waste Network, and the P2Rx centers do not certify the authenticity of information herein that originates from third parties. Facilities seeking to implement practices described in the success story database are strongly encouraged to evaluate the technical, economic and legal feasibility of the option prior to implementation.