

# CANADEXPORT

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## Environmental Expertise Needed in Thailand

*The Study on Environmental and Safety Protection Equipment*, prepared for the Canadian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand indicates there are opportunities for Canadian investors.

The country, while in a "period of unparalleled economic development and industrialization", has not managed to keep abreast of its environmental and safety needs.

### Environmental Situation

- Air quality is poor because vehicles congest city streets — there are more than 3 million motor vehicles in Thailand — and because of industrial pollution — the country has more than 90,000 factories, many operating well below internationally recognized emission standards.

- Forest areas are being depleted and virtually destroyed because of illegal cutting of trees, clearing the land for agricultural purposes, the building of dams, and fires that are caused primarily by man.

- Sewerage treatment facilities, particularly in large, industrialized cities, are lacking.

- Sea, river, inland and freshwater is becoming more polluted because of rapid development in industry and agriculture, the establishment of densely populated communities, and the use of chemicals and pesticides in agriculture.

- Waste disposal is a problem, being done either by composting through fertilizer fermentation plants or through open dumping. In Bangkok alone, there are four such plants with a combined capacity of 1,280 tons per day. Since these plants were built more than 10 years ago, their operating performances are much lower than their nominal capacities.

- Noise pollution adds to the chaos. At present, there are noise emis-

sion standards for vehicles and in the workplace, but no community standards in general.

### The Opportunities

**Forest:** Reforestation in denuded areas is an urgent priority and could be introduced by Canadian investors as a turn key project or as a joint venture. Canadians could also introduce plantations of specific woods or plants (e.g. eucalyptus for pulp and paper industry, teak and hardwood for the furniture industry, wood chips for export). Canadian expertise is ur-

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gently required for the survival of the country's mangrove.

**Water:** Clean water supply, waste water and sewerage systems are required, particularly in the rapidly growing communities in large cities. Consultants and waste water treatment plants are needed both for the cities and the newly established private industrial estates. Turn key projects for small-scale waste water treatment facilities will be needed for high rise buildings. A future law will make it compulsory for such buildings and major complexes to have these facilities built in.

**Solid Waste:** The problem is "severe" only in the larger cities at

the moment but composting plants and incinerators — likely supplied on a turn key basis — will be needed as the population expands and as tourist resorts grow. Good opportunities also lie in the supply of garbage trucks and an integrated system of garbage collection and decomposition.

**Air and Noise:** As vehicles, particularly in Bangkok, are the major polluters, new bus engines utilizing natural gas are a necessity. A "nugget" for Canadian investors is the electric train for Bangkok's sky train project which is likely to have spin-offs for other contractors. On the consumer goods side, Canadians should "act quickly" to supply air purifiers for both home and office use.

### Safety Protection

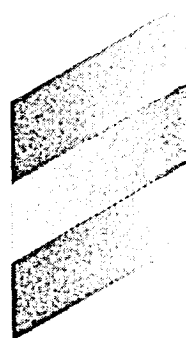
Generally, the Thai public and industry have to be educated on the need for and use of safety measures. But it is evident that there is a large market for fire fighting equipment, from extension ladder fire trucks to small fire extinguishers. Fire alarm systems are required at industrial sites, factories and in high rises.

In a country where motorcycles — often overcrowded — are the major means of transportation, safety helmets are becoming increasingly necessary.

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