
In addition, poll results show that 68 percent of Americans feel that the loss of habitat for an individual bird species is more important than the needs of a large logging company. Yet, probing closer, one finds that 75 percent of respondents favour logging jobs over habitat protection.

The inference to be drawn from such polls appears to be that people are in favour of the environment provided it affects someone else's job or wallet. In relaxing enforcement during recessionary times, state governments are merely reflecting these priorities.

8) Quality and Service are Increasingly Important

As in many other sectors today, quality and service (before and after the sale) is important and will become increasingly so in the U.S. environmental engineering sector. Following up on a client's satisfaction with prior projects is one increasingly common practice, both of staying abreast of future work and improving one's own level of quality and service.

9) Process Improvement is being emphasized as the Preferred Solution

There is an increasing American emphasis on process improvements, rather than end-of-line improvements, as the optimal environmental solution. As stated by President George Bush in 1989, "For too long, we've focused on cleanup and penalties after the damage is done. It's time to reorient ourselves using technologies and processes that reduce or prevent pollution - to stop it before it starts". As stated by the General Accounting Office in 1992, "there is a new focus on teaching companies the advantage of using different processes and inputs at the source as a way to reduce the use of toxic substances. The logic behind this idea is that it is easier to reduce the inputs than to have to clean up the resultant output". In addition, process improvements can often address "cross-media" problems where water, air and solid pollution problems can be addressed simultaneously through smarter processes.

This trend seems to be confirmed in manufacturers' capital spending statistics where the portion of total air abatement spending on production process (versus end-of-line) has increased from 27 percent in 1988 to 29 percent in 1990, and the portion of water abatement spending on production process has increased from 17 percent to 22 percent during the same period. This is discussed further in Section Four.

This clearly places a greater emphasis upon environmental engineering as the key solution. One recent example of an environmentally beneficial process improvement is that of Northern Telecom's elimination of the need for CFC solvents in its printed circuit board production process. Pre-treatment of inputs (source control) and improving of processes is high priority in all