

<p>New York State Environmental Investment Program <i>Technical Assistance Project Summary</i></p> <p>NYC Industrial and Technical Assistance Corp.</p>

Background

The Industrial and Technology Assistance Corporation (ITAC) is a not-for-profit economic development organization in New York City (NYC) that receives significant financial support from the New York State Office of Science, Technology and Academic Research (NYSTAR), New York’s high-technology economic development agency, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). ITAC serves as NYSTAR’s designated Regional Technology Development Center and works directly with area companies to increase their competitiveness and profitability. ITAC has been operating the NY Wa\$teMatch program, a materials exchange, since 1997. The exchange is an online database of unwanted, durable items that are listed as available or desired for free or low cost to businesses, recyclers and other end users.

Project Description

This two-year EIP project supported the operation of the materials exchange, and the provision of on-site waste assessments and technical assistance related to waste reduction, reuse and recycling to NYC companies. Through Wa\$teMatch, ITAC would save participating businesses \$1,173,200 and divert at least 8,380 tons of material from disposal. During the course of the project, ITAC would also begin training staff to educate clients about sustainable business practices and the link between the environment, jobs and economic prosperity. ITAC had researched the construction industry supply chain and documented the strong green building trend in NYC to demonstrate the benefits of these principles to firms.

Results

ITAC exceeded its performance targets, helping to achieve \$1,814,219 in economic benefit to NYC firms from avoided disposal costs, reuse/recycling revenues

and avoided purchase costs. A total of 9,630 tons of material was diverted from disposal. In one success story, ITAC established an organics recycling program that enabled a company to reduce disposal costs by 75% and helped the client establish simple housekeeping procedures to achieve more savings.

Lessons Learned

The project illustrated for ITAC staff that production managers rarely consider waste disposal and raw material procurement costs when they assess production costs and opportunities for efficiency improvements. To address this, ITAC staff will demonstrate the significance of avoided purchasing costs to these managers and help cultivate the understanding that waste-related costs are integral to production and operations. As ITAC introduces sustainable business concepts, clients will start to understand that these practices can reduce overhead and improve competitiveness.

Once firms introduce environmentally-friendly products, management often wants to ensure that operations are “green” as well. In other words, business managers are realizing they must “walk the talk” of their own marketing claims. This, in turn, is increasing their interest in waste reduction, reuse and recycling and in incorporating recycled content into their operations and products.

Over the course of this contract, NYC disposal costs rose by approximately \$25/ton. However, the rates local waste haulers were permitted to charge did not change significantly. So while ITAC clients saw fairly stable disposal costs, haulers’ profits shrunk. Meanwhile, tolls and fuel costs increased dramatically, so several on-going, ITAC-cultivated recycling projects were interrupted because disposal was more cost competitive than recycling.

Contractor: NYC ITAC
County: New York
ESD Region: New York
ESD Contact: 518/292-5340

NYS EIP Investment: \$250,612
Contractor Match: \$266,461
Total: \$517,073
Completion Date: September, 2005