Environment Protection Department

Overview

Environmental degradation is escalating rapidly at the national and global level. Environment Protection Department, Punjab was established to combat this problem. Environment Protection Department, Punjab created Environment Protection Agency (EPA) which is responsible for the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of the environment; the prevention and control of pollution; and promotion of sustainable development in the province.

EPA is building on its successes with the environment through reliable and effective regulations, legislation and high-quality service delivery. EPA sustains qualitative and quantitative standards for the discharge of effluents, wastes, air emissions or noise either for general applicability or for a particular area or from a particular source in the form of Punjab Environmental Quality Standards (PEQS) and other standards established under the laws, rules and regulations.

# History

To ensure control, reduction and elimination of pollution in Punjab, a nucleus organization known as Environmental Pollution Control Organization (EPCO) was created in the year 1975 in the Public Health Engineering Department, Punjab. EPCO focused on some areas of the environment but detailed work and follow up was not possible due to its limited scope.

On December 31, 1983 Under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance, a provision was made for the establishment of Provincial Environmental Protection Agency. In 1985, the Federal Government was requested to delegate powers of the Agency to the Housing Physical and Environmental Planning (HP&EP) Department. On July 1, 1987, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Punjab was formed. Punjab is the first province where an EPA was created in the best interest of citizens. The staff of the existing Directorate of EPCO was transferred to EPA, Punjab under the administrative control of the HP&EP Department.

On December 31, 1996 , a separate administrative unit, Environment Protection Department (EPD) was formed under the Government of the Punjab. EPA Punjab was then detached from the HP&EP Department and now works as functional unit under the EPD, Punjab.

On February 11, 1997 the Federal Government withdrew the existing Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance (PEPO) of 1983 and declared the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA) 1997. The EPA, Punjab now undertakes functions as delegated under this Act.

# Administration

### Responsiblities

The responsibilities of Administration Section are following:

* Recruitment, promotion, posting and transfer of all EPA staff
* Monitoring of monthly progress reports from district quarters and head quarters
* Dealing with budget matters pertaining to the department
* Coordinating amongst EPA offices in disposal of official assignments
* Supervising overall maintenance and security of the head quarters

Complaint Section

A Complaint Cell is established under Complaint Section and under the supervision of Administration Section for addressing public greivances and redress them accordingly enlisted below are the major functions of EPA Complain Section:

* Maintaining the record of public complaints received by the Office of the Director General, EPA Punjab and subsequent actions taken to find solutions to these issues
* Timely Resolutions of all complaints received at the online Pakistan Citizen Portal
* Processing of all grievances of public regarding environment received at the online portal of Chief Minister Directives
* Processing all grievances regarding environment received at the online petition cell of the Chief Secretary, Punjab

# Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

### Responsibilities

The responsibilities of environmental approval section are following:

* To review the IEE/EIA reports of the project
* To conduct the public hearing in EIA cases
* To issue the environmental approvals
* To monitor the conditions of the environmental approvals
* To initiate the required actions against the proponents in case of non-compliance of conditions of the Environmental Approval

# Environmental Laboratories

### Functions

The primary function of environmental laboratories section are following:

* Issuance of Approval Certificate to other Laboratories
* Monitoring Ambient Air Quality  in various districts of Punjab
* Monitoring Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) Levels and Ambient Noise Levels
* Monitoring drinking water, surface water and subsoil water quality
* Characterization of industrial and municipal waste water

# Implementation

### Functions

The primary function of implementation section are following:

* All development projects are dealt under Implementation section
* Expediting progress and ensure timely execution of schemes of Annual Development Programs
* Managing the finances for ADP schemes

# Legal Section

### Responsibilities

The responsibilities of legal section are following:

* Process/preparing/prosecution of complaint cases for in the Punjab Environmental Tribunal.
* Preparing replies/defences/comments for High Court and Supreme Court cases in Environmental issues/cases.
* Identifying  areas for legislation to cope with rising needs to combat pollution
* Coordinating with police and district offices to ensure implementation of the Environmental Protection Orders (EPO)
* Providing legal facilitation to all sections of the  EPA
* Studying and comparing environmental legislation from other countries and recommending suitable amendments in laws and procedures in Punjab

# Research and Investigation

### Functions

The primary function of research and investigation section are following:

* Taking measures to promote research for the development of indigenous technologies to address environmental challenges
* Dealing with public complaints regarding Industrial Pollution received from South Zone (Faisalabad, Sahiwal, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Bahawalpur Divisions)
* Issuing orders/EPOs to the polluters for corrective measures, after obtaining approval from DG EPA, Punjab
* Entertaining Assembly Questions, PM & CM references pertaining to 18 districts of South Zone
* Identifying research needs of the department through consultation with other sections
* Providing  assessment of pollution effects on man, animal and plant life
* Conducting research on waste minimization and resource recovery techniques with an emphasis on cleaner technology
* Coordinating with other research institutions and EPA Laboratories
* Conducting personal hearing of polluters u/s 16(1) of PEPA, 1997

# Technology Transfer

### Functions

The primary function of  technology transfer section are following:

* Formulation of guidelines to handle various environmental issues & providing training in various fields of environment protection
* Promoting cleaner production technologies
* Collaborating with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to prevent and control pollution and promote sustainable development
* Reviewing/commenting on various reports/projects prepared by different organizations
* Promoting environmental awareness through seminars, workshops, press and media
* Examining the references received from provincial government and federal government and offer technical comments thereon
* Processing the cases of import of scrap materials
* Entertaining the references of one UN program

# Directorate Environmental Health, Dengue Control & Hazardous Waste

### Functions

The primary function are following:

* Perform functions under Sections 14 of Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 2012 and rules & regulations made there under
* Formulate policy and guidelines in collaboration with concerned stakeholders regarding functions of all the sections under the directorate
* Regulate hazardous waste handling through permits and manifests
* Evolve systems, procedures, methodologies, techniques and carry out surveys, surveillance, research, inspection and audit to regulate hazardous wastes in the province from their generation to final disposal taking a cradle to grave approach
* Liaise with Federal Government on issues related to hazardous wastes
* Maintain and periodically review the provincial list of hazardous wastes
* Devise and implement strategies for prevention and control of epidemics controllable through environmental management (for example Dengue epidemic) and environmental accidents hazardous to environment
* Create awareness on handling of hazardous wastes and control of diseases caused controllable through environmental management