



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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ISO 14001—The Environmental Savior

The environment is the very basis for an economy because it is something that everyone shares. Most people are aware that environmental issues need to be addressed. Problems related to environment include:

1. Resource depletion

- Energy (Renewable and non- renewable)
- Mineral Resources (Non- renewable)
- Metals (Non -renewable)
- Biological Resources (Forests)

2. Environmental impact of pollution

- Greenhouse Effect (Global Warming)
- Ozone Depletion
- Nitrification and acidification of waterway and soil
- Noise Pollution
- Pesticide Pollution
- Nuclear Radiation
- Eco-toxicity

Most of these problems have a global impact and have to be addressed worldwide. Setting international standards can bring a worldwide focus to the environment, encouraging a cleaner, safer, healthier world. The existence of such standards allows organizations to focus on environmental efforts through internationally accepted criteria.

However, many organizations feel that these environmental regulations involve unnecessary expenditures. The International Standards Organization (ISO) thus proposed ISO 14001, an international standard for Environmental Management Systems (EMS).

Environmental Management System and ISO14001

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is an effective tool that controls the impact of any organization on the natural environment. It provides a basic structure for managing environmental responsibilities. Therefore, environmental management becomes more efficient, and all the efforts get focused into overall business operations.

ISO 14001 is the international standard for EMS. It aids organizations in recognizing the environmental impact of their operations, services, products and people. It provides a framework for companies to identify environmental issues and implement environmental management programs for improved performance.

The goals of registration with ISO 14001 are:



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- To exhibit high environmental standards
- To show compliance with legislation
- To decrease costs
- To improve quality and efficiency

ISO 14001 is an international standard that stipulates a process for improving environmental performance of companies. It includes

- General requirements
- Environmental policy
- Proper planning
- Implementation and operation
- Checking and corrective action
- Management reviews

Companies in various industries, like automobile, chemical, construction, engineering, food, medical, pharmaceutical and utilities, pursue ISO 14001 registration. ISO 14001 is beneficial because it:

- Provides a framework for the environmental policy and involves all the stakeholders
- Constantly meets regulatory requirements
- Improves operational efficiency and reduces waste
- Builds a strong relationship with local people
- Increases environmental consciousness
- Promotes savings from well-managed resources and better waste disposal
- Provides greater confidence in compliance with legislation
- Meets customer demands, thus giving a competitive edge