



Session: Solid Waste
Tuesday, Sept. 23
8- 10 a.m.
Room N259, Las Vegas Convention Center, Upper Concourse

Title: The Expanding Use of Environmental Information and Implications for the Industry

Presenter: Jerry Roose, Director of North American Environmental Operations, Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc.

Abstract:

The explosion of information through the internet touches many aspects of our lives. At times the only limit we have to information is our own imagination. As far as industry is concerned, the days of environmental data being buried in a file cabinet at an agency's office is almost as extinct as the dinosaurs. In fact this data is now available in many forms and can be downloaded into software applications and manipulated to the user's desire. Efforts are being made to integrate the separate "information stovepipes" within the various offices of EPA (as well as state offices) to paint new pictures of industry and its impact in a community. The full implication to industry of the dissemination of this information is yet to be determined, but it is clear that industry must move into this future state with its collective "eyes" wide open.

People's needs and expectations for environmental information are changing, and EPA's Office of Environmental Information has sponsored a "National Dialogue" to understand what "concerned citizens", government environmental and public health agencies, and environmental and community groups (NGOs) desire in the way of information. Through this dialogue, EPA is soliciting ideas from the public on the best way to organize and make available the data they already have and want to give the public access to raw data so that it can be used in ways that EPA may never think of. Examples on current use of environmental data (such as Toxic Release Inventory reporting) and how it can be represented (or misrepresented) will be discussed, as well as development of strategic plans to prepare and respond to inquiries from the media and public.