

TUV Rheinland's Expertise Helps the City of Fort Collins, CO to Get the Most Out of ISO 14001 Standard

City of Fort Collins, Colorado, is committed to providing world-class services to the community

BACKGROUND

City of Fort Collins, Co, is committed to providing world-class services to the community, and this approach is based on prescribing to the best practices. When the city decided to conduct its operations in an environmentally responsible way, the leadership team chose to do so according to ISO 14001, an international best practice. Published in 1996, ISO 14001 specifies the actual requirements for an environmental management system (EMS) and applies to the environmental aspects over which the organization has control and influence. ISO 14001 is the only standard in the ISO 14000 family that allows certification by an independent external authority.



BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The task before City of Fort Collins was a considerable one: the team had to implement, maintain and improve an EMS; draft its own environmental policy and demonstrate conformance with it; ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations; and achieve a third-party certification.

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

To initiate the process, the team in charge of EMS attended a workshop to help the staff understand the ISO 14000 elements and how to implement them in their situation. The city employees tackled three to four elements every three months, until they fully implemented the EMS.

Afterwards, it took the staff about a year to embed the elements into the city's work practices. Finally, the team conducted an internal audit and felt they were ready to present the EMS to the outside eye. They interviewed three firms and decided to work with TÜV Rheinland. "Dave Morin at TUV Rheinland demonstrated the highest degree of expertise and experience in the selection process," said Carol Webb, Regulatory and Government Affairs Manager at City of Fort Collins.

TÜV Rheinland performed a pre-assessment audit to identify any issues before going into the Stage I and II audits. The registrar's auditor worked with the city staff to ensure that the team got the most out of the audit to improve its performance. "The audits have been very helpful, and our auditor has been wonderful," said Webb. "He has really partnered and collaborated with us to help us continually improve the system." At the end of the process, City of Fort Collins achieved the

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SOLUTION AND RESULTS CONTINUED

ISO 14001 certification, its first quality management system accreditation.

"While the certification was critical as it demonstrated our full commitment to environmental management to the citizens and customers, we believe the real benefit is in implementing the standard to enhance the services and quality of life in our city," said Webb.

"We are very grateful to TÜV Rheinland for its commitment to our success and tremendous help along the way."

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