



compliance made easy

With the Alberta government having instituted stricter guidelines and reporting requirements designed to curb benzene emissions from glycol dehydrators, many oil and gas companies in the province are looking for ways to streamline the increased data collection and workflow required for compliance with the new measures.

And Calgary-based software developer and provider Envirosoft Corporation has answered the call. In January of this year, the company released Dehy Manager, software that drastically reduces the costly and time-consuming effort required for compliance to the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board's (ERCB) Directive 39.

"Until now, managing the company's Directive 39 compliance project has required a good deal of organization, cumbersome data collection, internal expertise with modelling programs or subcontracting out this function due to its technical and time consuming nature, and diligent record keeping," says Tim Biggs, manager of business development for Envirosoft. "With Dehy Manager, you will be able to manage

all of these within the one application."

In July 2008, the ERCB and Alberta Environment approved the updated edition of Directive 39 called "Revised Program to Reduce Benzene Emissions from Glycol Dehydrators" to establish mandatory requirements to ensure continued reduction of benzene emissions. Benzene emissions limits are set depending on the dehydrator installation/relocation date and distance to the nearest permanent resident or public facility. The process of calculating and reporting benzene emissions is detailed in the Control of Benzene Emissions from Glycol Dehydrators published by CAPP in June 2006.

"The directive is a fairly complex regulatory measure demanding quite a bit of project management, document management, as well as the reporting requirements," Biggs says.

Under some of the key requirements in the directive, companies must ensure that benzene emissions for each dehydrator are within established limits. As well, they must complete and post a Dehydrator Engineering and Operations Sheet (DEOS) every 12 months, or upon dehydrator relocation or



ERCB Directive 039 IN COMPLIANCE

Envirosoft's new software dramatically reduces the cost and time associated with tracking benzene emissions

change in status, and also complete and submit an annual Dehydrator Benzene Inventory List by July 1 of each year.

“So there are multiple steps that need to be completed for each glycol dehydrator to be compliant with the regulation and our product can greatly streamline that,” Biggs notes.

In addition, operators have to notify residents living in close proximity to a dehydrator (less than 750 metres) that units comply with ERCB regulations limiting benzene emissions. Combined with the other requirements of Directive 39 — and the sheer number of dehydrators in use in Alberta’s oilpatch — Biggs says it can be a cumbersome task for companies as they attempt to ensure accurate and timely compliance.

“Essentially your mid-sized oil and gas companies have in the region of 20 to 50 glycol dehydrators and large producers might have a couple of hundred, and for each one they have to follow the workflow steps. Both operational data and inlet gas analysis data has to be collected and maintained annually,” Biggs explains.

Usually, Biggs says companies will contract a consultant who uses one of several available simulation software tools to

estimate benzene emissions, and compile all the required information to generate a DEOS. However, because there is no standard data collection measures that every consultant and company follows, the result can be a mixed-bag of reporting techniques, assumptions and formats, a situation that he says the Dehy Manager helps to resolve.

“In essence, what the ERCB is getting is all of these operators utilizing different consultants, with different methods and different levels of success to generate the DEOS, and none of them look the same — there’s not a lot of consistency,” Biggs says.

“So we’re driving our software to take all the pain away from the project management, data management, document management, and actually providing consistency and quality to the reporting.”

Biggs notes that dehydrator information can be updated online, and company representatives have direct access to review information on all dehydrators, run reports and generate the DEOS, potentially eliminating the need for consultant involvement.

Envirosoft’s product includes an integrated copy of the GRI-GLYCalc v4.0

emissions modelling software. By using the input information already entered into Dehy Manager, the time required to generate DEOS graphs is dramatically reduced.

Another benefit of the software, according to Biggs, is that a company’s annual benzene emissions inventory is based on more accurate daily emissions and downtime tracking. Further, a project management/workflow screen allows for the tracking of tasks required for preparing the annual DEOS updates.

“As well, potential compliance concerns — for example, estimated benzene emissions being greater than the individual dehydrator or facility limit — are made apparent,” Biggs says.

Despite the fact the software has only been available for about six months, Biggs says industry response to Dehy Manager has been positive: “Uptake has been really fast. We have a really good product and as awareness of it grows we’re confident that it will be further embraced and utilized by industry.” • Paul Wells

CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tim Biggs, Envirosoft, Tel: (403) 225-8760 x226,
Email: biggs@envirosoft.ca