

Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans (EREP) and the Industry Greenhouse Program



This fact sheet describes the relationship between the Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans (EREP) program and the Industry Greenhouse Program (IGP). EPA Victoria is responsible for both programs.

This fact sheet is a guide only. More detailed information on the requirements of both programs is available through program regulations and the guidance material referenced at the end of this fact sheet.

Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans overview

The Victorian Government's Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans program is a new, innovative regulatory program to help businesses reduce water and energy use and waste generation. The program is designed to support business efforts to improve the way resources are used and, importantly, save businesses money.

From 1 January 2008, all commercial and industrial sites in Victoria that use more than **100 TJ of energy and/or 120 ML of water** in a financial year need to prepare a plan that identifies actions to improve resource efficiency. These businesses need to assess their resource use and register with EPA by 31 March 2008, prepare a plan by 31 December 2008, then implement all actions with a three-year or shorter payback period.

Businesses that exceed the energy or water use thresholds in subsequent financial years must register and complete plans in the following year.

Industry Greenhouse Program overview

The IGP was a mandatory energy efficiency program for all EPA licence holders under the *State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management)* and the incorporated *Protocol for Environmental Management (Greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency in industry)*.

The IGP's overall intent was to encourage businesses to improve their energy efficiency, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and business costs. Large energy-using sites (using more than **7 TJ** of energy per year) were required to undertake a Level 2 Energy Audit (in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard). From that audit, all action items with a payback period of three years or less had to be implemented.

Aligning program requirements

The EREP program was designed based on the successful model of the IGP, which delivered savings of 1.23 million tonnes of greenhouse gas and savings to business of \$38.2 million per year.

Energy use data

Both programs require sites to collect baseline energy data at a site level. Sites that have systems in place to report on energy use and greenhouse gas emissions through the IGP can use these to meet the data requirements of the EREP program.

Note that the energy definition in the EREP program includes all energy used onsite, but does not include some of the energy sources that were included in the IGP, such as CO₂ emissions from landfill.


Implementation

Sites involved in the IGP will have identified energy efficiency actions with a payback period of three years or less, most of which should have been implemented by the end of 2006. If sites have any actions yet to be implemented from their IGP commitments, these can be rolled into the EREP program.

As with the IGP, sites must implement any actions that have a three-year or better payback period.

Annual reporting

The annual reporting requirements required under IGP have been wholly incorporated into the EREP program. Sites can report and evaluate IGP action items through the EREP program.



The EREP program requires businesses to report annually to EPA for the reporting period. Except for the first year, annual reports must be submitted within three months of the end of each financial year or another reporting period agreed with EPA. For the first year of the program, businesses only need to report resource use data for the reporting period of 2007–08 and can submit this by **31 December 2008**.

Exemptions

To avoid duplicating resource efficiency work already done at your site, the EREP program allows for complete or partial exemptions from the need to prepare an EREP. Many IGP assessments were carried out several years ago and there may be further resource efficiency opportunities at the site. If actions identified under IGP still reflect current operations at the site and would be equivalent to EREP requirements, you may be able to apply for a partial exemption from preparing the energy section of your EREP.

For an exemption application to be accepted, your work must include all the necessary elements of

an EREP, such as baseline data, planned actions, costs and payback periods and time frames for implementation, as outlined in the EREP Guidelines.

If approved as an exemption, this work will be considered an alternative plan and reporting and implementation requirements against this plan will be the same as those required in an EREP. Alternatively, if there is further energy work to be done at your site, it may be better to simply include previous work in your EREP rather than apply for an exemption. Please contact EPA to discuss this work and your interest in applying for a partial exemption before lodging an application. EPA can help you assess your existing resource efficiency work and can ensure that the best approach to recognising this existing IGP or other work is taken.

Any application for exemption must be made during the program registration period from **1 January to 31 March 2008**. An application will need to include documents that show that the alternative plan meets the EREP requirements.

More information

If you have any comments or questions about the EREP program, please feel free to contact the EREP team:

EPA Victoria
HWT Tower
Podium Level, 40 City Road
Southbank, Victoria 3006
Telephone: (03) 9695 2722
Fax: (03) 9695 2780
Email: erep@epa.vic.gov.au
Web: www.epa.vic.gov.au/erep

For more detailed information on the IGP and EREP program requirements, please see the publications below.

The EREP Guidelines, *Environment Protection Act 1970 and Environment Protection (Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans) Regulations 2007*:

www.epa.vic.gov.au/erep

State Environment Protection Policy (Air quality management):

www.epa.vic.gov.au/about_us/legislation/air.asp#sepp_air_quality

Protocol for Environmental Management (Greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency in industry):

www.epa.vic.gov.au/about_us/legislation/air.asp#pem