

ENVIRONMENT

Dozens trained to measure industrial emission

Our Habitat

BY LUKE DOUGLAS Career & Education writer editorial@jamaicaobserver.com
Sunday, February 06, 2011



[Tweet](#)

MORE than 70 representatives from private and public sector bodies were recently trained and certified to observe and measure levels of visible emissions given off by industrial production plants.

The training will allow individuals and entities to gather information about the level of air pollution and take steps to ensure that the laws and regulations with respect to clean air are adhered to.

The training workshop was facilitated by the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) and conducted by United States-based entity Eastern Technical Associates (ETA) at the University of the West Indies, Mona.

"Participants will receive technical training in using their eyes as a means of measuring emissions into the air from various points on their plants," coordinator for NEPA's environment management division Gary Campbell told Career & Education.

Campbell, who has responsibility for air quality, added that participants will not only learn where to position themselves and how to take readings, but will also be able to complete the necessary paperwork in keeping with the required standards.

Some of the entities represented among the 76 registered included the Environmental Health Unit, Ministry of Transport & Works, Jamaica Fire Brigade, Jamaica Bauxite Institute, the Waste Management Unit in the Ministry of Health, Caribbean Cement Company, WINDALCO, ALPART, Noranda Bauxite, Jamaica Public Service Company, Jamaica Energy Partners, Jamaica Private Power Company, Petrojam, J Wray and Nephew, Red Stripe, Jamaica Broilers, Worthy Park Estates and the country's universities: the University of the West Indies, the University of Technology and Northern Caribbean University.

Noticeably absent however, were the country's environmental lobby groups which have consistently criticised NEPA for not carrying out its mandate to protect Jamaica's natural environment.

Campbell confessed that the environmental groups were not invited to the workshop, but said they would be included in subsequent re-certification seminars scheduled to take place every six months.

"Of course they (environmental groups) will be watching, and they are aware that the training is taking place and they will be asking for a report. We plan to expand it and involve as much of the island as possible," said Campbell.

Emphasizing the importance of the workshop, Jody Monk, ETA's director of training said particulates breathed into the lungs can be very harmful to human health. He said ETA used what is known as Method 9 visible emissions observation (VEO) to measure emission levels.

"Particulates including the PM10 which is 10 microns in size and PM2.5 can adversely affect humans when respired into the lungs. This type of training can be very useful in drastically reducing the type of particulates that can be emitted from all kinds of industries", Monk said.

EPA's director of marketing Marty Hughes said his company, which has over 30 years' experience in VEO training, was currently doing approximately 150 training programmes in mainland USA as well as in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, India, Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines.

"It's great that Jamaica can do this to help reduce the amount of particulates emitted not only in this country but also across the world. By introducing this training hopefully Jamaica will act a forerunner to other nations in the region," he added.
