



Media Release

Senator the Hon Robert Hill

Leader of the Government in the Senate

Minister for the Environment and Heritage

1 February 2001

MORE COMPANIES COME CLEAN ON POLLUTION FIGURES

Hundreds of new companies are reporting their emissions to the environment through the National Pollutant Inventory.

Federal Environment Minister Robert Hill said the National Pollutant Inventory was established in February 1998 to phase in compulsory reporting of emissions. In 1999, companies reported their emission levels for the first time.

Senator Hill officially announced the second year of results in Adelaide, today, with data showing the number of facilities to report nationally rising from 1200 in 1999 to 1600 in 2000.

"The NPI is clearly doing its job in providing valuable information about the impact of industry on our air and water quality, and in encouraging industry to clean up its act," Senator Hill said.

Senator Hill said the inventory gave Australians consistent and accessible information about emissions that could be related to their local area. From next year, penalties for non-reporting will be phased in.

"In 1999, 28 industry sectors were given handbooks with a table outlining how to report emission levels and companies were asked to report to the inventory. Last year, the number of industries reporting rose to 79," Senator Hill said.

Senator Hill said that in South Australia, 210 facilities reported in 2000, compared to 116 in 1999.

"Some facilities in South Australia which have reported in both years have also reported a reduction in emissions. It is promising to see these companies have introduced cleaner production measures while maintaining the same production levels," he said.

SOLA Optical in Lonsdale was one of South Australia's outstanding performers with its emissions dramatically reduced after the company changed its solvents to a more environmentally friendly water-based cleaning process.

"The company, which produces plastic lenses particularly for spectacles, employs about 750 people in this state. SOLA Optical has committed itself to reducing emissions and setting an example for other companies in South Australia," Senator Hill said.

"Kimberley-Clark pulp mills in the State's south-east should also be congratulated. The company's Millicent mill has reduced its methanol emissions and the Tantanoola mill has reduced sulphur dioxide emissions, both because of the introduction of cleaner production methods.

"We now have a much more complete picture of pollution emissions in Australia."

There are still some gaps in the data because information from Western Australia is yet to be processed.

The pollutant inventory data is available on-line at www.npi.ea.gov.au and further information can be obtained by calling 1800 657 945.

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