

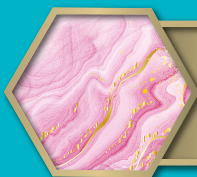
Frequently Asked Questions

(FAQ) GUIDE

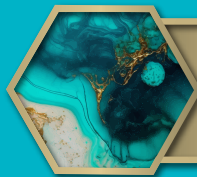


NSTEP

NATURAL STATE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



NATURAL STATE
STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
LEVEL
Q U A R T Z
NSTEP



NATURAL STATE
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ARKANSAS
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

How to Apply

(FAQ) GUIDE

What is NSTEP?

The Natural State Stewardship Program (NSTEP) is a voluntary stewardship program that recognizes and rewards organizations that excel in sustainability practices, the conservation of Arkansas' natural resources, or advance education in their communities. NSTEP is open to all organizations that reside within the State of Arkansas.

How do I apply to the program?

Membership applications are accepted year-round and can be found by visiting E&E's ePortal System, at:

<https://eportal.adeq.state.ar.us/app/#/formversion/3b97dfb8-6041-4884-82d3-6d5be9cafc63>

Is there a deadline for submitting my application?

There is no deadline regarding application submissions. Membership applications are accepted at any time throughout the year.

What happens after I submit my application?

Upon receipt of a completed application, the NSTEP coordinator will notify your organization's point of contact of the receipt of the application. E&E staff will review your organization's project proposals and compliance history. E&E will then notify you regarding your membership status. This timeline is dependent upon application completeness and volume of compliance history being reviewed.

Are there any fees associated with membership in the program?

There are no dues or fees associated with maintaining membership in the program. Membership in NSTEP is entirely voluntary.

What kinds of businesses are eligible for membership in the program?

Membership in NSTEP is open to all Arkansas organizations, including industries, manufacturers, educational institutions, municipalities, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and more.

General Information

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Where can I find my NSTEP Member ID?

Your NSTEP Member ID is the central number located on your NSTEP Certificate of Membership. Ex. NSTEP1902P.

Where can I find a copy of the NSTEP Handbook?

A copy of the NSTEP Handbook can always be found on the NSTEP webpage, <https://www.adeg.state.ar.us/NSTEP/>.

Who is my established point of contact for the Department?

The established point of contact for NSTEP will always be the active NSTEP coordinator. You may contact the current coordinator at 501.682.0648 or ee.NSTEP@arkansas.gov.

How do I request to receive a specific incentive?

When applying to the program, you are asked to select which incentives you would like to receive in the application itself. E&E staff will review selected incentives to ensure that avenues to receive those incentive(s) are ready and available.

What activities would be considered stewardship projects?

Projects that go beyond regulatory compliance and provide some sort of sustainability benefit, such as improvements to air or water quality, energy reductions, etc. The NSTEP Beyond Compliance Project Ideas flyer provides additional information. It can found on the NSTEP webpage.

What if I'm unsure how to measure my project's environmental benefit?

You are welcome to contact the acting NSTEP Coordinator with questions. They can provide you with information on how to report your metrics.

What is considered "beyond compliance?"

Environmental regulations set the baseline for an organization's importance. Going beyond compliance simply means finding ways to improve your organization's performance further than what is required by regulatory requirements.

Program Requirements:

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What is required of applicants desiring membership in the program?

There are three (3) compliance-related requirements for the program:

- No serious violations, or pattern thereof, of applicable local, state, or federal laws and permits within one (1) year prior to applying for membership.
- No conviction of applicable laws or out-of-court settlements of formal charges of criminal violations within three (3) years prior to applying for membership.
- If the applicant has entered into a Consent Administrative Order (CAO), the organization must be monitored and in good standing with an agreed-upon remediation schedule.

Is my membership automatically renewed?

NSTEP memberships are lifetime designations, unless the entity no longer wishes to participate in the program or compliance issues are discovered.

What do I do if my business changes ownership?

E&E should be notified of any changes in acquisition within thirty (30) days of the acquisition. If the organization wishes to continue in NSTEP, the company must submit a new application and wait for approval. No NSTEP publications may be used during this period.

Annual Report Requirements:

What is an annual report?

All NSTEP members are required to submit annual progress reports overviewing the achievements and measurements of their stewardship projects. These are submitted through E&E's [ePortal System](#).

When are annual reports due?

Annual reports are due by January 1 of every year following an entity's admission into the program.

For example, if your organization was admitted into the program on June 13, 2021, you would submit an annual report on January 1, 2022.

Environmental Management System & Auditing: (FAQ) GUIDE

What is ISO 14001?

ISO 14001 is a standard for Environmental Management Systems included in the ISO 14000 series alongside standards related to environmental auditing, environmental performance evaluation, environmental labeling, and life-cycle assessment.

How do I create an EMS that adheres to the standard of ISO 14001?

ISO 14001 is not a technical standard and should not replace technical requirements embodied in statutes or regulations. An EMS that adheres to these guidelines, however, is part of an overall management system that identifies and addresses environmental concerns through the allocation of resources, assignment of responsibilities, and ongoing evaluation of practices, processes, and procedures to achieve sound environmental performance.

Who can I contact to conduct external audits?

Most local utility companies can conduct professional external audits. Contact your local utility to find out more.

What is P2 (Pollution Prevention)?

Pollution prevention can be defined as eliminating or minimizing the initial generation of waste at the source, or using environmentally sound on-site and off-site reuse. Waste treatment, recycling, or disposal is not considered pollution prevention. Prevention must start at the source. You can find additional information regarding P2 on EPA's website, at <https://www.epa.gov/p2/learn-about-pollution-prevention>.

Who can I contact if my facility is interested in conducting a waste audit?

Depending on where your facility is located, you can contact your Regional Solid Waste Management District for more information. Unsure what district you belong to? Visit DEQ's website for more information at <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/sw/programs/rswmd.aspx>.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit E&E's website: <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/NSTEP/> or contact Dalton Barnum, NSTEP Coordinator, at 501.682.0648 or dalton.barnum@arkansas.gov