

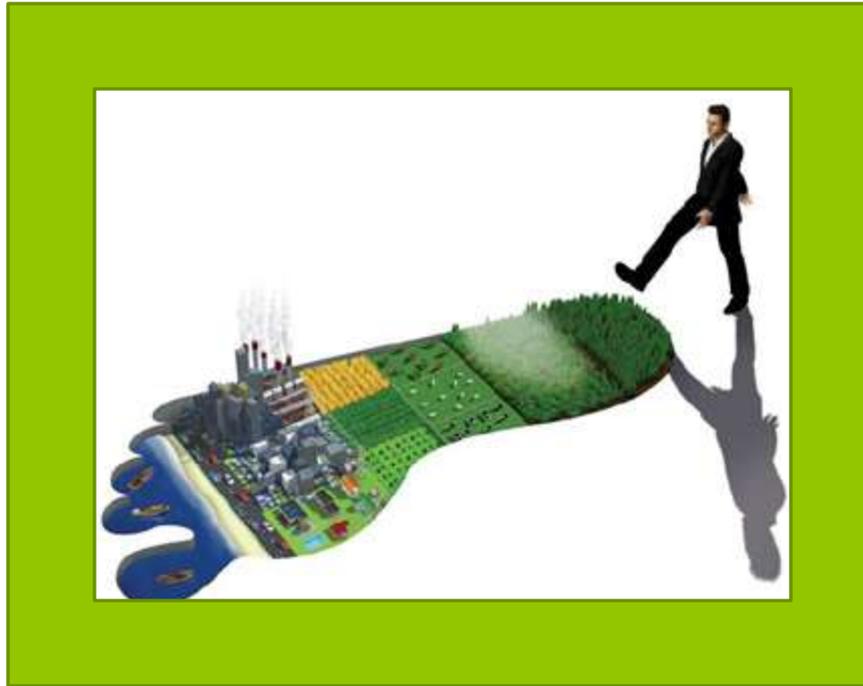
# VAMHCS GEMS Awareness

Per ISO 14001: 2015, 7.2 and 7.3  
(Previously ISO 14001: 2004, 4.4.2)

Jen Dallaire, VAMHCS  
GEMS Coordinator

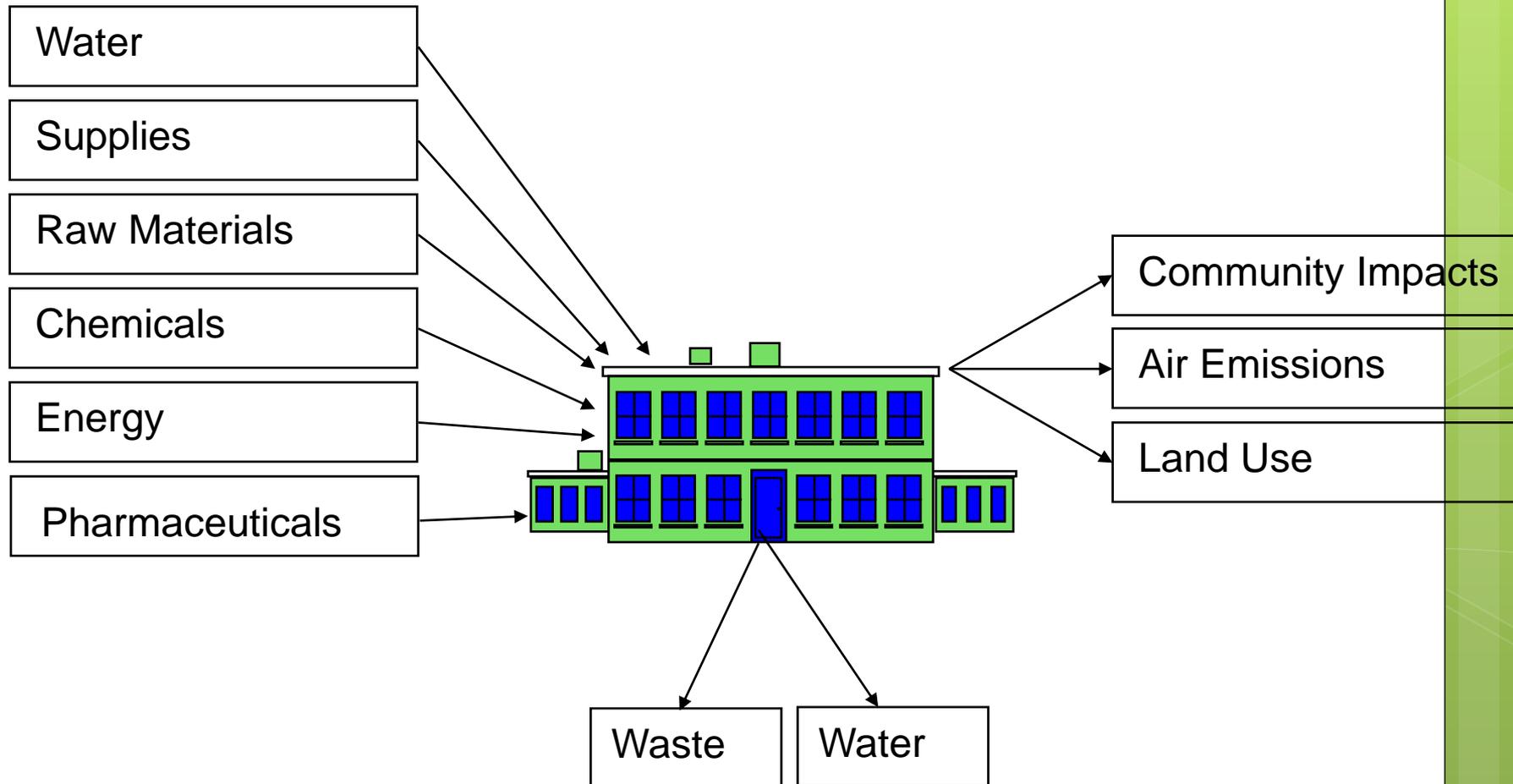
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# What is GEMS?



- **Green Environmental Management System**
- **Framework to Manage the VAMHCS Environmental Impact**

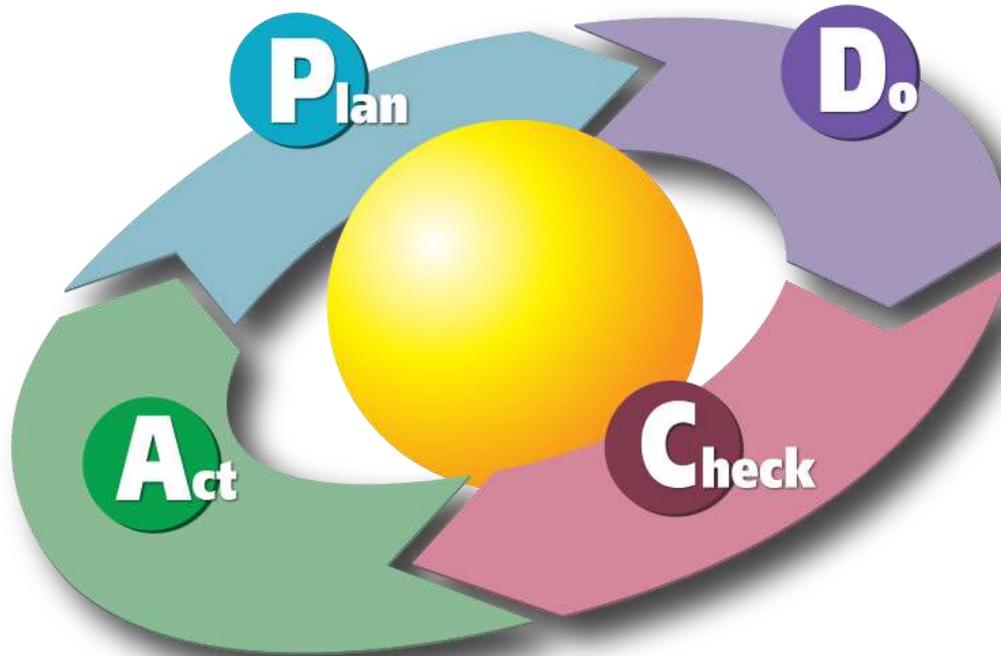
# Example Environmental Aspects/Impacts



# GEMS is Achieved Through:

- ❑ Writing an Environmental Policy
- ❑ Understanding legal requirements
- ❑ Identifying significant impacts
- ❑ Setting objectives and targets and programs
- ❑ Establishing/Maintaining controls
- ❑ Training and communicating
- ❑ Auditing the GEMS Program
- ❑ Reviewing progress

# VAMHCS GEMS program is based on ISO 14001



- International Standard for Environmental Management
- Based on Continual Improvement
- Continual Improvement is Demonstrated through Environmental Programs

# How Does the VAMHCS Impact the Environment?



## ✓ Air Pollution

- ✓ Use of Generators
- ✓ Refrigerant
- ✓ Boilers



## ✓ Waste

- ✓ General Trash
- ✓ Used Oil
- ✓ Hazardous Waste
- ✓ Pharmaceutical Waste
- ✓ Regulated Medical Waste
- ✓ Light Bulbs/Batteries

**HAZARDOUS WASTE**

FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS IMPROPER DISPOSAL.  
IF FOUND, CONTACT THE NEAREST POLICE OR PUBLIC SAFETY AUTHORITY OR THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY OR THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCE CONTROL.

GENERATOR INFORMATION:  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
EPA MANIFEST ID NO. / DOCUMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
EPA ACCUMULATION WASTE NO. CA. WASTE NO. START DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTENTS COMPOSITION \_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICAL STATE:  SOLID  LIQUID  GASEOUS  FLAMMABLE  TOXIC  
 CORROSIVE  REACTIVE  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

U.S.E.P. PROPER SHIPPING LABEL AND UN OR NA NO. WITH PREPARE

**HANDLE WITH CARE!**

## ✓ Water Pollution

- ✓ Construction (Storm water)
- ✓ Sanitary Waste
- ✓ Lab Waste
- ✓ Secondary Disinfection (legionella)

## Use Natural Resources

- ✓ Electricity Use
- ✓ Fuel Use (Natural Gas, Oil, Diesel)

## ✓ Potential Spills

- ✓ Aboveground and
- ✓ Underground Storage Tanks
- ✓ Chemical/Oil Storage



# Why does the VAMHCS Impact the Environment?

- To provide a safe, comfortable patient environment



+



- To Practice Medicine



+



+



- To Prevent Disease and infection  
(e.g., Legionella)



+



# VAMHCS Significant Aspects

- Waste Generation/Disposal
  - Pharmaceutical Waste
  - Regulated Medical Waste
  - Hazardous Waste



**HAZARDOUS WASTE**

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CONTENTS COMPOSITION:

PHYSICAL STATE:  SOLID  LIQUID  GASEOUS  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
HAZARDOUS PROPERTIES:  FLAMMABLE  TOXIC  CORROSIVE  REACTIVE  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

ONLY PROPER SHIPPING TANKS AND UNITS MAY BE USED.

**HANDLE WITH CARE!**

- Potential For Leaks and Spills
  - Fuel Storage (Tanks)
  - Chemical Storage



- Air Pollution
  - Emergency Generators
  - Refrigerants



# Waste Classifications

- Solid Waste
- Hazardous Waste
- Regulated Medical Waste
- Universal Waste
- Construction & Demolition Waste
- Recyclables
- Hazardous Pharmaceuticals



# VAMHCS Environmental Program: Perry Point Composting & Single Stream Recycling

**VAMHCS**    
 Honoring Our Veterans by Preserving Our Country

## SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING



**FACTOIDS**

- Recycling 1 aluminum can saves enough energy to power a television for 3 hours.
- Recycling 1 ton of paper saves 17 trees and saves 80% less water than to make new paper.
- It takes up to 1,000 years for a plastic bottle or bag to decompose in a landfill.
- Recycled plastic soda bottles yield enough fiber for one extra large t-shirt.

**ASI**    
 Comprehensive Waste Management

**BRUTE**

**No Chemicals  
No Medical Waste  
No Batteries  
No Electronics  
No Bulbs**

**VAMHCS**    
 Honoring Our Veterans by Preserving Our Country

## ORGANICS



**FACTOIDS**

- Research found one in five items that are placed in the curbside recycling bin are not recyclable.
- In 2012 over 13,000,000 tons of yard trimmings were composted.
- Food is the largest waste without that could be diverted from landfills for better uses. Site recycling compared to grow fresh vegetation.
- In the United States 30% of all food, worth \$2 \$46.2 billion, is thrown away each year.

**ASI**    
 Comprehensive Waste Management

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**No Chemicals  
No Medical Waste  
No Batteries  
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Must use a compostable liner

# VAMHCS Environmental Program: Baltimore VAMC Paper & Cardboard Recycling – Single Stream Coming Fall 2016!



# INK & TONER Cartridge Recycling

- 1. Recycled through the VAMHCS Warehouse.
- 2. Store the used containers in new cartridge boxes.
- 3. Label the cardboard box with: "Toner/Ink for Recycling."
- 4. Turn boxes into Warehouse. Contact warehouse when you need a pick-up or give the boxes to them when they are making a pick-up



# VAMHCS Environmental Policy

- The VAMHCS mission is to delivery quality healthcare to our nation's veterans. To accomplish our mission while protecting health and safety of our patients, employees, and visitors, the VAMHCS will adhere to the following environmental management principles:
  - *Stewardship*
  - *Compliance*
  - *Pollution Prevention*
  - *Environmental Planning*
  - *Continual Improvement*
- See VAMHCS GEMS Policy 512-001/OPS-115

# Your Contribution to the VAMHCS GEMS

- Know Your Job's Environmental Impacts
- Follow procedures and plans
- Reduce, reuse, recycle, and conserve resources
- Communicate ideas for improvement (GEMS Committee meets 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of Every Month, 1pm)

# Questions?

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**(410) 642-2411 ext. 5227 or**  
**Jennifer.dallaire@va.gov**