

VEC is a member based advocacy and networking organization consisting of environmental consulting and engineering firms, colleges and universities, and government agencies.

Since 2000, VEC brings businesses, educational institutions and state and U.S. government officials together to make Vermont a leader in the green economy. VEC promotes growth and supports economic development in Vermont's environmental business sector through networking, information sharing and special projects.

PROBLEMS

- Definition of environmental industry/green economy varies
- Industry sector is very diverse
- Demand for goods and services provided by this industry is still low

VEGI "GREEN ECONOMY" DEFINITION

- Waste Management
- Natural Resource Protection
- Energy Efficiency of Conservation
- Clean Energy

U.S. Department of Commerce "Environmental Technologies Goods and Services" Definition:

- Foster environmental protection
- Generate compliance with environmental regulations
- Prevent or mitigate pollution
- Manage or reduce waste streams
- Remediate contaminated sites
- Design, develop and operate environmental infrastructure
- Afford the provision and delivery of environmental resources

USDOC Estimates

- US Market for Env. Goods and Services \$303 Billion in 2015
- Industry employs 1.6 million people with revenues of \$320 Billion

2009 Survey conducted by VEC: "Vermont's Environmental Sector: Identifying Green Workforce Training Needs and Opportunities"

- 250 firms participated
- Majority have 4 or fewer employees
- 40% reported revenues exceeding \$250,000
- Major impediments to growth – Attracting and retaining qualified employees, and lack of in-state training opportunities.

GROWTH HURDLES FOR VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRY:

Attracting and retaining qualified employees
Out-of-state and foreign competition
Difficulty securing Federal contracts, both in-state and out-of-state.
Solutions to persistent environmental problems (Phosphorus in LC) don't yet exist.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Maintain "Green VEGI" incentives

It might appear that Vermont's environmental sector is doing well but that is not necessarily the case. We say and hear a lot of hyperbole about how Vermont is a "leader" in environmental technologies and practices. This might be an exaggeration. Most companies in this sector are small businesses that face a variety of obstacles to success. Many of these obstacles are shared by other sectors and some are unique. The environmental sector needs additional support so Vermont can truly be a leader.

- Simplify VEGI process to make it more accessible to small business
- Calibrate industry definition
- Update economic impact of industry