

Company Description



Gruene Environmental Companies (GEC) is a full service environmental company specializing in environmental remediation, hazardous and non-hazardous waste management, in-plant services and transportation of materials. Services are provided to small and large quantity generators, as well as to engineers and consultants on a wide variety of environmental projects. GEC's structure allows for the ability to provide a full line of environmental services.

Working toward a "Gruener" Environment

The Gruene Structure

Gruene Environmental Construction

- Spill cleanups, large scale soil excavation, UST removals, PCB transformer removals, environmental site remediation, confined space entry and industrial cleaning services



Excavation



Confined Space Entry

Gruene Waste Services

- Hazardous and non-hazardous waste disposal
- Lab packs and industrial waste management
- Management of classification, profiling, manifesting, transportation, and disposal of waste streams to ensure compliance with all local, state and federal regulations



Waste Profiling



Waste Packaging



Waste Labeling

Gruene Plant Services (GPS)

- Provide personnel to manage all aspects of waste disposal, recycling, and remediation projects at a customer's facility
- Allows the customer to focus on their core competencies while GPS provides the requested services



Drum Storage



Toting Services

Gruene Transportation and Supply

- Provide a variety of products associated with spill response, waste disposal, environmental remediation projects, and any specialty trucking needs a facility or project requires



Spill Response

Internship Objectives

My objectives were to learn about the administrative and operating environment of a full-service environmental company while assisting with the ISO 14001/OHSAS 18001 Certification Process. After understanding the scope of my internship, I set more specific objectives such as learning how to create an Environmental, Health & Safety Management System (EHSMS). I also strived to use my knowledge about developing documents to draft Policies, Standard Operating Procedures, Work Instructions and related forms from the company's Scope of Work and the operational processes they already had in place.

Description of Experience

At the beginning of my internship, Gruene Plant Services, a division of Gruene Environmental Companies, had commenced the ISO 14001/18001 Certification process. The ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 standards were created to provide organizations with a plan for creating management systems to control their impact on the environment and meet their health and safety obligations in an efficient and effective manner.

The Management Team at Gruene Plant Services (GPS) had already determined their operational Significant Aspects & Hazards as well as their Objectives & Targets. I began working directly with the person in charge of the ISO Certification process who will now be the Environmental, Health & Safety Management System (EHSMS) Manager. At first, I was assigned to create the best document format that would fulfill the company's needs and a document numbering system. During this process we discovered that the only documents the company currently had were site specific instructions that were being referred to as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) while they should have been referred to as Work Instructions. We edited many documents and I was able to make observations around the site when I was waiting for documents to be completed by members of the Management Team. I observed daily operational activities and was able to assist the Environmental Compliance Engineer and the Safety Engineer with different types of inspections. We then began to develop documents for a four tier system composed of Policies, Standard Operating Procedures, Work Instructions, and Forms. We developed all of these documents by using the information in the GPS Scope of Work and by examining all of the processes that take place at the Samsung Austin Semiconductor. Over the course of my internship, the created documents were revised many times and the customer requested the deadline to be sooner in order to continue the contract with them. The Stage I Registration Audit took place on August 19th in which no major or minor non-conformances were found. The auditor said the system was very well documented and overall recommended GPS for the Stage II Audit. The Stage II Registration Audit is now scheduled to take place during the second or third week of September.

Relationship to Career Goals

This experience has provided me with an understanding of Environmental, Health & Safety Management Systems along with knowledge about the different aspects of an environmental company's administrative and operative areas. I can apply this learning experience to a career in Environmental Compliance, Environmental Consulting, or Environmental, Health and Safety Management.

References

- Gruene Environmental Companies Presentation
By: Clint Morris – General Manager of Plant Services
- ISO 14001/OHSAS 18001 Standard By: British Standards Institute
- ISO 14001 Requirements Book By: Jack Kanholm

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to all Gruene Environmental Companies employees, especially Doug Anderson, Clint Morris, Kyle Kuenstler, Daniel Plebanski, Shevaun Horan and the other members of the Management Team.

Sponsors for high impact experiences for BESC and the BESC poster symposium include the Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.