

## **2008 U.S. Conference of Mayors Excellence in Public/Private Partnerships Awards**

### **Partnering for a greener Green Valley: Fayetteville, Ark., and CH2M HILL OMI**

The City of Fayetteville, Ark., and CH2M HILL OMI have been partners since 1987, when CH2M HILL OMI began to provide operations and maintenance services at a sludge processing facility. Over the years, CH2M HILL OMI has started up and managed two new wastewater treatment facilities built by the city, the most recent this past summer. The partnership has grown with the city, which has increased its population by 21 percent in the past eight years. Fayetteville is located in the Green Valley area of Northwest Arkansas, home to Wal-Mart and the University of Arkansas.

Several years ago, Mayor Dan Coody realized the importance of sustainability in city operations. He slowly began to implement new practices in the city, starting with converting traffic lights to longer-lasting LEDs. CH2M HILL OMI also has worked to operate the wastewater facilities in more environmentally friendly ways too. Highlights of the partnership between the city and company include:

- **Sustainability teams**– In 2007, the city hired a sustainability coordinator to increase “green” practices with the understanding that the changes must equal or surpass the salary. In the first year alone, for example, the city saved \$330,000 by auditing electrical uses, a larger amount than anyone anticipated. Also, the director leads a Sustainability Team made up of members from different city departments to develop new ideas and encourage sustainability. Not only do CH2M HILL OMI people participate on that team, but inspired by the city, CH2M HILL OMI established its own local sustainability team at the wastewater treatment plant. The team developed and implemented many ideas to help ensure the plant was following the same green path as the city, including purchasing an industrial tricycle and two bicycles to minimize the need for in-plant driving, implementing a no-idling policy, and eliminating bottled water, Styrofoam cups and paper plates. These actions created a green culture among CH2M HILL OMI employees, and Fayetteville now serves as one of two of the company’s sustainability pilot projects. In fact, these efforts helped the partners to be recognized as one of five finalists for the 2007 Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality ENVY Award.
- **Partnership with University of Arkansas** – The city is home to the university and has developed a partnership to raise awareness about sustainability in Northwest Arkansas. CH2M HILL OMI worked with university professors on a Supersaturated Dissolved Oxygen System, which oxygenates the wastewater’s plant effluent more cost effectively. The newly developed system had never been used, but together the city and company agreed to test it. The test proved successful and now the system operates full-time at the plant and is being marketed for more facilities. The system reduces energy and chemical costs which translated to an annual saving of nearly \$35,000:

	Pre SDOX-300	SDOX-300	Saving
Oxygen Consumption, 1000 cu ft/yr	4,267	1,422	2,845
Cost per 1000 cu ft	\$9.14	\$9.14	
Oxygen Cost per Year	\$39,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$26,000.00
Electrical Consumption, KWH	261,048	65,350	195,698
Cost per KWH	\$0.0458	\$0.0458	
Electrical Cost per Year	\$11,958.87	\$2,993.73	\$8,965.14
<b>Total Saving</b>			<b>\$34,965.14</b>

- Host of International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives** –In July 2007, the city hosted the ICLEI conference on climate change and CH2M HILL OMI co-sponsored the event. Local governments are members of the group, which encourages new, innovative environmentally friendly practices. The conference brought several hundred visitors to the city.
- Recycling** – The city encourages recycling by residents and also recycles at city offices. As an extension of the city, CH2M HILL OMI collects items to recycle – from soda cans to scrap metal. The company also purchases used vegetable oil from a nearby chicken processing plant to coat trucks hauling sludge. This reduces the amount of sludge left in trucks and the number of trips needed to the landfill. Switching to waste vegetable oil prevented nearly 1,000 pounds of waste and saved approximately \$5,000 per year compared to purchasing new vegetable oil.
- Sustainability Summit** – CH2M HILL OMI has partnered with the city to plan Fayetteville’s first Sustainability Summit, an all-day event to help citizens, students and local businesses learn how Fayetteville, its business partners and its corporate citizens are leading the way in sustainable initiatives. At the October 10 event, citizens will hear from nationally recognized speakers and engage in a consumer product fair. The company helped develop the agenda, recruit speakers, and create the Web site and other promotional materials, which have generated 172 registrations with two weeks to go (the target is 200). The fair is being promoted through signs at downtown venues and public service announcement published by NBC affiliate KNWA, one of the event sponsors. More information is available at: [www.sustainablefayetteville.org](http://www.sustainablefayetteville.org).

Working together, Fayetteville and CH2M HILL OMI are ensuring that sustainability is not just a vague promise but a true practice within city operations and around the community. Despite the successes, both the city and the company continue to seek innovative ways to further reduce their carbon footprint and benefit residents of the city and region. In fact, CH2M HILL OMI is adopting many of the new ideas proven at Fayetteville’s wastewater plants to use at the other 200 water and wastewater facilities it manages. The ideas that are practiced in Fayetteville – from recycling to energy audits – can be used by other municipalities.