

**AAPG Annual Meeting
March 10-13, 2002
Houston, Texas**

Maggie D. Moorhouse¹ (1) Moorhouse Associates, Inc, Corpus Christi, TX

Beyond Regulatory Compliance, How to Implement an Environmental Management System

'Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?' asked Alice in the classic by Lewis Carroll. 'That,' replied the Cheshire Cat, 'depends a good deal on where you want to get to.' When operators in the oil and gas industry reach a level of environmental competency that meets regulatory requirements, they too may be asking, 'Where do we go from here?'. Is simply complying with the law enough, or is there more that an operator can do to prevent problems or manage waste streams more efficiently? Operators may want to 'get to' a place beyond compliance that includes cleaner operations, fewer reportable spills, cost savings and waste minimization. By applying systems management analysis tools to evaluate their environmental program, operators can determine areas for improvement in their operations. Improvements can provide benefits that include risk reduction, increased cost efficiency and better environmental stewardship. The systems analysis tools include building an environmental issues team, creating process maps, performing activity-based costing analysis, performing Pareto and root cause analysis, identifying alternatives, prioritizing alternatives and developing an action plan. Through these tools an operator can establish an Environmental Management System that identifies ways to continuously improve upon not only their environmental compliance but also their overall operation.