

## **Green Environmental Management System (GEMS) Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA Maine Healthcare System is to provide compassionate, quality healthcare and benefits to each veteran we are privileged to serve. The purpose of the Environmental Management System is to do so in an environmentally responsible manner and to establish procedures for the continual improvement in environmental compliance, prevention of pollution, waste minimization, and resource conservation. It is the policy of the VA to improve its environmental stewardship by maintaining an Environmental Management System that will ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local environmental requirements, will utilize prevention of pollution approaches to conserve cultural and natural resources and will improve overall environmental compliance. This policy establishes a governing environmental policy, GEMS to accomplish its mission.

It is the VA Maine Healthcare System policy to:

- Develop and implement a VA Maine Healthcare System wide GEMS that will meet the requirements of Presidential Executive Orders (EO) 13423 and the guidance provided by Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive 2005-811);
- Be a good steward of the environment by complying with federal, state and local environmental laws, implementing prevention of pollution initiatives, conserving cultural and natural resources and continually improving environmental programs;
- Utilize sustainable practices to eliminate, minimize, or mitigate adverse environmental impacts;
- Evaluate the operations of the VA Maine Healthcare System to incorporate actions into facility planning and procedures to reduce environmental vulnerabilities;
- Integrate prevention of pollution, waste minimization, resource conservation and environment compliance into the VA Maine Healthcare System operations, purchasing, planning, and decision-making where practical;
- Use natural resources efficiently, and maintain and protect the wildlife habitat consistent with the VA Maine Healthcare System mission;
- Recognize that the development and construction at the VA Maine Healthcare System must consider the unique environmental conditions of which the facility is a part;
- Train VA Maine Healthcare System staff as needed to carry out the environmental responsibilities of their positions; and
- Solicit input, as appropriate, from stakeholders including staff, patients, visitors and local community regarding environmental matters affecting the operations of VA Maine Healthcare System.



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