

Air & Waste Management Association Kicks Off 1st Annual Environmental Challenge International (ECi)

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Competition Offers Students an Opportunity to Tackle a “Real” Environmental Challenge

Pittsburgh, PA (Feb.20, 2008) As part of its 101st Annual Conference & Exhibition, the Air & Waste Management Association (A&WMA) is challenging undergraduate and graduate students to try their hands at solving the types of environmental questions faced by professionals in the industry.

“The student Environmental Challenge is a new kind of experience that allows students to showcase their knowledge, discover what types of skills they still need to develop, and potentially catch the eye of industry leaders who manage some of the world’s biggest environmental programs,” said Adrienne Carolla, A&WMA Executive Director. “Our members are excited about how the ECi will allow them to share their experiences and interact with future professionals.” The ECi requires students to build an interdisciplinary team of no more than five people to study a “true-to-life” environmental problem based on the experiences of A&WMA members. The 2008 problem asks teams to consider how sustainable energy sources could replace a proposed fossil fuel-based Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) power plant in the Pacific Northwest, which was denied a permit. Teams will examine the issues surrounding the problem, discuss approaches to solving its challenges, and draft a presentation that will offer their potential solutions to judges during A&WMA’s Annual Conference & Exhibition in Portland, OR, June 24-27, 2008.

“The ECi committee has done its best to craft a competition that best simulates what environmental professionals face in their work,” said Steve Rybolt of the Port of Seattle, Chairman for A&WMA’s 2008 ECi. “We’ve even engineered a mechanism through which student teams can experience the twists, turns, and unexpected issues that almost always impact projects with environmental consequences.”

Student teams should expect some “late breaking” news on the problem that could require alterations to their proposals. Students will need to network among A&WMA members during the Annual Conference & Exhibition to evaluate the changes to the problem, and modify their presentations.

In addition to offering high-quality exposure to potential employers, student teams are eligible to win more than \$15,000 in cash prizes. The ECi is sponsored by URS Corp. and the chapters of A&WMA’s Pacific Northwest International Section. View the detailed problem and read the rules, eligibility requirements, and policies governing the ECi program at <http://www.awma.org/ACE2008/eci.htm>. For additional information, or for a team application, contact Steve Rybolt at rybolt.s@portseattle.org.