



## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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### STATE AGENCIES WORK WITH BUSINESSES TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

**WHAT:** Two state agencies have partnered to work with North Carolina businesses that manufacture parts for the automotive industry to help them meet a mandate to improve environmental performance. To begin work, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce will host a workshop (ISO 14001 EMS: the Nuts and Bolts of Getting it Done) teaching suppliers to the automotive industry how to implement an Environmental Management System (EMS). EMS is a tool that uses an international standard (ISO 140001) to systematically manage environmental activities, products, and services and to help achieve environmental obligations and performance goals. Automotive suppliers are implementing an EMS as part of a mandate from automotive companies such as Ford and General Motors (GM). GM manufacturing suppliers have until Dec. 31, 2002, to become certified; Ford suppliers have until July 1, 2003. Both companies are making the requirement because of their interest in improving the quality of the environment, and suppliers share the same concern. The new requirement will apply to about 5,000 of their manufacturing suppliers worldwide. Small manufacturers also will participate in the workshop.

Speakers include Dave Porter, Ashland Chamber of Commerce; Mark L. Warner, Mercedes-Benz U.S. International Inc., Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Ron Lak, Uniroyal Chemical Co. Inc., Gastonia; Susan Graff, Environmental Services Group, Atlanta, Ga.

**WHEN:** 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Wed., May 10

**WHERE:** N.C. Arboretum, 100 Frederick Law Olmsted Way, Asheville

**COMMENTS:** In North Carolina, manufacturers of automotive components such as tires, door paneling, cushion coverings, gaskets, and other components are a significant percentage of our state industrial and economic base. Companies that have implemented programs have reported benefits ranging from enhanced compliance, improved employee morale, and savings from pollution prevention activities.

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