



**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

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Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.  
Governor

Kendl P. Philbrick  
Acting Secretary

Michael S. Steele  
Lt. Governor

December 15, 2003

Fellow Marylanders:

During my career in the private sector, I spent many years working on environmental projects, cleaning up former industrial sites – among them the original home of Lockheed Corporation, which is now a mixed-use commercial site in Burbank, California, and a former Sperry Corporation headquarters in Lake Success, New York, now a high-tech office park. Each project brought unique challenges, but today they support high-paying jobs and generate tax revenue. I am optimistic that Governor Ehrlich's brownfields reform initiative, the topic of this issue of *EnviroMatters*, will bring equal benefit to Maryland and its citizens.

Enjoy this issue of *EnviroMatters*.

Sincerely,

Kendl P. Philbrick  
Acting Secretary

*December 15, 2003*

## **Governor's Brownfield Reforms Combine Environmental and Economic Benefits**

When Governor Ehrlich took office, one of his environmental priorities was to strengthen Maryland's brownfields program. In restoring brownfield sites - properties that are contaminated or thought to be contaminated with industrial wastes or other pollutants - we not only clean up the environment, but also take advantage of the huge potential inherent in the sites: Typically, brownfield properties are existing structures or land already served by utility and transportation infrastructure and close to population and economic centers, which means that they can be developed at less cost and that potential employees and customers are nearby.

Maryland has had a Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP), along with a companion redevelopment program, since 1997. But applying was complicated and time-consuming and the lack of certainty about the process and the amount of time to get approval for a project made investors and developers wary of the program. Across-the-board reforms were needed. With input from the developers, elected officials, lenders, consultants and environmentalists, we revamped the program. Among the reforms Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. has announced:

- The Department of the Environment has hired a redevelopment coordinator to market the VCP program and work with the development and real estate communities, local governments and the Department of Business and Economic Development.
- A cumbersome 22-page application has been cut to eight pages, along with a checklist and clear and comprehensive instructions that will make it easier to complete the application.
- A new web site (<http://www.mde.state.md.us/brownfields>) has been created for the program. The site provides detailed information about individual properties and sophisticated search tools - including a geographical information system (GIS) that will make it easy for anyone to obtain information about brownfield sites throughout Maryland.
- In addition to proactively marketing the program, the Department of the Environment will continue to provide training and workshops for consultants, investors, developers and local governments.

Separately, these reforms represent progress in improving Maryland's brownfields program; together, they have the potential to transform the program. Enforcement will remain a high priority (in fact, we want to increase enforcement activities), but this program provides incentives that will result in a steady increase in the number of properties restored to productive use, as well as the creation of new jobs in our communities - at the same time that we systematically restore the state's environment.