



Georgia's Lessons in Greening Hotels



**POLLUTION PREVENTION ASSISTANCE DIVISION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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Who is P²AD?

- **Non-regulatory** Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Providing **confidential, no-cost** technical assistance to clients with an interest in voluntarily reducing resource usage and waste generation.
- Focus on solid waste minimization, energy & water conservation, EPP, recycling
- Services available to all Georgia industries, businesses, institutions, government agencies, & farms



Past efforts to green the lodging industry – 1995 to 2002

- GHEP multi-agency, solid waste focus
 - Too much bureaucracy, limited recycling infrastructure, not sustainable
- Individual assessments – multi-media
 - Resource intensive, isolated successes
- Green Hotel Initiative
 - Great new link to other state efforts, lost momentum
- Greening State Parks & Jekyll Island Authority
 - Successful model, resource/time intensive, not easily transferable to private sector
- New Georgia Green Hotel Program...



New GA Green Hotel Program

Why Certification?

- Model of some type of certification showed early success in VT, PA
- Quick, easy identifier for customers
- 3rd party standard assures consistency and legitimacy – no green washing
- Role models will help lead the industry
- Same standard that is being used in PA, NY, DC, MD, WA, OR



New GA Green Hotel Program

- Partnership between P²AD & Green Seal
- Working with GHTA, CVBs, GDITT for support
- Fall 03 – solicitation letters out to ~650 GA properties
- 64 applications received and evaluated
- Feb/Mar 04 – 3rd party assessments conducted by Green Seal and qualified hotels certified
- EPA funding will cover first 20 certifications
- Statewide promotional campaign this spring for certified properties – prominence in G-8 marketing
- Training seminars in Mar/Apr for any interested properties



What is required for certification?

- Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Lodging Properties (GS-33) contains 36 criteria in 6 program areas
 - ✓ Waste Minimization, Reuse & Recycling
 - ✓ Energy Efficiency, Conservation & Management
 - ✓ Management of Fresh Water Resources
 - ✓ Waste Water Management
 - ✓ Hazardous Substances
 - ✓ Environmentally & Socially Sensitive Purchasing Policy
- Certification costs range from \$950-1600 depending on size of property



Road blocks/hurdles along the way

- Tight time schedule
- State has a small trade association with limited influence
- G8 – blessing and curse!
 - Elevated program significantly
 - Added complications w/schedule
 - Interesting coastal properties in the midst of so many other demands and “guaranteed” bookings
- Industry in Georgia still largely doesn’t see the demand for green



Successes so far...

- Eager support of state tourism agency
- Strong support of DNR Commissioner
- Great response rate given short deadline
- State travel policy writers very receptive to concept of integrating green into travel policy
- Stay tuned!
 - How many properties will meet the standard?
 - How will new travel policies impact state purchasing and drive demand?
 - How influential will certified properties be in leading others?

