



Michigan Forum Discusses ‘No Stricter Than Federal’ Impact And EGLE Priorities

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On May 21, 2019, Charlie Denton of Barnes & Thornburg’s Environmental Department moderated the Environmental Issues Forum presented by the [Michigan Chamber of Commerce](#). This annual event brought together attorneys, government officials and top consultants to present and discuss the most current environmental developments in Michigan. It was a full house at the Michigan Chamber of Commerce in Lansing that day, with an audience including environmental health and safety managers for manufacturers, utilities and other employers as well as environmental consultants from across the state.

The highlight of the program was a keynote presentation by Liesl Eichler Clark, director of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). Director Clark discussed the [reorganization of the former MDEQ](#) and other regulatory updates. She also offered details regarding EGLE’s priorities for the coming months, which include safe drinking water (e.g., lead and copper rule), improving collaboration, communication and customer service at EGLE, environmental justice considerations, reviewing regulatory proposals, and commitment to climate change actions (e.g., greenhouse gas survey).

Now in its 19th year, the forum featured a full day of presentations on topics of interest to environmental professionals and the regulated community, including:

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- Updates on revisions to Michigan's Part 201 cleanup criteria and brownfield redevelopment, presented by Sara Bals of SME and Suzanne Sutherland of Barnes & Thornburg.
- Waste management issues, with a focus on NREPA Part 115 amendments, landfill tipping fees and recycling. Presented by Darwin Baas of Kent County DPW and Liz Browne of EGLE Materials Management Division.
- Air emissions permitting compliance and enforcement, with a status update on U.S. EPA Clean Air Act rules as well as updates on Renewable Operating Permit/Title 5 fees and the Michigan Climate Change Office. Presented by Joel Bowers of Barnes & Thornburg and Lori Myott of Lansing Board of Water & Light.
- Stormwater pollution prevention and permitting issues, presented by Jeff Longsworth, Barnes & Thornburg and Chris Cieciek of LimnoTech.
- An update on Federal and Michigan OSHA by Don Lawless of Barnes & Thornburg.
- PFAS emerging contaminants, including EGLE and U.S. EPA regulatory updates, presented by Tammy Helminski of Barnes & Thornburg and Mark Westra of GZA-Rose & Westra.

In addition to moderating the forum, Charlie Denton introduced the day's theme: "No Stricter than Federal" as applied to environmental health and safety regulations. [Download a copy of his presentation.](#)