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## Saving Some Green: Free Resources on Environmental Law

Suzanne B. Corriell  
*University of Richmond*

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# Saving Some Green: Free Resources on Environmental Law

by Suzanne B. Corriell

Environmental legal research often requires examining federal, state, and local laws, in addition to understanding science and technology. While there are many print and subscription-based resources available for a fee, websites also that can help you navigate the laws and stay current with environmental news, and legal and scientific developments.

## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

<http://www.epa.gov>

The Environmental Protection Agency's National Library Network was recently named Federal Library/Information Center of the Year for its innovative and sustained achievements. The EPA provides access to more than forty-five thousand digital documents, many of which are available through the agency's website. In addition to providing background information on science, technology, and environmental issues, the site provides a full library of laws and regulations. These libraries can be accessed by topic or by industry/business sector. They include federal statutes and regulations, as well as policy, guidance, compliance, and enforcement documents. The EPA provides access to regional newsrooms on its site (<http://www.epa.gov/region3/newsevents/index.html>), including information on Virginia at "EPA in Virginia" (<http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/states/va.html>).

## National Council on Science and the Environment (NCSE)

<http://ncseonline.org/NLE/CRS/>

The National Council on Science and the Environment provides access to more than 2,000 Congressional Research Service reports on environmental and related topics. These reports, originally prepared for the U.S. Congress, are objective, accurate, and easily interpreted by nonscientists. The NCSE also provides access to the *Encyclopedia of Earth*,

policy papers, conference reports, and news summaries.

## Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/>

The Virginia DEQ site is the preeminent site for Virginia's environmental laws, regulations, and policies. In addition to linking to current and proposed regulations, the site posts public notices, environmental reports, studies, data, press releases, and news releases. Content areas are also provided for hot-topic areas, such as the Chesapeake Bay and air quality. Forms and applications are also readily available online.

## Environmental News Network

<http://www.enn.com/>

The Environmental News Network intends to "create a platform for global environmental action," partnering with environmental experts and editorial affiliates to provide news, information, and resources. The national and international environmental topics include environmental policy, climate, energy, water, green building, pollution, ecosystems, agriculture, and health. Archives go back to 2002.

## Environmental News Service (ENS)

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/>

The Environmental News Service is a daily international wire service for environmental news topics. Worldwide contributors cover issues and events with environmental impact. Topics include legislation, politics, lawsuits, international agreements, public health, air quality, drinking water, oceans and marine life, land use, wildlife, forests, natural disasters, hazardous materials, nuclear issues, renewable energy, recycling, transportation, and environmental economics. A searchable archive extends to 2001, and readers may subscribe to free email newsletters.

## Earthjustice

<http://earthjustice.org>

Earthjustice is the nation's leading, non-profit law firm for the environment. Their attorneys are involved in environmental protection cases, as well as policy development and strategic media campaigns. The Earthjustice website summarizes federal legislation and regulations and links to Earthjustice's current cases. The Washington, D.C., office focuses on Virginia regional issues, including sustainable fisheries, energy efficiency, and toxic mercury emission reductions. The website includes a blog, press releases, and a monthly newsletter.

## Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

<http://www.vims.edu/index.php>

For specialized research on marine science and the Chesapeake Bay, turn to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. VIMS provides access to the institute's comprehensive research on coastal ocean and estuarine science. VIMS gives full-text access or citations for news and journal articles, advisory and special

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**Suzanne B. Corriell** is head of reference and research services at the University of Richmond's Muse Law Library, and she is Vice President/President-Elect of the Virginia Association of Law Libraries. She received an undergraduate degree from Mount Holyoke College and law and master of library science degrees from the University of Iowa.

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reports, dissertations, and recommended websites. Much of the site is geared to the scientific community. It also links to state and federal agencies, government reports, and studies. Interactive maps show the institute's national and international research.

#### **ECOLEX**

<http://www.ecolex.org/>

ECOLEX is an environmental law information service. It posts information on treaties, international policy and technical guidance documents, legislation, judicial decisions, and law and policy literature. Users can access abstracts and indexing about each document, as well as full texts. The treaty database is effective when seeking treaties that address environmental problems.

For additional environmental law resources, please see articles by the College of William and Mary's Jennifer Sekula, "Nothing Dismal About It: Researching Environmental Law Without Getting Swamped," (*Virginia Lawyer*, December 2005, at 41) ([http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer\\_magazine/dec05sekula.pdf](http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer_magazine/dec05sekula.pdf)) and Hunton & Williams's Michele M. Gernhardt, "Bite-sized Environmental Law: Resources for the Jack of All Trades," (*Virginia Lawyer*, December 2008, at 53) ([http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer\\_magazine/vl1208\\_library.pdf](http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer_magazine/vl1208_library.pdf)).