



B U D G E T JUSTIFICATION

Fiscal Year 2008
Selective Service System

PERFORMANCE BUDGET

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
FY 2008 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
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Overview

The Selective Service System (SSS) is an independent Federal agency, operating with permanent authorization under the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. App. 451 et seq.). It is not part of the Department of Defense (DoD). However, it exists to serve the emergency manpower needs of DoD with a draft of untrained manpower or a more limited draft of personnel with professional health care skills, if so directed by the Congress and the President. The SSS is America's proven and time-tested hedge against underestimating the number of active duty and Reserve military personnel needed to fight a future conflict or sustain simultaneous ongoing contingencies. Its statutory mission also includes being ready to administer an Alternative Service Program, in lieu of military service, for men classified as conscientiously opposed to any form of military service.

In peacetime, the Agency is heavily dependent upon part-time personnel and volunteers throughout the U.S. to keep viable the Nation's ability to conduct a draft that would be timely, fair, and equitable in a crisis. Virtually all men in the U.S. are required to register with Selective Service within 30 days of reaching age 18. The current registration program, in effect since July 1980 for men born on or after January 1, 1960, is important for America because a future draft will only be fair and equitable when those men who should be registered are registered. An added national benefit of the registration program is that it facilitates distribution of Armed Forces recruiting information to America's young men as a part of the registration acknowledgment process. Registration also is important to a man's future because the Congress and scores of counties and cities have conditioned eligibility for government programs and benefits upon a man being in compliance with the SSS registration requirement. Also, 35 states, 3 territories, and the District of Columbia, through Driver's License Legislation (DLL), have passed laws that mandate a man to meet registration requirements in order to receive a state driver's license or identification card. These programs and benefits include student loans and grants, government jobs, job training, driver's license or state identification card, and U.S. citizenship (for registration age immigrant men who are not yet citizens).

Current and Future Operating Conditions

By the end of FY 2008, the SSS will be a more streamlined organization, maximize the use of e-government applications, with a workforce of 139 full-time equivalent employees that will be responsive to our client, the DoD, as well as the public. Its workforce will be augmented by approximately 200 part-time Reserve Forces Officers (RFO), and 56 part-time State and Territorial Directors. Any further budget or personnel erosion reduces the Agency's ability to meet its statutory mission obligations. This staffing level for present-day peacetime missions differs significantly from the level that would be employed during a draft.

The SSS is required to register more than 6,000 men who reach age 18 each day and train SSS personnel for their mobilization duties. The tasks performed by SSS

personnel are extraordinarily labor intensive and while technology is being employed extensively to increase efficiency and enhance programs, it is not the sole solution for all organizational challenges and improvements.

President's Management Agenda

The SSS seeks continuous improvements to its operations through an array of programs and policy changes based on the President's Management Agenda (PMA). Each change demonstrates the Agency's commitment to a more effective and efficient management style, measured operational readiness, and enhanced modernization as outlined in the Agency's Strategic Plan. This plan prioritizes SSS activities and forms the basis for long and short-term management and resource decisions. The Agency has realigned its processes, integrating its human capital and organizational structure to ensure that it is more capable and responsive to the manpower needs of the DoD.

During FY 2008, the SSS will continue to utilize e-commerce initiatives to improve the Agency's procurement and financial processes by utilizing the integrated financial management system. Under an agreement with the Department of the Interior (National Business Center), SSS continues its implementation of the integrated eTravel program, and of the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12, an identification and verification program. The Agency continues to utilize the e-Quip system for security clearances and will participate in the OPM sponsored e-OPF project.

The Agency continues to expand upon workforce development strategies and the implementation of a human capital management plan that will close most mission-critical skills, knowledge, and competency gaps. Additionally, the GoLearn.gov e-training system is in place to provide employees and managers with the required performance support tools necessary to assist them in meeting the training needs of the Agency's workforce. Finally, telework and flexhours mandatory programs are operating and the Agency is exploring further initiatives aimed at improving the work-life aspects of the job environment, to heighten morale and enhance job performance, and to improve recruitment and retention efforts.

Organizational Imperatives

Missions:

The DoD is the primary customer of the SSS. The SSS' missions are:

- To furnish personnel to the DoD for military service during a national emergency, when directed by the Congress and the President.
- To operate an Alternative Service Program for registrants classified as conscientious objectors by SSS Boards when a draft is ongoing.

Strategic Goals and Program Highlights

Upon reinstatement of the draft, the SSS is mandated to provide personnel in the numbers and timeframes required by the DoD and to implement an Alternative Service Program for Conscientious Objectors. Reinstatement of a draft requires Congressional and Presidential initiation and approval. To be prepared to respond, the SSS must periodically refine its planning through policy and procedural enhancements and update its supporting automated programs. The bulk of SSS staffing is comprised of 200 part-time Reserve Component officers and over 10,000 volunteer citizens recruited and trained in the responsibilities of adjudicating registrant claims and appeals.

This Budget Justification for FY 2008 supports an attainment of the following goals:

Goal 1: Ensure preparedness and the capacity to provide timely manpower to the DoD during a national emergency.

In the event of a mobilization, the SSS will hold a national draft lottery, contact those registrants who have been selected via the lottery, and arrange their transportation to a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). This procedure would be followed for a mobilization of trained health care specialists and/or untrained personnel.

Once notified of the results of their evaluation at the MEPS, any registrant who has been found qualified for military service may choose to file a claim for exemption, postponement, or deferment. If a claimant is reclassified as a conscientious objector (CO), he has a requirement to serve for 24 months in a non-military capacity contributing to the health, welfare, and safety of the U.S. The SSS will place these workers with non-military employers and track the progress of their service.

Objective 1 -- Be prepared to call, classify, and deliver personnel. (\$11.7M)

The purpose of the Personnel Delivery Systems is to randomly select registrants, contact those registrants that have been selected, and arrange for their delivery to Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS). The lottery activity of this program addresses the need for a random selection sequence, while the personnel delivery activity addresses the need to deliver those individuals selected into the military's induction system.

During FY 2008, the SSS will continue the development of its Central Registrant Processing Portal (CRPP) Initiative. This initiative permits the SSS to consolidate all of its separate manpower delivery Information Systems into a single unified portal. The benefits of the CRPP system include:

- **Consolidation** - Consolidate all the Mobilization Processing for all four induction scenarios into a single system:
 - Health Care (2 Step – Time Phased Response)
 - Conventional (2 Step – Time Phased Response)
 - Efficiency - Increase Efficiency of Mobilization Operations so that the Agency can perform a Mobilization in a more reliable and timely manner.
- **Customer Service** – Provide improved customer-service to the registrant during a mobilization. This includes reducing processing time and offering a greater number of self-service options available to the registrant.
- **Real Time Data Reporting** - Provide customizable secure access to all Agency data in real-time. This includes reducing the lag time between processing data and accessing data.
- **Auditing of mobilization operations** - Provide a legal auditing trail of all mobilization transactions regardless of the location of the action being performed or of the personnel performing it.
- **Reduce Paperwork** - Reduce the amount of paperwork necessary during a mobilization. There is no need to eliminate all paperwork, but rather reduce the amount that is required from its current level.
- **Training Efficiency** - Simplify the efforts and reduce the costs associated with producing training for field units

Strategic Objective 1.1.1: Be prepared to deliver personnel when needed.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal:

Maintain the Agency's Readiness Plans which include the Call and Deliver, Reclassify, Alternative Service, and the Lottery Standard Operating Procedures.

Strategic Objective 1.1.2: Be prepared to ensure timely and consistent handling of claims.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal:

Be prepared to activate State Headquarters, Area Offices, and board members to timely, fairly and equitably process reclassification claims.

Strategic Objective 1.1.3: Be prepared to implement an Alternative Service Program.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goals:

Modify the Alternative Service Processing System (ASPS) and incorporate the changes into the Central Registrant Processing Portal.

Increase outreach to historic peace churches and other organizations both in person and via electronic mediums.

Increase membership in the Alternative Service Employer Network (ASEN) through initiatives undertaken by its State Directors and Reserve Force Officers at the local level.

Objective 2 -- Ensure acceptable registration compliance rates. (\$10.3M)

Registration is a crucial component of any future induction or conscription/draft to furnish personnel to the DoD in the event of a national emergency in a fair and equitable manner. The higher the national registration compliance rate, the more fair and equitable any future draft would be for each registered individual.

Strategic Objective 1.2.1 Maintain registration rates of at least 90 percent or above for eligible males 18-25.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal:

Attain registration rate of 90 percent or above for eligible males 18-25.

Strategic Objective 1.2.2 Maximize the use of electronic registration methods.

Electronic registration methods include the following Strategies:

- (a) continuing to assess current methods of registering, determining costs, and burdens on the public;
- (b) identifying low-cost methods while ensuring the accurate processing of information;
- (c) using Web-based and other new technologies to improve public accessibility to the Selective Service; and,
- (d) working with other government and state agencies to identify programs or services to assist the SSS with registration compliance.

In addition, we plan to increase the percentage of electronic and automatic registrations (through sources such as Driver's License Legislation, internet and telephone registrations) to reduce the cost of each registration, thereby increasing the cost effectiveness of the overall registration process.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal: Obtain 83% of registrations electronically.

Strategic Objective 1.2.3 Maintain the participation rate in the SSS' High School Registrar Program.

The primary strategies to maintain participation in this program will include:

- (a) expanding public awareness in urban areas;
- (b) tracking responses from high schools;
- (c) enhancing school materials used to conduct the program;
- (d) monitoring participation of high schools in the program;
- and,
- (e) conducting visits and contacts with high schools to explain the benefits of the program focusing on the ease and responsiveness of SSS Internet registration procedures.

Encourage the Agency's uncompensated Local Board Members and State Resource Volunteers (SRV) to participate in the SSS' Adopt-a-High School Program and encourage registration via the Agency's Internet Website (www.sss.gov).

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal: Maintain registrars in 87% of the Nation's high schools.

Goal 2: Ensure management excellence.

To advance the President's Management Agenda (PMA), SSS has developed technology upgrades of Agency hardware, software, and systems development processes to improve efficiencies and remain current. The comprehensive plan to ensure alignment and integration among its human capital management, financial, operational, information technology, and logistical processes, have been developed. Benefits realized include an expansion of the Agency's e-government, budget and performance integration, and improvements in financial performance. Of particular note is the Agency's Integrated Financial Management System which has greatly enhanced SSS ability to align its budgetary resource expenditures with its goal performances.

Objective 1 -- Efficient and effective resource and procurement management.

Continue improving policies, procedures, and standards to better align Agency operations with the PMA. Over the next five years, the Agency projects a larger than average rate of retirement, increased hiring competition from the public and private sectors.

Strategic Objective 2.1.1 Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of human capital management.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal:

2.1.1 Implementation of the Strategic Human Capital Management Plan.

Implement the full Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-12) initiative.

Implement the OPM-sponsored electronic Official Personal File (e-OPF).

Strategic Objective 2.1.2 Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of acquisition and logistics activities

Implement the SSS Acquisition and Logistics Management Plan.

Objective 2.2 -- Efficient and effective financial management.

The Financial Management Directorate will focus on improving and achieving success in support of the President's Management Agenda (PMA). The Financial Management Directorate continues to be committed to achieving Agency "clean audit" opinions under the auspices of the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002. In accordance with the PMA, the Agency will continue its integration and implementation of an integrated financial management system. Additionally, its e-government initiative, to automate all government travel under the eTravel concept, will ultimately provide an improvement in the Agency's financial performance arena and an overall upgrade in the area of budget, human capital, and performance integration. These are the primary activities that will be used in support of improving the management and performance of the Agency and ultimately the Federal Government as outlined in the President's Management Agenda.

Strategic Objective 2.2.1 Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of financial activities.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal: Implementation of Financial Management IT Plans

Strategic Objective 2.2.2 Align budgeted funds with performance expectations.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goal: Complete Performance and Budget Integration.

Objective 3 -- Effective and efficient information technology management.

The Information Technology Division will focus its efforts on modernizing the technical environment of the Agency guided by the President's Management Agenda, Government Performance Results Act, Information Technology Management Results Act, Federal Information Security Management Act, and other statutory and/or regulatory documents. During the next five years, the Agency's Operations Directorate will provide leadership, innovations, flexibility, and responsive technical services while expanding information resources, access, and solutions for the Agency. It also will create a secure technically advanced information environment that will facilitate numerous enhancements that will increase the SSS' capabilities to effectively satisfy mission requirements.

Strategic Objective 2.3.1 Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's technical operations.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goals:

Complete the development and implementation of the registration modernization project. Completion of this project will result in considerable cost savings by replacing an expensive mainframe system with cheaper micro-computer hardware. Also, the mainframe software, some of which has been in use since the 1980s, will be replaced with more modern software allowing the staff to update its skills set. This will also minimize the negative impact of some pending staff retirements by replacing this system with more modern software that programmers are familiar with supporting and developing.

Completion of Phase 2 of CRPP - Complete design, development and testing of the remaining Mobilization Functionality (Registrant Management, Claim/Appeals Processing, Alternative Service Management, Location Management, RFO Management, Board Member Management, etc.)

Ensure compliance with FISMA requirements to include meeting annual auditing and reporting tasks as well as protecting personal identification information entrusted to Selective Service.

Ensure the Agency is in compliance with OMB Directive M-06-16 by implementing NIST 800-53 guidance.

Objective 4 -- Effective and efficient management of communications with the public.

Selective Service faces the ongoing paradoxical challenge of public concern: a) the more communications made, the greater the public concern about an imminent draft and, b) the less SSS says, the greater the amount of misinformation available. Consequently, all efforts are focused upon reaching our two audiences, the young men themselves and their influencers, maintaining or increasing registrations, and expanding public understanding of the Agency's missions. With over 6,000 young men turning 18 every day, the Agency's outreach to community leaders, other governmental and private sector entities, public and private influencers, and media will play an expanding role.

Strategic Objective 2.4.1 Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

FY 2008 Annual Performance Goals:

Distribute quality public service advertising materials to every national media market and obtain public service air-time in at least 90% of the major markets and 95% of all media markets.

Improve response turnaround times, in accordance with provisions of the Agency's Administrative Services Manual, for all types of responses: White House, congressional, media, Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act customers, and the general public.

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
SUMMARY OF PROGRAM COSTS
FY 2006 - FY 2008
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Estimate	FY 2008 Estimate
Goal #1	\$7,350	\$7,250	\$22,000
Goal # 2	\$7,995	\$7,800	\$0
Goal # 3 *	\$8,530	\$8,380	N/A
Goal # 4 *	\$875	\$825	N/A
Total	\$24,750	\$24,255	\$22,000
<u>FTE Requested</u>	139	139	139

* During FY 2006, with the approval of OMB, the SSS adopted a new Agency Strategic Plan (FY 2006 – FY 2011). This new plan replaced the four goals contained in previous Agency strategic plans with two goals. The first goal is statutory mission related and all funding contained in this FY 2008 Performance Budget is associated with the activities contained in that goal. The second goal in this document is an enabling goal in support of that goal. Therefore, FY 2008 is the first year that will reflect only two funded Strategic Goals (instead of the original four).

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
APPROPRIATION LANGUAGE SHEET**

Federal Funds

General and special funds:

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Selective Service System, including expenses of attendance at meetings and of training for uniformed personnel assigned to the Selective Service System, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 4101-4118 for civilian employees; purchase of uniforms, or allowances therefore, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; hire of passenger motor vehicles; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109; and not to exceed \$750 for official reception and representation expenses; [\$24,255,000] \$22,000,000: *Provided*, That during the current fiscal year, the President may exempt this appropriation from the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1341, whenever the President deems such action to be necessary in the interest of national defense: *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated by this Act may be expended for or in connection with the induction of any person into the Armed Forces of the United States.

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
PROGRAM AND FINANCING SCHEDULE
(In thousands of dollars)**

	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Identification code 90-0400-0-1-054			
Obligations by program activity:			
00.01 Direct program.....	24,430	24,500	22,000
01.01 Reimbursable program.....	336	375	375
10.00 Total obligations	24,766	24,875	22,375
 Budgetary resources available for obligation:			
22.00 New budget authority (gross)	25,086	24,875	22,375
22.30 Unobligated Balance Lapsing.....	320	0	0
23.95 New obligations	-24,766	-24,875	-22,375
 New budget authority (gross), detail:			
 Current:			
40.00 Appropriation (definite).....	25,000	24,500	22,000
40.75 Reduction pursuant to P.L.107-206	250	245	0
43.00 Appropriation (total).....	24,750	24,255	22,000
 Changes in unpaid obligations:			
72.99 Total unpaid obligations, start of year	8,917	4,149	3,731
73.10 New obligations.....	24,766	24,875	22,375
73.20 Total outlays (gross).....	-21,051	-21,144	-19,019
73.40 Adjustments to expiring accounts.	5,782	5,449	5,472
74.99 Total unpaid obligations, end of year	4,149	3,731	3,356
 Outlays (gross) detail:			
86.90 Outlays from new current authority	19,070	19,241	17,307
86.93 Outlays from current balance	1,645	1,528	1,335
86.97 Outlays from new permanent authority	336	375	375
87.00 Total outlays (gross).....	21,051	21,144	19,019
 Offsets:			
Against gross budget authority and outlays:			
88.00 Offsetting collections (cash)			
from Federal sources	<u>336</u>	<u>375</u>	<u>375</u>
 Net budget authority and outlays:			
89.00 Budget authority	24,766	24,875	22,375
90.00 Outlays	21,051	21,144	19,019
.....			

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
SALARIES AND EXPENSES
OBJECT CLASSIFICATION
(in thousands of dollars)**

Identification code 90-0400-0-1-054	FY 2006 <u>Actual</u>	FY 2007 <u>Estimate</u>	FY 2008 <u>Estimate</u>
Personnel compensation:			
11.1 Full-time permanent positions	9,116	10,320	9,690
11.3 Positions other than permanent	847	701	701
11.5 Other personnel compensation	204	255	255
11.8 Special personal services pymts	2,956	3,000	2,490
11.9 Total personnel compensation	13,123	14,276	13,136
12.0 Personnel benefits: civilian	2,598	2,775	2,760
13.0 Benefits for former personnel	0	0	0
21.0 Travel & transportation of persons	465	395	320
22.0 Transportation of things	9	37	37
23.1 Rental payments to GSA	884	850	750
23.2 Rent, non-Federal	188	220	220
23.3 Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	1,598	1,900	1,705
24.0 Printing and reproduction	608	460	435
25.0 Other services	3,299	2,515	1,915
26.0 Supplies and materials	274	237	192
31.0 Equipment	1,545	590	530
99.0 Subtotal, direct obligations	24,591	24,255	22,000
99.0 Reimbursable obligations (DoD Recruiting & Census Bureau)	336	375	375
99.9 Total obligations	24,927	24,630	22,375

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
SALARIES AND EXPENSES
PERSONNEL SUMMARY**

Identification code 90-0400-0-1-054	FY 2006 <u>Actual</u>	FY 2007 <u>Estimate</u>	FY 2008 <u>Estimate</u>
Total number of full-time permanent positions:			
Total compensable workyears:			
Full-time equivalent employment	139	139	139
Full-time equivalent of overtime and holiday hours	1	1	1
Average ES salary	143,000	145,400	145,400
Average GS grade	10.05	10.02	10.02
Average GS salary	58,569	55,195	56,851
Average salary of ungraded position	42,500	43,500	44,800

**REPORT ON OBLIGATIONS FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY 2006 <u>Actual</u>	FY 2007 <u>Estimate</u>	FY 2008 <u>Estimate</u>
1. <u>Capital Investment</u>			
A. Purchase of hardware	168	100	75
B. Purchase of software	1,322	75	125
C. Site or facility	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,490	175	200
2. <u>Personnel</u>			
A. Compensation, benefits, and travel	4,902	5,055	4,648
B. Workyears	<u>(80)</u>	<u>(80)</u>	<u>(80)</u>
Subtotal	4,902	5,055	4,648
3. <u>Equipment rental, space, and other operating costs</u>			
A. Lease of hardware	240	240	240
B. Lease of software	0	0	0
C. Space	190	190	187
D. Supplies and other	<u>160</u>	<u>178</u>	<u>163</u>
Subtotal	590	608	590
4. <u>Commercial services</u>			
A. ADPE time	98	98	90
B. Voice communications	205	205	199
C. Data communications	55	55	66
D. Operations and maintenance	95	95	97
E. Systems analysis, programming & design	0	0	0
F. Studies and other	0	0	0
G. Significant use of information technology	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	453	453	452
5. <u>Inter-agency services</u>			
A. Payments	915	925	955
B. Offsetting collections	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	915	925	955
6. <u>Intra-agency services</u>			
A. Payments	0	0	0
B. Offsetting collections	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	0	0	0

**REPORT ON OBLIGATIONS FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
(In thousands of dollars)**

	FY 2006 <u>Actual</u>	FY 2007 <u>Estimate</u>	FY 2008 <u>Estimate</u>
7. <u>Other services</u>			
A. Payments	0	0	0
B. Offsetting collections	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	0	0	0
<u>Totals</u>			
Workyears	(80)	(80)	(80)
Total obligations	8,350	7,216	6,845

**SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM
MAJOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION PLANS
2006 - 2008
(in thousands of dollars)**

Item: **Purchase of Hardware**

	FY <u>2006</u>	FY <u>2007</u>	FY <u>2008</u>
Obligations:	168	100	75

Description: Purchase of IT equipment to include updates and replacement cost of terminals, servers, routers and minor modernizations as described in the ITAP. The SSS anticipates automated enhancements of significant costs in out years. The Agency is in the process of examining its IT architecture to satisfy current and anticipated needs. The estimated additional obligations for the out years will be determined when the IT Business Case results are adopted.

Item: **Lease of Equipment**

	FY <u>2006</u>	FY <u>2007</u>	FY <u>2008</u>
Obligations:	240	240	240

Description: Leasing of an industrial laser printer for letter production and inserter/sorter at the Data Management Center (DMC). Leasing of 57 computer workstations at the National Headquarters.

Item: **Commercial Services**

	FY <u>2006</u>	FY <u>2007</u>	FY <u>2008</u>
Obligations:	453	453	452

Description: Routine on-going expenses related to leased telecommunications services, maintenance of IT equipment, data entry services, and a more secure, advanced computer technology in concert with the Agency's ITAP. New technological applications are fundamental to expanding automated requirements and interfaces to support customer services mandated for communications via electronic media versus paper. The SSS anticipates automated enhancements of significant costs in out years. The Agency is in the process of examining and expanding its IT architecture to satisfy current and anticipated needs. The estimated additional obligations for the out years will be determined when the IT Business Case results are adopted. Initial investment costs will increase significantly; however, the long-term effect will produce a marked overall decrease in spending.