



Northwest Pulp & Paper ASSOCIATION

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Spokane's Inland Empire Paper Company Honored with 2025 NWPPA Environmental Excellence Award *IEP recognized for wastewater system upgrade*

OLYMPIA — Sept. 15, 2025 — The Northwest Pulp & Paper Association has recognized Spokane's Inland Empire Paper Company (IEP) with its 2025 Environmental Excellence Award.

IEP has been manufacturing paper in the Spokane Valley since 1911, providing above-living wage jobs for regional families for generations. IEP is currently one of the most modern paper-making facilities in the world. This status has been attained through significant reinvestment and modernization of nearly every process within the facility using innovative design and state-of-the-art equipment.

The award, presented Sept. 9 at a private event in Portland, recognizes the facility's recent \$3 million capital upgrade to its wastewater treatment system (WWTS). The investment moves the facility toward its goal of achieving Washington state's stringent water quality standards — some of the most rigorous in the nation.

The upgrade includes the installation of nearly 4,000 fine-bubble aerators to the WWTS as a part of continued efforts to attain very stringent nutrient standards for phosphorus, nitrogen and carbonaceous biological oxygen demand (CBOD). CBOD is a measure of the oxygen consumed by microorganisms to break down organic



Inland Empire Paper Company's Technical Superintendent Ben Carleton (left) and Environmental Manager Doug Krapas (center) accept the 2025 Environmental Excellence Award from NWPPA Executive Director Chris McCabe. (Photo courtesy NWPPA).

matter present in the mill's wastewater. Washington state's water quality standards for the Spokane River require IEP to achieve total reductions of phosphorus of 93% and CBOD reductions of 97%.

IEP was previously recognized by NWPPA in 2022 for being the first pulp and paper mill in the industry to install microscopic membrane filters to treat its water. These upgrades make IEP the best performing facility in the industry for nutrient removal and are expected to achieve the state's water quality standards for the Spokane River.

NWPPA Executive Director Chris McCabe said the award highlights IEP's continued investments and ongoing commitment to meeting state water quality standards.

"Washington state's water quality standards are some of the most stringent in the country. Companies like IEP remain committed to meeting and complying with these standards and are working continuously to operate in the most environmentally responsible manner possible," said McCabe. "We are proud to highlight the outstanding work of Inland Empire Paper Company and recognize them for their excellent work to meet an incredibly stringent standard."

IEP's Environmental Manager, Doug Krapas, and Technical Superintendent Ben Carleton, accepted the award.

"Inland Empire Paper Company appreciates being recognized by NWPPA for this important investment in our Spokane facility and in our efforts to meet state water quality standards," said Krapas. "NWPPA plays a vital role in helping not only IEP, but other pulp and paper facilities in the Northwest to navigate the state's complex regulatory environment. IEP appreciates the association's recognition of our ongoing environmental stewardship efforts."

About the Northwest Pulp & Paper Association

Formed in 1956, the Northwest Pulp & Paper Association (NWPPA) represents 10 member companies and 13 pulp and paper mills in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. For more information, visit www.nwpulpandpaper.org.