

## ***Report Shows No Significant Cost Increase in MDEQ/MDNR Split***

The Michigan Auditor General has issued a 25-page report (the Report), entitled ***Review of the Cost and Staffing Levels Before and After the Split of the Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality***, which examines the changes since the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) was created by an executive order on October 1, 1995, and assumed certain regulatory duties that were previously performed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The Report addresses the questions of whether costs increased as a result of the split, and how staffing levels for administration, enforcement, scientific and technical units have changed.

According to an MDEQ press release, the Report, which was issued on July 25, 2001 in response to a legislative request, shows that the state's split of its natural resources and environmental agencies is not increasing costs significantly, and that the departments are "beefing up enforcement programs with additional staff."

The Report identifies central level costs of \$1.1 million that are related to the creation of the new department. Of that, \$758,000 is for rent and \$354,000 is for human resources and personnel offices. Regarding staffing levels, the Report finds that filled full-time positions increased in the enforcement, scientific and technical areas, and decreased in central administrative areas.

MDNR Director K.L. Cool said that he felt that the Report "accurately reflects administrative and field efforts."