

## Environmental Science & Engineering

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# Korean National Institute for Environmental Research visits Canada – again....

Report by Ned Gravel

The Korean National Institute for Environmental Research (NIER) recently visited the Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL) for the third time. The purpose of their visit was to acquire CAEAL knowledge on the design and implementation of laboratory quality systems that conform to ISO/IEC 17025.

NIER is based in Incheon, Korea, and is known for the development of advanced air- and water- monitoring systems that can automatically invoice plants and factories based on the automated measurements of discharged effluent parameters into groundwater and air. A separate public company, the Environmental Management Corporation (EMC), is responsible for these automated systems.

This year's contingent included all levels of environmental lab staff from director level to analysts and business planners. After the three-day course on laboratory quality system design and development, they visited the Robert O Pickard Environmental Centre, the wastewater treatment facility and environmental testing laboratory of the City of Ottawa.

This is the third time this course has been delivered to NIER staff. NIER is

continuing its efforts to have their various laboratories formally recognized as competent in the production of environmental test results. They like our consensus-based approach in developing laboratory accreditation solutions. They wish to do something similar for environmental laboratories in Korea, all of which must meet Korean government guidelines for their operations.

The laboratory visits are a highlight that started in 2006 and will continue to be a feature of their annual tour in Canada. They wish to examine how Canadian laboratories can implement ISO/IEC 17025 to support environmental testing. Do Canadian practices stand up to the theory?

NIER staff already know that accreditation has a significant impact on the demonstrated competence of a laboratory. One laboratory at a time, they are learning to implement systems to meet their own needs – and they are taking pages from the Canadian playbook.

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