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## Use of Drones in Environmental/Engineering Services: Pollution Management, Inc., (Little Rock, Arkansas) Personnel Achieve FAA Certification

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The use and functions of unmanned aerial vehicles (i.e, drones) in service industries is rapidly evolving.

Environmental services and/or environmental monitoring/enforcement is an example of an area in which the usefulness of drones is being recognized.

By way of example, as noted in a previous post (see post [here](#)), the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality as early as 2018 added drones as a tool in the agency's environmental protection missions. The three drones employed by the agency are used for activities such as:

- Surveillance
- Enforcement
- Permit Support Documentation
- Waste and Landfill Inspections
- Legal Dumping of Chemicals, Oil or Waste Tires
- General Emergency Response Functions Involving Facility Discharges, Train Derailments, Truck Accidents, Oil Spills
- Investigations of Unusual Events

An example in the environmental services area is the Little Rock/Springdale firm of Pollution Management, Inc., ("PMI") which operates a drone for certain environmental/engineering services.

The company states it uses a drone in the engineering area for activities such as:

- aerial imagery (i.e., dam/levee inspections, slope failures, structure layout, etc.)
- Topographic data (civil site layout, flood studies, landfills, industrial site design)

In the environmental area the drone is stated to be utilized for aerial site reconnaissance for areas that are:

- Large areas of land
- Not easily accessible by foot or vehicle
- May not be easily observable due to thick vegetation or other impediments

In other words, drones apparently have certain potential inherent advantages when it comes to their ability to cost effectively observe for environmental assessment purposes larger or relatively inaccessible areas.

Note that the utilization of drones for income-producing purposes is subject to Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) rules and restrictions. PMI indicates that Professional Engineer Brad Wingfield recently passed his FAA Part 107 aviation exam. As a result, he is certified to pilot drones for commercial purposes.