



SmallBiz@EPA

EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman Program

A monthly newsletter for the regulated small business community

May 2021

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Congratulations and Thank You to Kansas State University's Pollution Prevention Institute!

KSU PPI has recently unveiled a new look and updated version of the National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program website. KSU's PPI has served as the EPA grantee for an ongoing cooperative agreement with EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman program since 2015. A big thanks to KSU PPI and the website subcommittee for all of their hard work on this outstanding accomplishment. To view the new and improved website go to nationalsbeap.org.

Policy & Regulation

Extension of 2019 and 2020 Renewable Fuel Standard Compliance and Attest Engagement Reporting Deadlines

EPA is finalizing modifications of certain compliance dates under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program. First, EPA is extending the RFS compliance deadline for the 2019 compliance year and the associated deadline for submission of attest engagement reports for the 2019 compliance year for small refineries. The new deadlines are November 30, 2021 and June 1, 2022, respectively. Second, EPA is extending the RFS compliance deadline for the 2020 compliance year and the associated deadline for submission of attest engagement reports for the 2020 compliance year for obligated parties. The new deadlines are January 31, 2022 and June 1, 2022, respectively. Finally, EPA is extending the deadline for submission of attest engagement reports for the 2021 compliance year for obligated parties to September 1, 2022. [Read the Federal Register Notice](#).

Pesticide Registration Review; Pesticide Dockets Opened for Review and Comment; Notice of Availability

This notice announces the availability of the EPA's preliminary work plan for the following chemical: Metrafenone. With this document, the EPA is opening the public comment period for registration review for this chemical. Comments must be received on or before June 28, 2021. Read the [Federal Register Notice](#).

MCPA; Pesticide Tolerances

This regulation establishes tolerances for residues of MCPA ((4-chloro-2-methylphenoxy) acetic acid) in or on tea and intermediate wheatgrass forage, grain, hay, and straw. Interregional Research Project

Number 4 (IR-4) requested these tolerances under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA). This regulation is effective April 13, 2021. Objections and requests for hearings must be received on or before June 14, 2021, and must be filed in accordance with the instructions provided in [40 CFR part 178](#). [Read the Federal Register Notice](#).

Metaflumizone; Pesticide Tolerances

This regulation establishes tolerances for residues of the insecticide metaflumizone in or on multiple commodities which are identified and discussed in the [Federal Register Notice](#). BASF Corporation requested these tolerances under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA). This regulation is effective April 19, 2021. Objections and requests for hearings must be received on or before June 18, 2021, and must be filed in accordance with the instructions provided in [40 CFR part 178](#).

EPA Administrator Regan Establishes New Council on PFAS

To help deliver on EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment, Administrator Michael S. Regan issued [a memorandum to EPA's senior leadership](#) calling for the creation of a new "EPA Council on PFAS" that is charged with building on the Agency's ongoing work to better understand and ultimately reduce the potential risks caused by these chemicals. Administrator Regan has asked Radhika Fox, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Office of Water, and Deb Szaro, Acting Regional Administrator in Region 1, to convene and lead the EPA Council on PFAS, which will be comprised of senior EPA career officials from across the Agency. [Read the full press release](#).

EPA Announces Plan to Update Toxics Release Inventory to Advance Environmental Justice

On April 29, 2021, EPA announced that it will be taking important steps under the [Toxics Release Inventory \(TRI\)](#) to advance Environmental Justice, improve transparency, and increase access to environmental information. The comprehensive plan includes expanding the scope of TRI reporting requirements to include additional chemicals and facilities, including facilities that are not currently reporting on ethylene oxide (EtO) releases, and providing new tools to make TRI data more accessible to the public. TRI is a resource for learning about annual chemical releases, waste management, and pollution prevention activities reported by nearly 22,000 industrial and federal facilities.

"Every person in the United States has a right to know about what chemicals are released into their communities," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "By requiring new and more data on chemical releases from facilities, EPA and its partners will be better equipped to protect the health of every individual, including people of color and low-income communities that are often located near these facilities but have been left out of the conversation for too long."

The announcement includes several components:

TRI Facility Expansion to Include Certain Contract Sterilizers using EtO

EPA recognizes and shares the public's concerns about the harmful effects of EtO on human health, including cancer and the environment. The Agency is committing to broadening TRI reporting on this chemical to include certain contract sterilization facilities that use EtO that are not currently required to report this information. EtO is used to make other industrial chemicals and is also used to sterilize medical devices.

Many of these contract sterilization facilities are located near areas with Environmental Justice concerns. Workers in facilities that use EtO and communities – including historically underserved

communities – living adjacent to these facilities are at the highest risks from exposure to EtO. Making more information available about releases of EtO will assist the Agency in identifying and responding to any human health and environmental threats they cause. The Agency will provide more details in upcoming months on its effort to require these contract sterilization facilities to report to TRI and will keep the public informed as next steps are determined.

Additional TRI Reporting Requirements for Other Chemicals and Sectors

The Agency will continue to expand the TRI program to protect the health and safety of underserved communities, including:

- TRI Reporting for Natural Gas Processing Facilities
- TRI Reporting for Additional Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
- TRI Reporting for TSCA Workplan and High-Priority Chemicals

Additional TRI Tools for Communities

The ability to access and use TRI data empowers communities to make informed health and safety decisions. EPA has taken several steps to make TRI data more useful and accessible to communities with Environmental Justice concerns by:

- Enhancing TRI search tools to include a “Demographic Profile” section which displays a map showing information like the income profile and the racial makeup surrounding TRI facilities derived from [EJSCREEN](#). Users can also access demographic data for individual TRI facilities, as well as view a “Community Report” by selecting a facility from the “Facility Comparison Table” in the “Facility Summary” section.
- Launching a [Spanish version of the TRI website](#)
- Promoting the use of [Pollution Prevention \(P2\) information](#)

[Read the full Press Release.](#)

Key Dates and Upcoming Opportunities

National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program 2021 Annual Training June 8-10, 2021 1pm – 4pm ET [Registration is Now Open!](#)

Join us for this year’s virtual SBEAP Annual Training event, scheduled to take place each afternoon, from 1-4pm ET, June 8-10, 2021. This event will provide training, networking, and collaboration opportunities in support of environmental assistance for small businesses across the country. Featured speakers will include EPA regulatory experts, small business assistance program specialists and research scientists. To register and view the draft training agenda, please visit nationalsbeap.org/news-events/training.

EPA ENERGY STAR Webinars

ENERGY STAR will offer the following webinars on Portfolio Manager. These webinars explain how to navigate different parts of Portfolio Manager, from basics to advanced features. [Register](#)

- May 5, 1 PM (ET) – Portfolio Manager 101
- May 19, 1 PM (ET) – Portfolio Manager 201
- May 25, 1 PM (ET) – Portfolio Manager 301

Every other Wednesday at noon, we’ll hold Portfolio Manager “Ask the Expert” webinars that give users an opportunity to ask their questions directly to EPA experts in an open forum. Want to talk to a “real” person? Have a question about how Portfolio Manager calculates your score? Want to learn more about

entering Green Power? Join us, and we'll answer all your questions about ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager in this public forum. [Register](#)

- May 12, 12 PM (ET) – Ask the Expert
- May 26, 12 PM (ET) – Ask the Expert

May 20, 1 PM (ET) – The State of Decarbonization: Briefing on SED Pulse Survey

The Smart Energy Decisions (SED) news & research organization will share the results of their recent "Pulse Survey" on the state of decarbonization efforts in North America. Over 160 organizations, including many ENERGY STAR partners, responded to the survey from a wide range of sectors, including industrial, REITs, retail, municipal governments, universities, hospitality, healthcare, and others. [Register](#)

Apply Now: Water Toxicity Sensor Challenge

Open Date: April 27, 2021 Close Date: July 26, 2021

[Register for the Informational Webinar on June 8 at 2pm ET](#)

EPA, in partnership with NOAA, USGS, US Army, the Greater Cincinnati Water Works, and the Water Research Foundation, recently launched a Water Toxicity Sensor Challenge. The challenge is to develop a water sensor that can detect toxicity in water. The challenge is divided into two stages. The first stage will seek designs, with up to three winners. The second stage will be a prototype demonstration.

The sensor design should be for one that:

- can measure the level of activation of one or more toxicity pathways; and
- is less expensive and faster than current lab methods for detecting specific contaminants.

A toxicity pathway is an interruption to normal biological processes that occurs when a cell is exposed to a stressor, like a chemical or toxin, that could lead to harmful health effects. By measuring the level of activation of a toxicity pathway, the sensor would give us a way to rapidly detect the presence of harmful contaminants in water. Up to three winners from Stage 1 will receive up to \$15,000 each. A larger prize purse will be offered for Stage 2. For more information, please visit the [Water Toxicity Sensor Challenge webpage](#). Join us for an informational webinar that will provide an overview of the Water Toxicity Sensor Challenge competition and how to apply. Experts will be available to answer questions during a question & answer session following the presentation. [Register for the webinar.](#)

Additional Funding Available for EPA Environmental Justice Grants

The deadline has been extended to **June 1, 2021** for both the [EJ Small Grants](#) and the [EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving](#) funding opportunities. Funding per project has increased also to \$75,000 and \$200,000 respectively. For more information, visit epa.gov/environmentaljustice and www.grants.gov.

EPA to Accept Applications for Grants that Enhance Recycling Markets or Reduce Food Waste Until June 1

On April 28, 2021, EPA Region 5 began accepting applications for Sustainable Materials Management Grants to fund recycling markets or food waste reduction projects in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. Proposed projects must focus on enhancing municipal and industrial recycling markets or preventing food waste through source reduction or food rescue. EPA plans to award \$30,000 - \$60,000 grants to fund up to three or four projects dependent on available funding, applications received, and other applicable considerations.

Sustainable materials management is a systemic approach to use and reuse materials through a product's entire life cycle to reduce environmental impacts, conserve resources and reduce costs.

The deadline for submissions is June 1, 2021 (11:59 p.m. Eastern Time). EPA will notify selected finalists by early July 2021. Grants will be awarded by September 30, 2021. For more information on how to

apply, visit epa.gov/grants/region-5-fy-21-sustainable-materials-management-grants. For more information on EPA's Sustainable Materials Management program visit epa.gov/smm. [Read the press release.](#)

Join the [Sustainable Materials Management \(SMM\) listserv](#) to get updates and webinar announcements from EPA!

EPA Announces \$6.5 Billion in New Funding for Water Infrastructure Projects

On April 27, 2021, at an address to water associations, utilities, and their workers to mark Water Week, EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan announced the 2021 notice of funding availability under the Agency's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program and state infrastructure financing authority WIFIA (SWIFIA) program. These lending programs accelerate investment in critical water infrastructure through innovative and flexible financing that can support a wide range of projects in both large and small communities.

EPA's WIFIA loan program has become one of the most effective tools used to upgrade our nation's infrastructure. To date, EPA's 49 WIFIA loans are providing over \$9.3 billion in credit assistance to help finance nearly \$20 billion for water infrastructure while creating approximately 49,000 jobs and saving ratepayers over \$4 billion. This round of WIFIA funding will provide up to \$5.5 billion to support \$11 billion in water infrastructure projects and prioritizes five areas:

- Supporting economically stressed communities.
- Protecting water infrastructure against the impacts of climate change.
- Reducing exposure to lead and addressing emerging contaminants.
- Updating aging infrastructure.
- Implementing new or innovative approaches including cybersecurity and green infrastructure.

EPA is also announcing funding under [SWIFIA](#). This program, which was authorized by Congress as part of the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018, offers low-interest loans to state water infrastructure programs that then help finance needed water infrastructure projects in local communities. This round of funding will provide SWIFIA borrowers up to \$1 billion to support \$2 billion in water infrastructure projects.

EPA will evaluate proposed projects described in the letters of interest using WIFIA's statutory and regulatory criteria as described in the notice of funding availability. Through this competitive process, EPA will select projects that it intends to fund and invite them to apply. EPA will accept letters of interest from prospective WIFIA borrowers until July 23, 2021. EPA will accept letters of interest from state water infrastructure programs until June 25, 2021. For more information about WIFIA and this funding announcement, visit epa.gov/wifia. [Read the Press Release.](#)

EPA Announces \$5 Million in Grants Available for Tribes and Insular Areas to Replace Diesel Equipment and Reduce Harmful Emissions

For the first time under this competition, matching funds are not required

On April 30, 2021, EPA announced the availability of grant funding available to Tribal and certain insular area governments, to implement projects aimed at reducing emissions from the nation's existing fleet of older diesel engines. EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$5 million in Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Program grants to eligible applicants, subject to the availability of funds. Older diesel engines emit large amounts of NOx and PM2.5, which contribute to serious public health problems, including asthma, lung disease, and various other cardiac and respiratory diseases.

A total of \$4.5 million will be made available to Tribal governments, or intertribal consortia, and Alaska Native villages; and \$500,000 will be made available to insular area governments including the U.S. Virgin

Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. EPA anticipates awarding five to ten cooperative agreements to Tribal governments, intertribal consortia or Alaska Native villages, and two to four cooperative agreements to insular area governments. For the first time, matching funds are not required for eligibility. This approach will expand access to diesel emission reduction projects to those Tribal and insular areas with more limited resources.

Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov to be considered for funding. Although funding for both Tribes and insular areas is being announced under this single Request for Application, the applications will be reviewed separately. Three informational webinars to accommodate diverse time zones will take place on 05/12/2021, 05/18/2021, and 05/20/2021 for interested applicants. EPA anticipates sending notification of awards in August of 2021. For more information and to access the Request for Applications, visit epa.gov/dera/tribal. To attend the informational webinars, visit epa.gov/dera/tribal#dates for links. Pre-registration is not required. For general information on the DERA Program, visit epa.gov/dera. [Read the Press Release.](#)

Ask SBEAP

Dear SBEAP,

During the pandemic slowdown, our painting operation and associated metal fabrication small business were made aware that our processes may generate regulated emissions and wastes requiring state or EPA permits. I know ignorance is no excuse for disregarding the law, but is there a one-stop small business compliance resource where we can research these permits or seek help?

Sincerely,
Sammie, Small Manufacturer

Dear Sammie,

Small manufacturers and businesses that paint, machine, clean or process metals, plastics or other materials, often generate toxic emissions or hazardous wastes that may be harmful to both human health and the environment. Service industries such as auto body shops, dry cleaners and even dentists can generate regulated emissions, too.

The National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) operates a website that can serve as an initial one-stop [environmental compliance](#) resource for most small business manufacturers such as yourself. If you decide you need one-on-one assistance, go to “[state contacts](#),” and reach out to your state SBEAP. State SBEAPs are designed to help you get into compliance; they specialize in helping businesses identify which rules or permits may apply and can help with calculations and state-specific air permitting requirements. These services are offered at no cost and most are confidential, so you can trust them with your concerns about non-compliance. When you visit the [National SBEAP](#) site, you may also notice the [2021 Virtual Annual Training](#). This June 8-10, 2021 event is open to SBEAPs and small businesses, or those who work with small businesses. There is no cost for the event, but registration is required. As always, if you need additional assistance, email [Ask SBEAP](#) or call us at 800-578-8898.

Spotlight

EPA Honors Small Business Champions at its 31st Annual Administrator's Small Business Programs Awards Ceremony

On May 6, 2021, EPA held its 31st Annual Administrator's Small Business Program Awards Ceremony to recognize Agency programs and employees, as well as businesses and state officials for their outstanding contributions to the Agency's small business programs during Fiscal Year 2020. Each year, the celebration coincides with National Small Business Week to highlight the contributions of small businesses to America's communities and the national economy.

"Small businesses are the proven incubators of innovative ideas and products that improve lives and protect the environment," said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan in his remarks at the ceremony. "They will be an important partner in EPA's efforts to tackle climate change, advance environmental justice, and restore the role of science in protecting public health and our environment."

The Administrator's Small Business Program Awards honor the accomplishments of the many EPA small business champions and partners, and reaffirms the Agency's unwavering commitment to maximizing small business procurement opportunities that enhance regulatory and environmental compliance assistance as an essential part of EPA's human health and environmental protection. The Honorable Ben Cardin, U.S. Senator for Maryland and Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, said in his opening remarks, "The [COVID-19] pandemic has showed us that the federal government has the duty to use its purchasing power to support small businesses especially those in underserved communities."

One of the recipients of the Administrator's Award for Outstanding Accomplishments by a Small Business Contractor was Nobis Engineering, Inc., for its Superfund remediation efforts. The company constructed 10 acres of wetland mitigation and restored 20 acres of natural habitat at the Elizabeth Mine Site, one of the largest and most intact historic mining sites in New England. In his keynote, Vice President of Operations for Nobis Engineering Chris Adams said, "This project has meant so much to us especially our small business subcontractors – unique and complex projects like these don't come around often and we have EPA to thank for this opportunity."

EPA Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe agreed saying, "EPA has a long and distinguished record of excellence in supporting the nation's small businesses as we work to fulfill our mission of protecting human health and the environment. Our collective support to small business is important, and it matters now, more than ever. The [COVID-19] pandemic has disproportionately impacted small businesses, particularly those in underserved communities."

For decades, EPA has been committed to supporting small businesses and furthering their sustainability while protecting human health and the environment. For more information on EPA's small business programs, visit [OSDBU's webpage](#). [Read the full Press Release and list of award winners](#).

EPA Recognizes Electronics Industry Leaders for Diverting 176,494 Tons of Electronic Products from Landfills, Reducing Environmental Impacts Across the Country and Helping to Address Climate Change

On March 30, 2021, EPA announced the 2020 winners of the Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Electronics Challenge Awards. The SMM Challenge encourages electronics manufacturers,

brand owners, and retailers to send 100 percent of the used electronics they collect to third-party certified electronics refurbishers and recyclers. The 2020 award winners reused or recycled 176,494 tons of electronics and avoided the equivalent of nearly 500,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

“The innovation and environmental leadership shown by these companies is outstanding,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. “The Electronics Challenge award winners are corporate role models creating new products that show environmental improvement can go hand-in-hand with other technological advances. EPA encourages others to follow their lead by implementing similar innovative approaches.”

The use of electronic products has grown exponentially over the past two decades, changing the way people communicate and more recently, how they stay in touch during the pandemic. Reusing and recycling reduces environmental impacts, including those from climate change, throughout the life cycle of electronics, while also creating green jobs.

Since 2012, EPA has been recognizing leading electronics manufacturers, brand owners, and retailers for their significant contributions in electronics sustainability as part of the SMM Electronics Challenge. This year the Agency is honoring three categories of winners with its Gold Tier Awards, Champion Awards, and a Special Award for participants who made significant contributions during the pandemic.

For more information on the 2020 SMM Electronics Challenge award winners, visit epa.gov/smm-electronics/sustainable-materials-management-smm-electronics-challenge-recognition-and-awards. For more information on EPA’s Sustainable Materials Management of electronics program, visit epa.gov/smm-electronics. For information on where consumers can donate or recycle electronics, visit epa.gov/recycle/electronics-donation-and-recycling. For information about EPA’s National Recycling Goal, visit epa.gov/americanrecycles/us-national-recycling-goal. Read the Press Release.

EPA Awards Over \$3 Million to Small Businesses to Support Commercialization of Environmental Technologies

On April 20, 2021, EPA announced \$3,192,989 in total funding for eight small businesses to further develop and commercialize technologies to protect public health and the environment. The funded technologies are focused on clean and safe water, air quality monitoring, land revitalization, and sustainable materials management.

“Small businesses are building a better future for our country with their entrepreneurial spirit and innovative technologies,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. “I congratulate the small businesses who are receiving this funding. Your work is essential to helping us achieve our goal of creating healthy, clean, and safe environments for all Americans.”

These eight small businesses are receiving up to \$400,000 in Phase II funding from EPA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. These companies were previously awarded SBIR Phase I funding of up to \$100,000 for “proof of concept” of their innovative environmental technologies and are now receiving Phase II funding to further advance and commercialize the technology.

For more information on EPA's SBIR Phase II recipients, visit cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/recipients.display/rfa_id/680/records_per_page/ALL

Learn more about EPA's SBIR program: epa.gov/sbir. Learn more about the Federal SBIR Program: www.SBIR.gov. [Read the press release.](#)

EPA Publishes 28th Annual U.S. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

On April 14, 2021, EPA released its 28th annual [Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks \(GHG Inventory\)](#), which presents a national-level overview of annual greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 to 2019. Net U.S. greenhouse gas emissions were 5,769 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2019, a 1.7 percent decrease in emissions between 2018 and 2019. While many long-term and short-term factors influence annual greenhouse gas emissions in recent years, the downward GHG emissions trend can be largely attributed to falling emissions in the electric power sector.

The GHG Inventory covers seven key greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and nitrogen trifluoride. In addition to tracking U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, the inventory also calculates carbon dioxide that is removed from the atmosphere through the uptake of carbon in forests and other vegetation.

Public review of this year's report occurred from February 12 to March 15, 2021 and comments received are posted to the docket EPAHQ-OAR-2021-0008. Responses to comments will be posted to EPA's website within 2-4 weeks following publication of this report. [Read the Press Release.](#)

Share with the small business community through EPA's SmallBiz@EPA Bulletin

Do you have a story, upcoming event, resource, or information that may be beneficial to the small business community? Please email us at asbo@epa.gov to provide a brief submission with a suggested title, your contact information, and a website link for more information on the topic.

EPA Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman Program

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