




UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

November 29, 2021

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Response to Planned Corrective Actions for Office of Inspector General Report No. 21-P-0123, *EPA Delayed Risk Communication and Issued Instructions Hindering Region 5's Ability to Address Ethylene Oxide Emissions*, issued April 15, 2021

**FROM:** Sean W. O'Donnell 

**TO:** Joseph Goffman Acting Assistant Administrator  
Office of Air and Radiation

Thank you for your October 26, 2021 memorandum, which outlines the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's planned corrective actions and estimated completion dates for the two unresolved recommendations issued in the subject Office of Inspector General report. Based on the information and supporting documentation provided, we agree that the planned corrective actions for Recommendation 2 meet the intent of our recommendation. You should track implementation of these corrective actions in the Agency's audit tracking system until all actions are completed.

However, we do not agree with the planned corrective actions for Recommendation 1, which states that the Office of Air and Radiation should "develop standard operating procedures describing how the Office of Air and Radiation will work with EPA regional offices to communicate preliminary air toxics risk information, including elevated risks found in the National Air Toxics Assessment, to the public so that communities are promptly informed of potential health concerns." The Agency's memorandum states that, to address this recommendation, the Office of Air and Radiation will add standard operating procedures to its *Strategy for the Air Toxics Program*, which "will focus on leveraging regional and risk communication expertise in engaging partners about air toxics risk." While engaging partners is important, our recommendation focuses on communicating air toxic risk information to the public. Further, the Agency's memorandum does not clearly outline how the Office of Air and Radiation will work with EPA regional offices to determine which office will communicate preliminary air toxics risk information to the public. Instead, the memorandum states that the "EPA cannot proactively predict which agency or partner should lead a particular risk communication effort." Accordingly, we consider Recommendation 1 to remain unresolved.

We will post this memorandum to our public website at [www.epa.gov/oig](http://www.epa.gov/oig).

cc: Elizabeth Shaw, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation  
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