

CHAPTER 12 - LIBRARY SERVICES

1. PURPOSE. This policy establishes principles that govern the operation of the EPA library network.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY. This policy applies to all EPA employees and contractors responsible for providing information/library services. It also applies to officials who contribute to the Headquarters library official collection of EPA reports.

3. BACKGROUND. Efficient and cost-effective access to information and data about the environment and related scientific, technical, management, and policy information is critical to the ability of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to carry out its mission. EPA recognized this when it established a library network in the early 1970's to support staff in EPA Headquarters, the 10 Regional Offices, and in the 13 research laboratories and field sites across the country. This approach is consistent with OMB Circular A-130, "Management of Federal Information Resources", which states that the collection of information by Federal agencies be carried out within the context of efficient, effective, and economical management.

4. AUTHORITIES. OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources.

5. POLICY. It is EPA policy that the library network provide EPA staff with access to high quality, cost-effective information to carrying out the Agency's mission. The librarians, as information brokers, shall promote the available information resources through outreach to EPA staff. The EPA libraries shall provide State agencies, and the general public with access to the library collection. EPA program managers shall provide the EPA library network with copies of final technical reports and guidance. Copies of these documents shall also be sent to the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).

6. RESPONSIBILITIES. The Information Services Branch which is part of the Information Management and Services Division, Office of Information Resources Management, serves as the

"National Program Manager" and is responsible for coordinating the major activities of the EPA library network. In the Regional Offices, responsibility for managing the library function is generally placed in the Regional Management Divisions, although in a few Regions the libraries are the responsibility of the Office of Public Affairs. In the laboratories, responsibility for managing the libraries may vary from site to site. The role of the National Program Manager is to work with the library network and its managers to provide the following services:

- a. Assessment of EPA program staff needs for information and provision of services to meet those needs.
- b. Online searches of commercial databases and, as appropriate, EPA databases, to supply EPA staff with needed information. Where possible, provision of State environmental agencies with relevant information services.
- c. Access to the EPA library network collection of books, journals, maps, and materials produced in microform.
- d. Access to information resources of other federal, academic and special libraries through interlibrary loan.
- e. Development of specialized services, e.g., Hazardous Waste Collection, guides to information resources, including documents, databases, and directory information and selective dissemination assistance.
- f. Coordination with other related EPA functions.
- g. Provision of translation services to EPA staff.

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