What is a Record?

DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS

Do any of the following apply?

PURPOSE

Was the material mandated by statute or regulation**?**

Does the material support a financial or legal claim or obligation**?**

Is the material required to operate EPA programs or provide program support functions**?**

Was the material created or received in the conduct of Agency business**?**

ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION

Does the material document/facilitate:

- EPA actions (ensure continuity and consistency)**?**
- Formulation of policies and decisions**?**
- EPA directives**?**
- Board, committee or staff meeting notes**?**

Does the material protect government and individual rights and interests (financial, legal and other)**?**

Does the material provide information required by Congress**?**

PRESERVATION ISSUES

Was the material filed, stored or otherwise systematically maintained by EPA**?**

Is the material appropriate for either permanent or temporary preservation by EPA**?**

VALUE

Does the material have administrative, fiscal or legal value**?**

Does the material have historical, informational or evidential value**?**

Does the material have programmatic value**?**

No

Does the material consist of non-official or private information which pertains solely to an individual's own affairs and does not relate to or have an effect upon the conduct of Agency business?

Yes

PERSONAL PAPERS

- Diaries and journals not prepared for transacting government business
- Papers accumulated by an official before assuming office
- Privately purchased books and publications that do not relate to EPA business
- Records related to private, personal matters kept at an office for convenience
- Presentations or papers of a professional nature not representing agency opinion or policy

No

NON-RECORD

- Materials that do not contribute to an understanding of EPA operations or decision-making processes
- Materials that have no substantial programmatic value
- Exact (extra) copies of official record documents retained elsewhere that serve as:
  - -- Convenience copies kept solely for ease of access and reference
  - -- Information/Reference copies of records sent to individuals or offices interested in, but not acting on, a matter
  - -- Technical reference documents needed for general information, but not properly part of the office's records

Yes

Are you/your organization the custodian (i.e., creator or sponsor) of the record?

No

Did you comment or take action on the record?

No

Yes

Is retention of this version of the record necessary to support the decision trail of your comment or action? *

No

Yes

OFFICIAL RECORDS

- Any final product related to EPA's administrative, enforcement or regulatory policies and activities. Examples of final products include:
  - -- Decision papers
  - -- Memoranda
  - -- Letters
  - -- Films
  - -- Data files
  - -- Models
  - -- Reports
  - -- Publications, etc.
- Supporting materials sufficient to document and/or explain the document trail/decision making process for administrative, legal, final, programmatic and historical purposes. May include drafts, annotations, reports, raw data, meeting minutes and telephone logs.

Note: Official records may be originals or copies of original records.

* *If the comment/action regarding the record is summarized or documented elsewhere, the record containing marginalia is a non-record.*

For further information call your local records contact:
Name: _____
Phone #: _____
or the EPA Records Help Desk at
202-566-1494 / records@epa.gov