



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

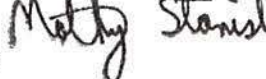
SEP 12 2016

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

NOW THE
OFFICE OF LAND AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Identifying Emergency Response Contacts for Tribal Governments

FROM: Mathy Stanislaus 
Assistant Administrator
Office of Land and Emergency Management

TO: Regional Administrators
Regions I – X

Over the past year, the Agency has taken a multi-pronged approach to improve emergency response notification to impacted stakeholders downstream from the source of a release. This includes engaging our response partners, improving access to the automated notification from the National Response Center, and actions associated with the September 4, 2015, Memorandum issued by Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) entitled “Review of Regional and Area Contingency Plans for Downstream Notifications.” Because notification is an important element of any emergency response, the Gold King Mine After-Action Report also includes a recommendation (#10) to improve notification to downstream stakeholders, particularly highlighting the need to notify tribal emergency response contacts during an incident.

To this end, by October 31, 2016, I ask that Regional Administrators ensure their offices develop a plan to maintain updated information for tribal emergency response contacts utilizing existing networks and mechanisms for gathering such information. This planning effort will supplement and support emergency response actions described in regional contingency plans, area contingency plans, and other emergency response planning and preparedness documents. Regional Response Teams will regularly review their regional and area contingency plans and update tribal emergency response contacts as appropriate.

Timely notification to the accurate set of contacts is critical to ensure potentially-impacted communities are prepared to respond to a release. While I recognize that there are 567 federally recognized tribes and that tribal contacts can frequently change, developing a protocol to obtain

and maintain tribal contacts will make the notification process easier and more efficient during an incident response. Regional Emergency Response Managers will serve as the coordination lead for these plans and may work with Public Affairs Directors (PADs), regional public affairs staff, and tribal program coordinators in developing plans which should include:

1. the number of tribes in the region;
2. list of tribes in the region, by state, with National Response Center application agreements;
3. contact information (with gaps identified if necessary) for tribal emergency response officials;
4. the process for updating the information on a regular basis, including RRT review of regional and area contingency plans; and
5. how the information is utilized to support downstream notifications (e.g., included in regional and area contingency plans, etc.).

Regions should submit final plans to Eugene Lee (Chief, Emergency Operations and Continuity Branch, Office of Emergency Management, OLEM) at lee.eugene@epa.gov. The recommendation #10 work team, consisting of management and staff from OLEM, the Office of International and Tribal Affairs, Region 10, and the Office of Public Affairs, will coordinate a review process of the plans and provide comments, as necessary, by December 31, 2016. If you have questions related to this effort please contact Eugene at the email above or at 202-564-7988.

Thank you, in advance, for your efforts to strengthen this process and assist our tribal stakeholders in protecting human health and the environment.

cc:

Matthew Fritz, Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator
Jane Nishida, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator Office of International and Tribal Affairs
Frank Benenati, Associate Administrator, Office of Public Affairs, Office of the Administrator
EPA Assistant Administrators
EPA Deputy Regional Administrators
EPA Regional Superfund Directors
EPA Regional Removal Managers
Regional Public Affairs Directors
Regional Tribal Program Coordinators
Reggie Cheatham, Director of the Office of Emergency Management, OLEM
Nancy Grantham, Director of Public Affairs, Office of the Administrator
Jessica Snyder, Tribal Program Coordinator, OLEM