



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

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

January 9, 2018

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Project Notification:
Evaluation of EPA's Green Chemistry Challenge Awards and
Use of Data from the Award Results
Project No. OPE-FY18-0003

FROM: Eric Lewis, Director, Special Program Reviews
Office of Program Evaluation

TO: Charlotte Bertrand, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to begin preliminary research to evaluate the agency's Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards and how the agency uses the data from the award nominations. Our objective is to identify the internal controls put in place by the EPA for use during the fiscal year 2017 challenge awards to prevent the use of unverified, self-reported results for agency reporting purposes as related to EPA performance measures and goals. Our second objective is to verify that the EPA implemented the corrective actions documented in the agency's Management Audit Tracking System in response to our recommendations in OIG Report No. 15-P-0279, *EPA's Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards Program Lacks Adequate Support and Transparency and Should Be Assessed for Continuation*, issued September 15, 2015.

The OIG plans to contact staff in the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. We will also contact other EPA offices as needed. Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used in conducting our project. The anticipated benefits of this project are to validate that the agency is operating efficiently and effectively.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of the preliminary research phase of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, the reporting procedures, the methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a regular basis, as agreed upon at the kickoff meeting.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. We will request your resolution if an agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records to the OIG or

otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the Administrator and include the incident in the *Semiannual Report to Congress*.

The project will be supervised by me, and the Project Manager will be Jee Kim. Any information related to the project should be addressed to me at (202) 566-2664 or lewis.eric@epa.gov or to Jee Kim at (913) 551-7009 or kim.jee@epa.gov. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

cc: Ryan Jackson, Chief of Staff
Henry Darwin, Chief of Staff for Operations
Kevin Chmielewski, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations
Nancy Beck, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
Louise Wise, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
Janet Weiner, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
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Arthur A. Elkins Jr., Inspector General
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