

# SMALLBIZ@EPA

EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombuds Program

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE REGULATED SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

### ▶ **Policy and Regulation**

- ▶ EPA Finalizes Stronger Standards for Harmful Soot...
- ▶ EPA Finalizes Changes to Strengthen Implementation...
- ▶ Proposed Rule: Revisions to Regulations Related to...
- ▶ Taconite Iron Ore Processing: National Emission...
- ▶ Clarifying the Scope of "Applicable Requirements"...

### ▶ **Key Dates and Opportunities**

- ▶ EPA Grants Webinar Series...
- ▶ EPA Opens \$1.5M Grant...
- ▶ Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$83 Million...

### ▶ **Ask SBEAP**

### ▶ **Spotlight**

- ▶ EPA Region 6 Dallas Office Hosts...
- ▶ EPA Announces First ENERGY STAR...
- ▶ EPA and DOE Announce Intent to Fund Projects to Reduce...



## POLICY AND REGULATION

### **EPA Finalizes Stronger Standards for Harmful Soot Pollution, Significantly Increasing Health and Clean Air Protections for Families, Workers, and Communities**

On February 7, 2024, the Biden-Harris Administration finalized significantly stronger air quality standards that will better protect America's families, workers and communities from the dangerous and costly health effects of fine particle pollution, also known as soot.

The action is based on the best available science, as required by the Clean Air Act, and sets an air quality level that EPA will help states and Tribal Nations achieve over the coming years — including through complementary EPA standards to reduce pollution from power plants, vehicles and industrial facilities, paired with historic investments under President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

[Read the press release](#)

## **EPA Finalizes Changes to Strengthen Implementation of Toxic Substances Control Act, Improve Chemical Reviews**

On February 8, 2024, EPA finalized amendments to the 2018 Toxic Substances Control Act Fees Rule that will strengthen the Agency’s ability to successfully implement the law in a sustainable way, will improve the efficiency of EPA’s chemical reviews, and ensure these reviews result in necessary health and safety protections. The amendments update how EPA will recover authorized costs of the law’s implementation and ensure that collected fees provide the Agency with 25% of authorized costs consistent with direction from Congress. [Read the press release](#)

## **Proposed Rule: Revisions to Regulations Related to Project Emissions Accounting**

On February 22, 2024, EPA proposed revisions to its New Source Review (NSR) preconstruction permitting regulations that would improve implementation and enforceability and address concerns raised in a petition for reconsideration of a 2020 final action. The proposed revisions would apply to project emissions accounting — the process used to determine if NSR would apply to a modification at an existing facility. [Read more on the proposed rule](#)

## **Taconite Iron Ore Processing: National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants**

On January 31, 2024, EPA finalized amendments to the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) for Taconite Iron Ore Processing Plants, strengthening existing emissions limits for harmful acid gases such as hydrogen chloride and hydrogen fluoride, and establishing new emission limits for mercury. [Read more on the amendments](#)

## **Clarifying the Scope of “Applicable Requirements” Under State Operating Permit Programs and the Federal Operating Permit Program**

On January 9, 2024, EPA proposed a rule titled, “Clarifying the Scope of “Applicable Requirements” Under State Operating Permit Programs and the Federal Operating Permit Program.” EPA has received requests for additional time to review and comment on the proposed rule revisions and is extending the comment period on the proposed rule that was scheduled to close on March 11, 2024, by an additional 30 days, until April 10, 2024. [Read the proposed rule in the Federal Register](#)



## **KEY DATES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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### **EPA Grants Webinar Series for Grant Applicants and Recipients**

EPA is hosting a series of three webinars for assistance agreement (grant) applicants and recipients. During each webinar, EPA staff will review key aspects of EPA's grants processes and requirements, and you will have the opportunity to submit questions.

Upcoming webinars in March 2024 focus on the grant competition process and procurement, subawards and participant support costs. [Register to attend these webinars](#)

### **EPA Opens \$1.5M Grant Competition for Pollution Source Reduction Projects, Apply by April 15th**

EPA invites eligible applicants in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. to apply for a Regional Source Reduction Assistance grant by April 15, 2024. This regional competitive grant provides awardees with up to \$240,000 in funding for projects that promote practical source reduction practices, tools and training, or Pollution Prevention (P2) approaches to measurably improve the environment. [Read the press release](#)

### **Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$83 Million in Funding to Expand Air Quality Monitoring Across the Nation as Part of Investing in America Agenda**

On February 16, 2024, EPA announced the availability of \$81 million in funding for eligible air agencies to expand and upgrade the nation's air quality monitoring networks as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda. The investment, made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, will enhance and extend air monitoring in and near communities. The funding will support the work of eligible state, local, Tribal, and territorial air agencies in addressing air pollution, including monitoring near fence-line communities, developing and refining air toxics monitoring methods, and ensuring cleaner air for all. EPA encourages eligible entities to apply for funding as soon as possible and no later than April 8, 2024. Details about the application process are available on [EPA's Air Quality and Air Quality Sensors Grants website](#).



## **ASK SBEAP**

**Dear SBEAP:**

***My business is expanding into a new market and will soon start generating hazardous waste. Do my employees need to be trained or certified to some standard before they can manage this new waste?***

***Sincerely, Haz Waste Harold***

Dear Haz Waste Harold:

Federally, the management of hazardous waste at a hazardous waste generator's facility is regulated by the EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, or RCRA. Under RCRA, training is required for employees expected to handle or oversee the management of hazardous waste at facilities generating more than 100 kilograms or 220 pounds of hazardous waste a month (these facilities are called Small Quantity Generators or Large Quantity Generators).

If you have employees that handle hazardous waste, such as in the paint room or booth or on a processing line, you must provide them with hazardous waste training within six months of hire or position change and at least once per year thereafter. Until initial training, untrained employees must work under the supervision of a trained individual. Training can come from many different sources, such as state environmental agencies, industry associations and private consultants. Whichever provider you choose, training must be comprehensive enough that employees are "thoroughly familiar" with proper waste handling and emergency response procedures relevant to their job duties. Employees expected to sign hazardous waste manifests for shipment off-site need additional training under DOT's hazardous materials transportation regulations, [49 CFR 172.704](#).

It is important to note that some state governments enforce stricter hazardous waste regulations than the EPA, such as in Kansas and Minnesota, so contact your state SBEAP for personalized compliance assistance. To find your state SBEAP, [use this map](#). As always, if you need additional assistance, you can email Ask SBEAP at [info@nationalsbeap.org](mailto:info@nationalsbeap.org) or call us at 800-578-8898.



## **SPOTLIGHT**

### **EPA Region 6 Dallas Office Hosts State Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs of Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico**

On February 21-22, 2024, the EPA Region 6 Dallas office hosted its first in-person regional meeting between the EPA Region 6, EPA HQ Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), and the Region 6 Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs) of Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico, to strengthen support and collaboration between the state and federal environmental programs. The two-day event featured speakers from EPA Region 6, EPA OSDBU, OAQPS, and Region 6 state SBEAPs, showcasing their accomplishments and addressing technical challenges.

From the success of the event, EPA Region 6 Mission Support Division's Grants and Acquisitions Branch Manager, Tongee Flemming, has stepped into the role as the Regional Small Business Liaison for Region 6 to strengthen small business environmental assistance, coordination and collaboration and between EPA and Region 6 state SBEAPs.

### **EPA Announces First ENERGY STAR Certified Vehicle Dealerships**

EPA is recognizing eight vehicle dealerships for being the first to earn EPA's ENERGY STAR certification for superior energy performance. Vehicle dealerships that earn the ENERGY STAR use significantly less energy — and contribute fewer greenhouse gas emissions — than their peers. [Read the press release](#)

### **EPA and DOE Announce Intent to Fund Projects to Reduce Methane Emissions from the Oil and Natural Gas Sectors as Part of President Biden's Investing in America Agenda**

On February 9, 2024, EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy announced a Notice of Intent (NOI) to make funds available to help measure and reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sectors as part of President Biden's [Investing in America agenda](#). Methane is a climate "super pollutant" that is more potent than carbon dioxide and responsible for approximately one third of the warming from greenhouse gases

occurring today. This NOI is issued to give applicants ample time to prepare their proposals and form partnerships (if necessary) in anticipation of the upcoming issuance of the funding opportunity announcement (FOA). [Read the press release](#)



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