

SMALLBIZ@EPA

EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombuds Program

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE REGULATED SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

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POLICY AND REGULATION

National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Ethylene Oxide Emissions Standards for Sterilization Facilities Residual Risk and Technology Review

On April 5, 2024, EPA issued a final rule after finalizing a residual risk and technology review (RTR) conducted for the Commercial Sterilization Facilities source category regulated under national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants (NESHAP) under the Clean Air Act. We estimate that these final amendments will reduce ethylene

oxide (EtO) emissions from this source category by approximately 21 tons per year. This final rule became effective on April 5, 2024. [Read the rule in the Federal Register](#). View the [Small Entity Compliance Guide](#)

Secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM)

On April 3, 2024, EPA proposed to replace the current secondary sulfur dioxide (SO₂) standard with a new annual secondary standard of 10-15 parts per billion and to retain the existing secondary standards for oxides of nitrogen and particulate matter. The Clean Air Act directs EPA to set secondary NAAQS to protect the “public welfare” against adverse effects – including ecological effects such as damage to vegetation – caused by criteria air pollutants. [Read more on the standard](#)

EPA Takes Action to Maintain Public Health Protections for Communities Near Stationary Combustion Turbines

On April 15, 2024, EPA denied a petition to remove stationary combustion turbines from the list of sources subject to regulation for emissions of air toxics, maintaining public health protections for communities near these facilities. As a result of denying this petition, stationary combustion turbines will continue to be required to comply with national limits on hazardous air pollutants such as formaldehyde under section 112 of the Clean Air Act. [Read the press release](#)

Clean Water Act Methods Update Rule for the Analysis of Effluent

On April 16, 2024, EPA published a rule finalizing changes to its test procedures required to be used by industries and municipalities when analyzing the chemical, physical, and biological properties of wastewater and other samples for reporting under the EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program. EPA anticipates that these changes will provide increased flexibility for the regulated community in meeting monitoring requirements while improving data quality. This final rule is effective on June 17, 2024. [Read the rule in the Federal Register](#)

Other Solid Waste Incinerators; Air Curtain Incinerators Title V Permitting Provisions

On August 31, 2020, in accordance with requirements under the Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA performed a five-year review of the Standards of Performance for New Stationary

Sources and Emissions Guidelines for Existing Sources: Other Solid Waste Incineration (OSWI) Units, which includes certain very small municipal waste combustion (VSMWC) and institutional waste incineration (IWI) units. In response to supportive comments received on the August 2020 proposal, this action is finalizing, as proposed, to remove the title V permitting requirements for air curtain incinerators (ACIs) that only burn wood waste, clean lumber, yard waste, or a mixture of those, and are not located at title V major sources or subject to title V for other reasons. EPA is finalizing this proposed action now to simplify the compliance obligations for owners and operators of these types of units. The effective date of this rule was April 17, 2024. [Read the rule in the Federal Register](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Finalizes First-Ever National Drinking Water Standard to Protect 100M People from PFAS Pollution

On April 10, 2024, the Biden-Harris Administration issued the first-ever national, legally enforceable drinking water standard to protect communities from exposure to harmful per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), also known as “forever chemicals.” This final rule represents the most significant step to protect public health under [EPA’s PFAS Strategic Roadmap](#) and complements [President Biden’s government-wide action plan](#) to combat PFAS pollution. [Read the press release](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Finalizes Critical Rule to Clean up PFAS Contamination to Protect Public Health

On April 19, 2024, EPA took another step in its efforts to protect people from the health risks posed by exposure to “forever chemicals” in communities across the country. This final rule will designate two widely used PFAS chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund, and will help ensure that polluters pay to clean up their contamination. [Read the press release](#)

EPA Finalizes Stronger Chemical Risk Evaluation Process to Protect Workers and Communities

On April 23, 2024, EPA finalized a rule that strengthens its process for conducting risk evaluations on chemicals under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). These improvements to EPA’s processes advance the goals of this important chemical safety law, ensure that TSCA risk evaluations comprehensively account for the risks associated

with a chemical, and provide a solid foundation for protecting public health, including workers and communities, from toxic chemicals. The rule also includes changes to enhance environmental protections in communities overburdened by pollution, complementing the Biden-Harris Administration's ambitious [environmental justice agenda](#). [Read the press release](#)

Revisions and Confidentiality Determinations for Data Elements Under the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule

On April 25, 2024, EPA published a rule amending specific provisions in the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule to improve data quality and consistency. This action updates the General Provisions to reflect revised global warming potentials; expands reporting to additional sectors; improves the calculation, recordkeeping and reporting requirements by updating existing methodologies; improves data verifications; and provides for collection of additional data to better inform and be relevant to a wide variety of Clean Air Act provisions that the EPA carries out. This rule is effective January 1, 2025. [Read the rule in the Federal Register](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Finalizes Ban on Most Uses of Methylene Chloride, Protecting Workers and Communities from Fatal Exposure

On April 30, 2024, EPA finalized a ban on most uses of methylene chloride, a dangerous chemical known to cause cancer, neurotoxicity, liver harm and even death. Ending most uses of methylene chloride will save lives and complements [President Biden's Cancer Moonshot](#), a whole-of-government initiative to end cancer as we know it. [Read the press release](#)



KEY DATES AND OPPORTUNITIES

FY 2024 and FY 2025 Region 2 Source Reduction Assistance in Communities Grant Opportunity

EPA Region 2 is issuing this funding opportunity to fund Source Reduction Assistance in Communities (SRAC) grants that support research, investigation, experiments, multi-media service-learning approaches, studies, demonstrations, outreach, education and training using source reduction approaches for pollution prevention, otherwise known as 'P2'. EPA Region 2 is interested in receiving applications for results-oriented and multi-media community-based pollution prevention projects that are performed in and benefit

States or communities within EPA Region 2 (New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight federally recognized Indian Nations). [See the funding opportunity](#)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$1 Billion in Grants to Invest in America's Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Transition

On April 24, 2024, EPA announced the launch of the nearly \$1 billion Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Grant Program to fund the replacement of certain polluting heavy-duty vehicles with zero-emission vehicles and improve air quality for communities across the country, particularly those overburdened by air pollution. The deadline to apply for the 2024 Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Grant Program is July 25, 2024. EPA expects to announce awards by the end of this year. [Read the press release](#)



Dear Ask SBEAP:

I operate a kitchen countertop and cabinet manufacturing small business, and I recently heard about EPA's stricter air quality rules for particulate matter. How will this new EPA rule impact my business?

Sincerely, Mr. Chuck Wood

Dear Chuck:

In February 2024, the EPA implemented a significant rule to improve air quality. EPA strengthened the [National Ambient Air Quality Standards \(NAAQS\) for fine particulate matter](#), also known as PM_{2.5}. PM_{2.5} is a dangerous air pollutant linked to respiratory problems and heart disease. The EPA lowered the acceptable annual average level of PM_{2.5} from 12 to 9 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) to better protect public health. While these regulations don't directly target businesses, they may lead to stricter permitting requirements down the line. States will be working with the EPA to implement the new standard. The first impact happens 60 days after the final rule was published. Therefore, the permits issued before the new rule will not need adjustments. However, new or modified facilities applying for permits will need to consider the stricter limits. They may need to adjust their plans or install additional controls to meet the new standards for cleaner air. It should be noted that EPA is also finalizing revisions to other key aspects related to the PM NAAQS. This includes placing monitors in areas with

environmental justice concerns and updating the Air Quality Index to better reflect health risks.

If you have questions, your state or National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program, known as SBEAP, can help. Contact the [National SBEAP](#) hotline or your [state SBEAP](#).



SPOTLIGHT

EPA Recognizes Small Business Champions at Administrator's 34th Annual Small Business Programs Award Ceremony

On May 2, 2024, EPA hosted the [Administrator's 34th Annual Small Business Programs Award Ceremony](#) to honor the outstanding Fiscal Year 2023 small business championship of EPA programs, employees, and business and state partners from across the country. The awards ceremony was held in celebration of National Small Business Week, which ran from April 28 - May 4, 2024. [Watch the recording of the ceremony](#) and [view official photos from the event](#)

EPA Publishes Annual U.S. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

On April 11, 2024, EPA released its latest annual [Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks \(GHG Inventory\)](#), which presents a national-level overview of annual greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 to 2022. Net U.S. greenhouse gas emissions have declined 17% overall since 2005, which reflects the combined impacts of several factors, including energy market trends, technological changes including energy efficiency improvements, and the carbon intensity of energy fuel choices. [Read the press release](#)

EPA Announces Online Collection of Environmental Justice Resources

On April 23, 2024, EPA announced the [Environmental Justice Clearinghouse](#), a first-of-its-kind online collection of resources related to environmental justice. Directed by President Biden's [Executive Order on Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All](#), the Environmental Justice Clearinghouse will help the public access federal and non-federal resources online as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's ambitious environmental justice agenda. [Read the press release](#)

EPA Celebrates Earth Week and Agency Efforts to Prevent Plastic Pollution

On April 26, 2024, EPA wrapped up Earth Week by highlighting the work the agency is doing to prevent plastic pollution. Together, everyone can prevent plastic waste from entering the environment by reducing the waste they generate, reusing or recycling plastic products, and picking up littered materials. EPA's [Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution](#), together with the [National Recycling Strategy](#), identifies actions that governments, businesses, industry, and nonprofits in the U.S. can take to prevent and reduce plastic pollution. [Read the press release](#)



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