



SMALLBIZ@EPA

EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombuds Program

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE REGULATED SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

June 2026

EPA's Small Business Ombudsman Support

Have a question about a SmallBiz@EPA article or EPA press release? Need help getting to the best regulatory contact, web information, or have a small business item to add to SmallBiz@EPA?

Contact the [ASBO Program](#) through our live hotline service (M-F, 8:30AM - 4:30PM ET) or via [email](#). We're here to help with your small business compliance/enforcement questions and general asbestos concerns.

Contact Us

ASBO Hotline: 800-368-5888

Email: asbo@epa.gov

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POLICY AND REGULATIONS

EPA Issues Guidance on Streamlining Clean Air Act Title V Operating Permit Process to Expedite Approvals

On May 11, 2026, EPA issued guidance clarifying the agency's review process of Clean Air Act (CAA) Title V permits to streamline and expedite approvals. This action, which can shave additional time off the permitting process, gives American businesses regulatory certainty and states flexibility to work through the process with the public without slowing down the ability to issue a permit. This action reinforces EPA's commitment to reduce administrative burdens and permitting delays.

[Read more on Title V permitting guidance in the press release.](#)

EPA Launches Transparent, Interactive Permitting Map

On May 6, 2026, EPA launched the [EPA Permitting Authority Map](#). The interactive map identifies which regulatory agencies have the authority to issue permits covering all of EPA's permitting programs and environmental statutes. The development of the map is an integral resource in advancing Pillar 3 of Administrator Lee Zeldin's [Powering the Great American Comeback](#) initiative: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership.

[Read more on the new permitting map in the press release.](#)

Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons: Reconsideration of Certain Regulatory Requirements Promulgated Under the Technology Transitions Provisions of the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act of 2020

EPA is finalizing changes to regulations promulgated under the Technology Transitions provision of the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act of 2020 (AIM Act), which authorizes the Administrator to restrict fully, partially, or on a graduated schedule, the use of a "regulated substance" in the sector or subsector in which they are used. This final rule addresses administrative petitions and input received from regulated industry and other interested parties relevant to requirements and restrictions across various refrigeration and air conditioning subsectors.

Effective Date: July 27, 2026.

[Read more on the final hydrofluorocarbons rule in the Federal Register.](#)

EPA Withdraws Biden-era 2023 Affirmative Defense Rule, Restoring Protections for Energy and Manufacturing Facilities

On May 28, 2026, EPA withdrew the 2023 Biden EPA Affirmative Defense Rule to comply with a federal court mandate and restore longstanding protections for manufacturers, energy producers, and other facilities that exceed emissions limits due to unavoidable events such as equipment malfunctions or natural disasters. The withdrawal reinstates a framework that distinguishes between liability for noncompliance, and situations where noncompliance occurs as a result of circumstances beyond a facility's control.

[Read more on the rule withdrawal in the press release.](#)

EPA Clarifies When Oil and Natural Gas Producers Can Flare After Phase Out Deadline

On May 1, 2026, EPA issued guidance clarifying that current federal regulations allow oil and natural gas producers to continue routine flaring of associated gas at new oil wells in limited circumstances after the May 7, 2026, phase out deadline. This clarification is in direct response to concerns from several oil and natural gas owners and operators' that circumstances beyond their control could otherwise force them to halt production of American energy. According to the Department of Energy, EPA's clarification will allow for the continued production of tens of thousands of oil barrels per day, helping to reduce gasoline and diesel prices nationwide.

[Read more on the oil and natural gas rule deadline in the press release.](#)

Reporting Deadline Extension: Health and Safety Data Reporting Rule Under Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) Section 8(d)

EPA has extended the reporting deadline for the Health and Safety Data Reporting Rule under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) by one year to **May 21, 2027**.

Effective Date: May 22, 2026.

[Read more on the final rule and deadline extension in the Federal Register.](#)

Rule Withdrawal: Definition of Hazardous Waste Applicable to Corrective Action for Releases from Solid Waste Management Units

EPA has withdrawn its proposed rule entitled "Definition of Hazardous Waste Applicable to Corrective Action for Releases from Solid Waste Management Units." The agency issued the proposed rule to amend the regulatory definition of hazardous waste applicable to corrective action to address releases from solid waste management units at hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities permitted under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

Withdrawn as of May 8, 2026.

[Read more on the withdrawal notice in the Federal Register.](#)

Extension of Comment Period; Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (26-2)

On April 24, 2026, EPA issued significant new use rules (SNURs) under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) for chemical substances. The SNURs requires notification to EPA at least 90 days before commencing the manufacture (defined by statute to include import) or processing of any of these chemical substances for an activity that is designated as a significant new use in the SNUR. This document extends the comment period, which was scheduled to end on May 26, 2026, for 45 days.

Comments must be received on or before July 10, 2026.

[Read more on the proposed rule and make a public comment in the Federal Register.](#)

Reopening of Comment Period; Hazardous and Solid Waste Management System: Disposal of Coal Combustion Residuals from Electric Utilities

EPA issued a proposed rule on February 20, 2020, to establish a federal permit program for disposal of coal combustion residuals (CCR). EPA is reopening the comment period on that proposed rule and requesting public comment on several issues.

Comments must be received on or by June 29, 2026.

[Read more on the proposed rule and make a public comment in the Federal Register.](#)



KEY DATES & OPPORTUNITIES

P2 West Event, September 22-24, 2026, in Portland

In partnership with The Nevada Business Environmental Program at the University of Nevada, the Pollution Prevention (P2) Resource Center will host P2 West 2026 in-person, September 22-24 in Portland, Oregon. Join sustainability leaders, environmental professionals, researchers, industry innovators, and regulatory experts at P2 West, an engaging roundtable focused on practical strategies to reduce pollution at the source.

[For more information and how to register view PPRC's event page.](#)

EPA Gulf of America Division Announces Grants to Advance Innovative, Farmer-Led Conservation on Working Lands

On May 5, 2026, EPA's Gulf of America Division announced up to \$50 million in new grant funding to improve water quality, habitat, resilience, and environmental education by demonstrating innovative practices on America's working lands. The Farmer-to-Farmer grant program provides targeted support to farmer-led and farm-focused organizations operating within the Gulf of America watershed, encompassing EPA Regions 3 through 8. The agency expects to make 20 to 30 awards, totaling \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million, each with a five-year project period.

[The Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\) is now available.](#) Applications are due no later than June 19, 2026.

DISCOVER SBEAP

As required under [Section 507 of the 1990 CAA Amendments](#), state Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs) partner with EPA in providing regulatory compliance assistance to small businesses. Each month, a different state SBEAP is highlighted in SmallBiz@EPA to help promote cooperative federalism and the essential compliance assistance services SBEAPs provide around the country to the local small business community.

Kansas SBEAP: Technical Expertise, Sustainable Solutions, and Multimedia Compliance

For over 30 years, the [Kansas Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) (SBEAP) has been a key resource for the state's small business community. Hosted by the Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI) at Kansas State University, the program uses university-based technical expertise to provide free, confidential environmental assistance. A notable aspect of the program's stability and reach is that PPI is 100% grant-funded, receiving its primary support from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the EPA.

Rooted in a Strong Mission - Guided by PPI's mission to protect public health and promote sustainability, Kansas SBEAP acts as a confidential intermediary. The program helps small businesses stay compliant while finding practical ways to reduce waste and eliminate pollution at the source, supporting both a healthy environment and economic growth.

A One-Stop Multimedia Shop - Kansas SBEAP operates as a multimedia program, allowing business owners to handle various environmental requirements through a single point of contact. Their expertise includes:

- **Air Quality:** Helps facilities navigate complex air quality regulations, including air permits, asbestos protocols, and open burning rules. This program provides specific support for sectors like grain elevators and has

developed several technical calculators to help businesses simplify the math required to determine their Potential to Emit (PTE).

- **Waste Management & Food Recovery:** Help with hazardous waste regulations—including generator status and universal waste—along with guidance on the EPA’s food recovery hierarchy to keep unused food out of landfills.
- **Water Quality:** Technical support for industrial stormwater compliance, helping facilities create Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWP3) and implement Best Management Practices (BMPs). The program also provides resources on Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) to help prevent nutrient runoff.
- **Storage Tanks:** Specialized help for Underground and Aboveground Storage Tanks (UST/AST), including leak detection guides and required training for A/B operators.

By taking a holistic approach to environmental management, Kansas SBEAP helps small businesses focus on their operations while keeping their local communities clean.

To learn more about Kansas SBEAP’s services, visit www.sbeap.org or call the technical hotline at 800-578-8898.



SPOTLIGHT

EPA Proposes Redefining “Begin Actual Construction” to Remove Unnecessary Impediments to Building and Advance Economic Progress

On May 11, 2026, EPA issued a proposal to clarify preconstruction permitting requirements and bring flexibility to building non-emitting components or structures, such as certain cement pads and wiring, piping, and associated support structures. If finalized as proposed, Americans will be able to start building non-emitting components or structures for essential power generation, data centers, and manufacturing prior to obtaining a major New Source Review permit.

[Read more on the redefinition and proposal in the press release.](#)

EPA Announces \$2.9 Billion for States to Reduce Lead in Drinking Water and Protect Americans’ Health

On May 20, 2026, EPA announced nearly \$2.9 billion in funding to protect Americans from exposure to lead in drinking water. Lead is a powerful neurotoxin that is especially harmful to children. This investment will go directly to states through the [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund \(DWSRF\)](#). This funding will advance state and local efforts to find and replace lead pipes (also known as lead service lines) that deliver water to homes. Communities can use these funds for

identifying lead pipes, planning removal projects, and funding replacement of these lead service lines.

[Read more on the initiative and funding award in the press release.](#)

ASBESTOS UPDATES

In one comprehensive program, the Asbestos and Small Business Ombuds (ASBO) serves two distinct roles: (1) the Asbestos Ombuds (AO) role and (2) the Small Business Ombuds role. EPA's Asbestos Ombudsman role is a requirement defined under the [Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act](#). In response to the AO role, each month the bulletin will also include asbestos-related information, resources and regulatory updates when available.

Health Effects from Exposure to Asbestos

Exposure to asbestos increases your risk of developing lung disease. That risk is made worse by smoking. In general, the greater the exposure to asbestos, the greater the chance of developing [harmful health effects](#). Disease symptoms may take many years to develop following exposure. Asbestos-related conditions can be difficult to identify. Healthcare providers usually identify the possibility of asbestos exposure and related health conditions like lung disease by taking a thorough medical history. This includes looking at the person's medical, work, cultural and environmental history.

Three of the major health effects associated with asbestos exposure are:

- lung cancer
- mesothelioma, a rare form of cancer that is found in the thin lining of the lung, chest and the abdomen and heart
- asbestosis, a serious progressive, long-term, non-cancer disease of the lungs.

For more information on these and other health effects of asbestos exposure see the [Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#) and the [National Cancer Institute](#).

Learn more about [EPA Actions to Protect the Public from Exposure to Asbestos](#).

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