

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**STATEMENT OF  
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OFFICE OF SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**February 27, 2003**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Marianne Horinko, Assistant Administrator of the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Also appearing today is Mr. Tracy Mehan, Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Water. We are pleased to be here to discuss President Bush's budget request for EPA and our views on water infrastructure, brownfields, Superfund, and other programs that fall within the Agency's Offices of Water and Solid Waste and Emergency Response.

The President's budget provides the necessary funds for EPA to carry out our mission efficiently and effectively - to protect human health and safeguard the environment. The FY 2004 budget request is \$7.6 billion, which includes another increase for the brownfields program and a significant increase for the Superfund program.

The President's budget request reflects a continued commitment to leave America's air cleaner, its water purer, and its land better protected than this Administration found it. The President' budget request includes a \$280 million increase over last year's request for EPA's core operating programs for air, water, land, and enforcement.

## **OSWER PROGRAMS**

### **Superfund**

The President's budget requests a \$150 million increase for the Superfund remedial action program. What that means is that these funds are specifically targeted for cleanup construction activities, enabling the Agency to maintain cleanup progress at the more than 380 sites under construction and start construction cleanup at 10 to 15 additional Superfund sites over and above the cleanup EPA would have started in FY 2004. The additional funds will be used to begin construction at sites the pose the highest risk to human health and at sites that will reach construction completion over the next two years. The increase in the President's request will raise overall Superfund program funding to \$1.39 billion. The Superfund program not only protects human health and the environment by cleaning up toxic waste sites, but also works with both public and private partners to promote reuse and redevelopment of Superfund sites.

As of January 2003, cleanup construction has been completed at 848 private and federal National Priority List (NPL) sites. Since the less complex sites have been cleaned up, the remaining sites present more challenges. Cleanup construction projects are under way or completed at 93 percent of the sites on the NPL. In FY 2004, EPA expects the Superfund program to complete cleanup construction at 40 Superfund sites. This target continues to reflect the number of large, complex sites that have entered or are ready to enter the construction phase of the Superfund program.

The Superfund removal and emergency response program started 426 removal starts in FY 2002, and to date, has completed more than 6,500 removals at toxic waste sites to immediately reduce the threat to human health and the environment. In the past two years, the program has responded to incidents at the World Trade Center, the Capitol Hill Complex, and more recently at the West Pharmaceutical company explosion and fire in North Carolina.

### **Brownfields**

The President's FY 2004 budget request provides a \$10.7 million increase in funding for the brownfields program for a total request of \$210.7 million. This follows a doubling of brownfields cleanup funding in the President's FY 2003 request. Through FY 2004, EPA estimates that funding will have generated more than 5,800 brownfield site assessments and leveraged more than \$6 billion in cleanup and redevelopment funds.

EPA is committed to building and enhancing effective partnerships that allow us to safeguard and restore land across America. Brownfields cleanup and redevelopment remains one of the Administration's top environmental priorities. The brownfields program will draw on these additional resources to enhance State and Tribal response programs that restore and reclaim contaminated and potentially contaminated sites. By protecting land and revitalizing contaminated sites throughout the United States, EPA continues to expand efforts to foster healthy and economically sustainable communities.

### **Oil Spill Program**

The President's budget request provides \$16.2 million for EPA's oil program. EPA's oil program focuses on preventing oil spills from occurring, reduces the risk of hazardous exposure to people and the environment, and responds to spills when necessary. More than 20,000 spills are reported to the Federal government each year. EPA evaluates as many as 13,000 spills to determine if its assistance is required. On average, EPA either manages the oil spill response or oversees response efforts of private parties at approximately 300 sites per year.

EPA's spill prevention efforts protect inland waterways through oil spill prevention, preparedness, and enforcement activities associated with the more than 400,000 non-transportation

related oil storage facilities that EPA regulates.

## **Homeland Security - Emergency Response**

EPA plays a vital role in responding to hazardous material releases and preparing for, and responding to, terrorist or other intentional incidents because of our unique expertise and experience in emergency preparedness and response. The \$123 million in the President's budget request would allow the Agency to continue providing leadership and guidance for the protection of the nation's critical water infrastructure while upgrading and enhancing our emergency response capabilities in our integrated emergency response program.

Incorporated in this request are targeted investments to strengthen the Agency's readiness and response capabilities, including the development of a dedicated "decontamination team," for the cleanup of critical buildings and infrastructure, state-of-the-art equipment, and highly specialized training for On Scene Coordinators (OSCs). For example, in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), EPA currently has OSCs providing incident command support as part of the Space Shuttle Columbia response. EPA will continue to conduct research and provide guidance and technical support for Federal, state, and local governments, and other institutions in the areas of building decontamination, water security, and rapid risk assessment.

## **Chemical Security**

We are working with the Department of Homeland Security and other stakeholders to strengthen protections for our Nation's chemical facilities. Using our expertise in the prevention of accidental hazardous chemical releases, EPA is working with State and local governmental entities, industry trade associations, and professional societies to increase attention to facility site security. EPA is a participant on the American Chemistry Council's security committee and is actively involved with the Center for Chemical Process Safety which has a security committee that is working aggressively to provide guidance on site security to chemical plants. Further, EPA has issued, and will continue to issue, alerts and advisories to a wide variety of industry sectors about chemical site security and chemical theft.

## **NEW INITIATIVES**

EPA has taken the lead on several new initiatives to promote a cleaner environment, encourage recycling and waste minimization, and advance innovative approaches to environmental challenges.

### **The Resource Conservation Challenge (RCC)**

The Resource Conservation Challenge is encouraging businesses, manufacturers and consumers to help achieve two goals by 2005: increase the national recycling rate from 30 to 35 percent, and

reduce the generation of the 30 most harmful chemicals in hazardous waste. This initiative, which EPA officially launched on September 9, 2002, is a major national effort to conserve our natural resources through waste reduction and energy recovery.

Some of the approaches EPA is using to help meet these two goals include: forming partnerships such as the National Waste Minimization Partnership Program; stimulating infrastructure development; providing education, training, outreach and technology assistance to businesses, government organizations, institutions, and Tribes; and educating and increasing environmental awareness among consumers, including youth and the underserved communities. Our first Waste Minimization Trends Report shows a 44-percent reduction for 20 of the 30 harmful chemicals. Our 2000 annual report characterizing municipal solid waste indicates we are currently at a 30 percent national recycling rate, which is nearly double the 1990 recycling rate.

### **Innovations Initiative**

The Innovations Initiative supports land revitalization, recycling, waste minimization, energy recovery and partnerships through creative approaches. The pilot program funds innovative ideas to solving environmental challenges. In fiscal year 2002, EPA selected 12 innovative pilots totaling \$500,000. In fiscal year 2003, EPA will hold two pilot selection rounds. States, Tribes, local governments and external stakeholders are being encouraged to participate by submitting applications. The innovation projects are coordinated and selected by a workgroup comprised of EPA Regions and Headquarters. EPA is also developing a series of other activities, including training, awards, and industry pilots.

### **CONCLUSION**

I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee to address the Superfund and brownfields programs, and other programs entrusted to the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. The President's budget request for EPA will help ensure that we are able to accomplish the Agency's important mission - to protect human health and safeguard the environment.