

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 15 2007

OFFICE OF WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: *National Water Program Guidance: FY 2008*

FROM:

Michael H. Shapiro

Deputy Assistant Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Shapiro".

TO:

National Water Program Managers and Staff

The final *National Water Program Guidance: FY 2008*, which defines environmental and public health goals and program strategies for the National Water Program for FY 2008, is now available on the internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/ocfopage/npmguidance/index.htm>. Printed copies of the *Guidance* are available from the EPA Office of Water.

Priorities for the water program in FY 2008 are summarized in the Executive Summary of the *Guidance*. These priorities are:

- Support Sustainable Water Infrastructure;
- Improve Water Security and Emergency Response;
- Contribute to the President's Wetlands Goals;
- Improve Monitoring;
- Restore Water quality on a Watershed Basis; and
- Improve Compliance with Drinking Water Standards.

The *National Water Program Guidance: FY 2008* is modeled on the national guidance for FY 2007, but includes some important differences.

- The environmental and public health "outcome" measures in this *FY 2008 Guidance* are updated to reflect the revised and improved outcome measures developed for the new EPA *Strategic Plan*. For example, a new measure of progress to improve water quality in watersheds is now included in the *Guidance*.
- This *FY 2008 Guidance* describes program strategies supporting the aquatic ecosystem subobjectives recently added to the EPA *Strategic Plan*. These new subobjectives include Long Island Sound, South Florida, Puget Sound, the Columbia River Basin, and the Pacific Islands.
- The *FY 2008 Guidance* reflects work by EPA, States and Tribes to streamline reporting. The number of measures reported on by EPA Regions was reduced from 96 in 2007 to 68 in 2008. Of those 68 measures, 45 have "targets." Other measures are reported by EPA Headquarters or by Great Waterbody Offices.

- The program implementation strategies described in this *Guidance* closely track the FY 2007 strategies. Some examples of new areas of attention include:
 - Comprehensive statewide mercury reduction programs;
 - Establishment of a new EPA workgroup addressing climate change impacts on water programs; and
 - Increased emphasis on the implementation of TMDLs as a critical follow-up to the development and approval of TMDLs.

The Agency planning process provides for the development of draft EPA Regional and national commitments for FY 2008, based on the targets for the measures identified in this *Guidance*, by July 9th. I encourage Regions to do their best to develop commitments that meet or exceed the targets in the *Guidance* while reflecting the needs and priorities in each Region. Final commitments are to be negotiated by this fall.

Once final commitments are in place, the National Water Program will monitor progress throughout FY 2008. The program evaluation “feedback loop” includes the following key elements:

- Reporting of progress toward environmental and public health goals and program commitments at the mid-year and at the end of the year, including identification of “best practices”;
- Continued efforts to share program perspectives among Regional and HQ program managers through HQ visits to Regional; and
- Cooperation with the other offices, such as the Office of Management and Budget, EPA Inspector General, Government Accountability Office, and National Academy of Sciences, to consider conclusions of evaluation studies of water programs and adopt recommended “best practices” where appropriate.

If we can reinforce a strong annual planning process with an equally effective performance assessment effort, the National Water Program will be well prepared to continue its strong performance in the years ahead.

Thank you for the outstanding work you have done to continue progress toward cleaner and safer water for all Americans. I look forward to working with you as we continue with this important mission.

cc: Lyons Gray, Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Benjamin Grumbles, Assistant Administrator for Water