



Press Advisory

Following are some Agency developments which may interest you. If you need more information on any of these subjects, call the appropriate contact.

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2003

EPA AWARDS WATER SECURITY TRAINING GRANTS

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As part of EPA's initiative to help small drinking water utilities assess their vulnerabilities to terrorism, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water G. Tracy Mehan III announced the awarding of \$1.5 million in grants for Water Security Training and Assistance to five nonprofit training and technical assistance organizations. The program is authorized under the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002. The following organizations will receive grants: the Maryland Center for Environmental Training at the College of Southern Maryland, La Plata, Md.; the National Environmental Services Center at West Virginia University, Morgantown, W.Va.; the National Rural Water Association, Duncan, Okla.; the Rural Community Assistance Program, Washington, D.C.; and the Water Environment Federation, Alexandria, Va. Grant funds, up to \$300,000 per organization, will be used to support "Train-the-Trainer" efforts to build staff expertise in drinking water security and provide no cost training to state, tribal, or local agencies that assist drinking water systems. The program's goal is to provide a pool of professionals who can deliver training and technical assistance to drinking water systems serving populations of less than 50,000 people. For more information on EPA's water infrastructure security efforts go to: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/security/>.

EPA STRENGTHENS REGIONAL HAZE PROVISIONS FOR WESTERN STATES AND ELIGIBLE INDIAN TRIBES; EFFORT WILL IMPROVE VISIBILITY IN WESTERN U.S.

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EPA today approved a proposal to amend its regional haze rule, incorporating provisions designed to improve visibility in the 16 federally-protected national parks and wilderness areas on the Colorado Plateau, including the Grand Canyon. The new provisions set regional milestones for reducing emissions of sulfur dioxide, a key compound in the formation of fine particles and regional haze, that participating states must meet between 2003 and 2018. The new provisions were first proposed to the Agency in September 2000 by the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP), which includes representatives of western states, tribes and federal agencies. According to the WRAP plan, states and tribes will collect annual sulfur dioxide emission reports from power plants and other large sources and generate a regional emissions total. If the regional total exceeds the annual milestone, a backstop sulfur dioxide market trading program would be triggered, ensuring that emission reduction milestones and visibility goals are met. Haze forms when sunlight strikes very small pollution particles in the air. The same pollution that causes haze also poses serious health risks, especially for people with chronic respiratory diseases.

**PROPOSAL TO DELIST METHYL ETHYL KETONE AS
REGULATED TOXIC AIR POLLUTANT**

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EPA is proposing to remove methyl ethyl ketone (MEK) from the Clean Air Act's list of 188 hazardous air pollutants emitted from large industrial facilities. Since 1996, the Agency has exhaustively reviewed the potential health and environmental effects that could result from exposure to MEK emitted from industrial facilities, and EPA has concluded that the sources of exposure regulated by the Clean Air Act are not likely to cause adverse human health or environmental problems. The health effects information on MEK that EPA used to make this decision has undergone independent scientific peer review. MEK is used as a solvent in the surface coatings industry. Industries also use MEK for producing adhesives, magnetic tapes, printing inks, degreasing and cleaning fluids, antioxidants, and perfumes. The Agency's proposed delisting of MEK as a hazardous air pollutant does not affect other ways this chemical will be regulated. MEK will continue to be regulated as a volatile organic compound because of its contribution to smog. In addition, MEK emissions would still be reported as part of EPA's Toxics Release Inventory. This proposal is open to public comment for 90 days after publication in the Federal Register.

ENFORCEMENT WRAP-UP

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**ALABAMA MAN ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF SELLING
COUNTERFEIT AND ADULTERATED PESTICIDES**

William C. Murphy of Glencoe, Ala., was arrested on May 15 and appeared in U.S. District Court in Birmingham, Ala., to face charges that he violated the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. The indictment alleges that the defendant, operating under the name of Sierra Chemical, sold counterfeit, misbranded, adulterated and mislabeled pesticides to numerous municipalities in Alabama and Georgia. Selling altered, counterfeit or improperly branded and labeled pesticides to cities can present a significant public health and environmental risk if the pesticides are used to control mosquitos and other insects that carry West Nile Virus and other diseases. The case was investigated by the EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and the FBI. It is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Alabama and the Environmental Crimes Section of the U.S. Department of Justice. An indictment is merely an allegation and all defendants are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in a court of law.

MISSOURI HOG FARM OWNER ADMITS TO NEGLIGENT SEWAGE DISCHARGE

In the U.S. District Court in St. Louis, Brian Nobis, owner of the Nobis Hog Farm in Holliday, Mo., pled guilty on May 12 to negligently discharging sewage from a sewage treatment lagoon into a tributary of the Middle Fork of the Salt River. The discharge of sewage into surface waters can make them hazardous to fish and wildlife and can also make them unfit for recreational and drinking water uses. Nobis faces a maximum possible sentence of up to one year in prison and/or a fine of up to \$100,000. The defendant has already agreed to a \$33,000 civil settlement, \$28,000 of which will be suspended if he implements improved environmental practices. The case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. It is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office in St. Louis.