

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AGENCY**
[OPPTS-00169; FRL-4956-8]
**Consumer Labeling Initiative; Notice of
Project Initiation**
AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: EPA is launching a voluntary Consumer Labeling Initiative (CLI) pilot project to invite ideas from its customers, including consumers, industry, and health and safety professionals, on ways to improve the environmental, health, and safe use information appearing on household product labels, specifically home and garden pesticides and household hard surface cleaners. The project goal is to ensure that consumers have and understand the information they need in order to make responsible product choices based on their own needs and values, and to use chosen products safely as directed. This voluntary project is not intended to produce new regulations or mandatory requirements.

DATES: Written submissions must be received on or before April 22, 1996.

ADDRESSES: All nonconfidential submissions should be sent to: OPPT Document Control Officer (7407), AR-139 - Consumer Labeling Initiative, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Nonconfidential submissions will be placed in the Administrative Record, file number AR-139, for public inspection. Persons interested in reviewing the record should contact the TSCA Nonconfidential Information Center (NCIC), NE Mall Rm. B-607, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460, (202) 260-7099. The TSCA NCIC is open from noon to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. See the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION unit of this document for information on submitting comments containing confidential business information (CBI).

Information may also be submitted electronically by sending electronic mail (e-mail) to: ncic@epamail.epa.gov. Electronic communications must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Submissions will also be accepted on disks in WordPerfect in 5.1 file format or ASCII file format. All submissions in electronic form must be identified by the file number "AR-139." No CBI should be submitted through e-mail. Electronic comments on this notice may be filed online at many Federal Depository Libraries. Additional

information on electronic submissions can be found in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION unit of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary F. Dominiak, CLI Task Force Co-Chair, Chemical Control Division (7405), Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, Rm. E-209B, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460, (202) 260-3068.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA is interested in improving the labeling of products used in the home. Of particular concern are labels of pesticide products which are often difficult to understand and inconsistent with non-pesticide products of similar composition, such as cleaners. EPA is proposing that the CLI examine labeling of certain non-pesticide household products to instruct this effort, and to seek ways in which the consumer can be better served by the way information is presented on like kinds of products. EPA is not proposing to duplicate efforts of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and in fact has included CPSC in the CLI Task Force to both learn from the Agency's experience, and to avoid any potential unnecessary overlap between EPA and CPSC. Specifically, EPA is not planning to propose regulatory changes to non-pesticide household product labeling which is already under the purview of CPSC. The CLI is a voluntary, partnership effort in the spirit of reinventing government to find better ways to serve industry and consumer customers. The CLI is intended to make it easier for consumers to find and understand environmental, health, and safe use information on household chemical product labels. The CLI pilot project will focus on home and garden pesticides and on household hard surface cleaners, including disinfectant and antimicrobial cleaning products.

EPA has formed a special State and Federal CLI Task Force including representatives from the CPSC, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the California Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment, the American Association of Pest Control Officials (AAPCO), and the Forum of State and Tribal Toxic Actions (FOSTTA). Through the CLI Task Force, EPA will closely coordinate with other regulatory agencies responsible for consumer labeling in order to learn from their experiences and to avoid duplicating or interfering with their existing regulatory programs and requirements. The Task Force will seek voluntary approaches for achieving its goals and will cooperate across

Federal and State programs and with international, industry, consumer, and environmental groups. New regulations and mandatory requirements are not the intended outcome of the CLI, but the project may recommend subsequent rulemaking to amend existing FIFRA regulations in order to remove barriers to label improvements suggested by the CLI for household pesticide products.

The pilot project will focus on assessing consumer needs regarding labeling as it relates to the use and disposal of home and garden pesticides and household hard surface cleaners, including disinfectant and antimicrobial products. The Task Force will assist EPA in: (1) Identifying and inviting input from the diverse stakeholders who are interested in the issues, including companies and organizations interested in becoming partners in exploring the issues of label improvement; (2) conducting focus groups to ask consumers directly how to improve both the content and presentation of environmental, health, and safe use information on labels; and (3) conducting a review of the existing literature to update and expand the current understanding of consumer-related product labeling. This information will be used by EPA to generate options and recommendations to the Administrator for future private and Agency action to bring about label improvement.

Additional details and descriptive materials on this project can be obtained by calling the number appearing in FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. Interested parties are invited to help by providing information regarding existing research on consumer labeling issues. Producers of household consumer products who are interested in becoming industry partners in this project are invited to call and identify themselves. Industry partners may be asked to share their knowledge of the scientific, marketing, economic, and other factors affecting product labeling, and to take leadership roles, e.g., piloting potential labeling improvements.

An administrative record has been established for this project under file number "AR-139." A public version of this record, including printed, paper versions of electronic submissions, which does not include any information claimed as CBI, is available for inspection from noon to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The public record is located in the TSCA Nonconfidential Information Center, Rm. NE-B607, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460.

Electronic submissions can be sent directly to EPA at:

ncic@epamail.epa.gov

Electronic information must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption.

The official record for this project, as well as the public version, as described above, will be kept in paper form. Accordingly, EPA will transfer all submissions received electronically into printed, paper form as they are received and will place the paper copies in the official record which will also include all information submitted directly in writing. The official record is the paper

record maintained at the address in ADDRESSES at the beginning of this document.

Any person who submits written information containing CBI must mark the submission as "Confidential Business Information." Submissions not claimed as confidential at the time of submission will be placed in the public file. Any submissions marked as "Confidential Business Information" will be treated in accordance with the procedures in 40 CFR part 2. Any party submitting information claimed to be CBI must prepare and separately submit a public version of the information that EPA can place in the public file. CBI

information should be submitted in triplicate to Document Control Office (7407), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. CBI submissions should be mailed in a double envelope with "CBI" and the Administrative Record file number AR-139 marked on the inner envelope, and the submission should be marked with Administrative Record file number AR-139.

Dated: March 5, 1996.

Lynn R. Goldman,
*Assistant Administrator, Office of Prevention,
Pesticides and Toxic Substances.*

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