

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**[FRL-5962-9]****Information for States on Recommended Operator Certification Requirements****AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In this document, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the public availability of EPA 816-R-98-001, "Information for States on Recommended Operator Certification Requirements."

Section 1420(d)(2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as amended in 1996, requires EPA, through a partnership with States, public water systems, and the public, to develop information for States on recommended operator certification requirements. EPA is required to publish this information by February 6, 1998. Consistent with these statutory requirements, the EPA appointed such a work group (the Partnership), under the general provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-423), to provide advice on matters relating to operator certification. The Partnership held formal meetings in March, June, August, and September of 1997. These meetings were advertised in the **Federal Register** and were open to the public. The "Information for States on Recommended Operator Certification Requirements," as developed by the Partnership, consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 contains a summary of the existing State operator certification programs. Chapter 2 contains excerpts from the National Research Council's book entitled *Safe Water From Every Tap* including the Executive Summary and Chapter 6—Training Operators for Small Systems. Chapter 3 contains the "Operator Certification Program Standards" developed by the Association of Boards of Certification. Chapter 4 contains a listing of State Drinking Water Administrators and Operator Certification Program Officers. The materials in this package are offered for information only and are intended to assist the States as they begin to review their operator certification programs. This information will be used by EPA as background material to develop operator certification guidelines, as required by Section 1419 of the SDWA. These guidelines, which will be published by February 1999, will specify the minimum requirements for a State operator certification program.

DATES: The document is available beginning February 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Copies of "Information for States on Recommended Operator Certification Requirements" are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline, telephone (800) 426-4791. Hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday excluding Federal Holidays. Copies are also available from the Office of Water Resource Center (RC4100), U.S. EPA, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC, 20460. Also, Chapters 1 (excluding appendices), 3 and 4 of the document may be obtained from the EPA Web Site at the URL address: "http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Safe Drinking Water Hotline, telephone (800) 426-4791. For technical inquiries, contact Richard Naylor, Designated Federal Officer, Drinking Water Implementation and Assistance Division, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (4606), U.S. EPA, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC, 20460. The telephone is (202) 260-5135 and the e-mail address is naylor.richard@epamail.epa.gov.

Dated: January 30, 1998.

Robert Perciasepe,

Assistant Administrator, Office of Water.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**[FRL-5962-8]****Notice of Availability for Information for States on Developing Affordability Criteria for Drinking Water****AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency is making available Information for States on Developing Affordability Criteria for Drinking Water. The Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 require the Agency to publish information to assist states in developing affordability criteria. The Amendments require that the Agency consult with the States and the Rural Utilities Service of the Department of Agriculture in developing this information. The document being made available today was developed by a diverse working group of stakeholders under the auspices of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC). The full NDWAC reviewed a draft of this document and

recommended to EPA that it be made available for public comment. The availability of the draft document was announced in a **Federal Register** notice published on November 21, 1997. The comment period closed on December 31, 1997. The final document being made available today fully reflects the Agency's consultation with the States and the Rural Utilities Service, and, to the extent possible, the comments received from other sources.

DATES: The statute requires that this information be published by February 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Address all inquiries concerning this document to Peter E. Shanaghan, Small Systems Coordinator, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, Mail Code 4606, 401 M Street S.W., Washington DC 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter E. Shanaghan, 202-260-5813 or shanaghan.peter@epamail.epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A copy of the document may be obtained by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. The hotline operates Monday through Friday, 9:00 am—5:30 pm (EST). The document may also be downloaded from EPA's homepage, <http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW>.

Dated: January 30, 1998.

Robert Perciasepe,

Assistant Administrator, Office of Water.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**[FRL-5952-3]****Sole Source Aquifer Designation of Poolesville Area Aquifer System, Lower Western Montgomery County, MD****AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.**ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Regional Administrator of Region III of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that the portion of the Piedmont aquifer system that underlies Poolesville and the surrounding area in lower western Montgomery County, Maryland (denominated as "Poolesville Area Aquifer System") is the sole or principal source of drinking water for this area and if the aquifer system were contaminated would create a significant hazard to public health. This determination is in response to a