

will be evaluated relative to the scope and research needs of the Department of Energy. The brief preapplication must consist of (1) one to two pages of narrative describing the research objectives and methods of accomplishment, (2) a letter from the appropriate state EPSCoR coordinator endorsing the preapplication, and (3) a letter of intent from the DOE National Laboratory researcher confirming willingness to collaborate on the project. The preapplications will be grouped according to programmatic areas of interest to the DOE and will be reviewed by DOE laboratory management to determine the priority of the proposed research. The preapplications will also be reviewed by the relevant programmatic research area program manager. DOE program managers will be asked to rank EPSCoR preapplications by program priority. They will also be asked for their willingness to provide co-funding if a project is selected for approval. Based on this review, DOE/EPSCoR management will recommend formal submission of applications to the Department. A telephone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address are required parts of the preapplication. Instructions regarding the contents of a preapplication and other preapplication guidelines can be found on the SC Grants and Contracts web site at: <http://www.sc.doe.gov/production/grants/preapp.html>. DOE is under no obligation to pay for any costs associated with the preparation or submission of applications if an award is not made. In addition to the project description, all preapplications and formal applications must include the following information:

(1) Applications should explain the relevance of the proposed research to the agency's programmatic needs. On the cover page, applicants should specify the relevant DOE technical program office, and if known, the name of the program manager, and telephone number. DOE program descriptions and the contact person information may be accessed via the web at: <http://www.doe.gov>.

(2) Applications must demonstrate clear evidence of collaborative intent, including a delineation of each partner's role and contribution to the research effort as well as a "Letter-of-Intent" from the participating DOE National Laboratory, facility, or center.

(3) Applications must explain the individual value to both the EPSCoR and the National Laboratory partners. There should be clear objectives, not necessarily the same, for each partner.

### Merit Review

Applications will be subjected to scientific merit review (peer review) and will be evaluated against the following evaluation criteria, listed in descending order of importance as codified at 10 CFR part 605.10(d).

1. Scientific and/or Technical Merit of the Project;
2. Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach;
3. Competency of Applicant's Personnel and Adequacy of Proposed Resources;
4. Reasonableness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Budget.

The evaluation will include program policy factors such as the relevance of the proposed research to the terms of the announcement and an agency's programmatic needs and priority. External peer reviewers are selected with regard to both their scientific expertise and the absence of conflict-of-interest issues. Non-federal reviewers will often be used, and submission of an application constitutes agreement that this is acceptable to the investigator(s) and the submitting institution.

Applications received by SC under its current competitive application mechanisms that meet the criteria outlined in this notice may also be deemed appropriate for consideration under this announcement and may be funded under this program.

General information about the development and submission of preapplications, applications, eligibility, limitations, evaluation and selection processes, and other policies and procedures are contained in the Application Guide for the Office of Science Financial Assistance Program and 10 CFR part 605. Electronic access to the latest version of SC's Application Guide is possible via the Internet at the following web address: <http://www.sc.doe.gov/production/grants/grants.html>.

Additional information regarding format, preparation and specific requirements for this program may be found at the following web address: <http://www.sc.doe.gov/production/bes/EPSCoR/APPL11.HTM> and takes precedence.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for this program is 81.049, and the solicitation control number is ERFAP 10 CFR part 605.

Issued in Washington, DC on November 25, 2002.

**John Rodney Clark,**

*Associate Director of Science for Resource Management.*

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**BILLING CODE 6450-01-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Energy Information Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Energy Information Administration (EIA), Department of Energy (DOE).

**ACTION:** Agency information collection activities: submission for OMB review; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The EIA has submitted the energy information collection listed at the end of this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and a three-year extension under section 3507(h)(1) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq).

**DATES:** Comments must be filed by January 2, 2003. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments but find it difficult to do so within that period, you should contact the OMB Desk Officer for DOE listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Bryon Allen, OMB Desk Officer for DOE, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget. To ensure receipt of the comments by the due date, submission by FAX (202-395-7285) or e-mail ([Ballen@omb.eop.gov](mailto:Ballen@omb.eop.gov)) is recommended. The mailing address is 726 Jackson Place NW., Washington, DC 20503. The OMB DOE Desk Officer may be telephoned at (202) 395-3087. (A copy of your comments should also be provided to EIA's Statistics and Methods Group at the address below.)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to Herbert Miller. To ensure receipt of the comments by the due date, submission by FAX (202-287-1705) or e-mail ([herbert.miller@eia.doe.gov](mailto:herbert.miller@eia.doe.gov)) is recommended. The mailing address is Statistics and Methods Group (EI-70), Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585-0670. Mr. Miller may be contacted by telephone at (202) 287-1711.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This section contains the following

information about the energy information collection submitted to OMB for review: (1) The collection numbers and title; (2) the sponsor (*i.e.*, the Department of Energy component); (3) the current OMB docket number (if applicable); (4) the type of request (*i.e.*, new, revision, extension, or reinstatement); (5) response obligation (*i.e.*, mandatory, voluntary, or required to obtain or retain benefits); (6) a description of the need for and proposed use of the information; (7) a categorical description of the likely respondents; and (8) an estimate of the total annual reporting burden (*i.e.*, the estimated number of likely respondents times the proposed frequency of response per year times the average hours per response).

1. ERA-766R.
2. General Counsel.
3. OMB Number 1903-0073.
4. Three-year approval requested.
5. Mandatory.

6. The ERA-766R is the recordkeeping requirements contained in 10 CFR 210.1 of DOE's General Allocation and Price Rules. The data are used to help DOE's General Counsel in its efforts to complete the enforcement program with respect to prior petroleum price and allocation regulations. No data are submitted; only maintenance of records is required.

7. Business or other for-profit.
8. 400 hours (100 respondents  $\times$  1 response per year  $\times$  4 hours per response).

**Statutory Authority:** Section 3507(h)(1) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-13)(44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq).

Issued in Washington, DC, November 27, 2002.

**Jay H. Casselberry,**

*Agency Clearance Officer, Statistics and Methods Group, Energy Information Administration.*

[FR Doc. 02-30562 Filed 12-2-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Energy Information Administration

#### Policy Statement; Energy Information Administration Policy for Release of the Weekly Petroleum Status Report; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Energy Information Administration (EIA), Department of Energy (DOE).

**ACTION:** Policy statement. Energy Information Administration Policy for release of the weekly petroleum status report; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Energy Information Administration (EIA) is soliciting comments on a proposed change in the policy for the release time of EIA's Weekly Petroleum Status Report (WPSR). Under the proposed policy, the release time would be changed to coincide with normal New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) and International Petroleum Exchange (IPE) trading hours.

**DATES:** Comments must be filed by January 2, 2003. If you anticipate difficulty in submitting comments within that period, contact the person listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Ronald W. O'Neill. To ensure receipt of the comments by the due date, submission by FAX (202-586-5846) or e-mail ([ron.oneill@eia.doe.gov](mailto:ron.oneill@eia.doe.gov)) is recommended. The mailing address is Ronald W. O'Neill, M.S. EI-42, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585-0640. Alternatively, Mr. O'Neill may be contacted by telephone at (202) 586-2991.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to Ronald W. O'Neill at the address above. The WPSR is available on EIA's Internet site at [http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil\\_gas/petroleum/data\\_publications/weekly\\_petroleum\\_status\\_report/wpsr.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/weekly_petroleum_status_report/wpsr.html).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. Background
- II. Current Actions
- III. Request for Comments

#### I. Background

The Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (Pub. L. No. 93-275, 15 U.S.C. 761 *et seq.*) and the DOE Organization Act (Pub. L. No. 95-91, 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*) requires that EIA carry out a centralized, comprehensive, and unified energy information program. This program collects, evaluates, assembles, analyzes, and disseminates information on energy resource reserves, production, demand, technology, and related economic and statistical information. This information is used to assess the adequacy of energy resources to meet near and long term domestic demands.

EIA provides the public and other Federal agencies with opportunities to comment on collections of energy information conducted by EIA. As appropriate, EIA also requests comments on important issues relevant to EIA's dissemination of energy information. Comments received help

EIA when preparing information collections and information products necessary to EIA's mission.

EIA's Weekly Petroleum Status Report (WPSR) provides timely information on supply and selected prices of crude oil and principal petroleum products. It serves the industry, the press, planners, policymakers, consumers, analysts, and State and local governments with a ready, reliable source of current information.

#### II. Current Actions

The WPSR data are based primarily on weekly company submissions of information as of 7 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) Friday. Weekly data are filed with EIA by 5 p.m. EST on the following Monday. Currently, the WPSR data are publicly released electronically at 9 a.m. each Wednesday, and the printed version is available on Friday. For weeks that include holidays, release of the WPSR may be delayed by one day.

The American Petroleum Institute (API) has released its version of the same data about 5 p.m. on Tuesday. As a result, the API release was the most closely watched and had the greatest impact on petroleum markets. More significantly, the Tuesday night release occurred when all major petroleum trading markets were closed. The API recently announced that, starting January 8, 2003, they would begin releasing their weekly data at 9 a.m. on Wednesdays.

With market focus now turning to both EIA and API data, EIA is soliciting public opinion on the best or most beneficial release time for the data. To the extent that the weekly supply data reflect current market conditions, and thereby facilitate market efficiency, EIA is considering moving its release time to 10:10 a.m. on Wednesday to coincide with normal NYMEX and IPE trading hours. However, public opinion is sought on alternative times as well.

#### III. Request for Comments

The public should comment on the actions discussed in item II concerning the proposed policy change in the WPSR release schedule.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be considered during final development of EIA's policy for scheduled releases of the WPSR. The comments will also become a matter of public record. After EIA has considered any comments and developed the final WPSR release policy, a Federal Register notice will be issued announcing the policy.