

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the GP and the Response to Comments are available upon request. Written requests may be submitted to EPA Region 10, 1200 Sixth Avenue OWW-130, Seattle, WA 98101. Electronic requests may be mailed to: [washington.audrey@epa.gov](mailto:washington.audrey@epa.gov) or [godsey.cindi@epa.gov](mailto:godsey.cindi@epa.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The GP, Fact Sheet, and Response to Comments may be found on the Region 10 Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/waterpermits.htm> (click on general permits then on placer mining). Telephone requests for copies may be made to Audrey Washington at (206) 553-0523 or to Cindi Godsey at (907) 271-6561.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Executive Order 12866:* The Office of Management and Budget has exempted this action from the review requirements of Executive Order 12866 pursuant to Section 6 of that order.

*Regulatory Flexibility Act:* After review of the facts presented in the notice printed above, I hereby certify pursuant to the provision of 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that the reissuance of this general permit will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. Moreover, the permit reduces a significant administrative burden on regulated sources.

Dated: April 19, 2007.

**Michael F. Gearheard,**

*Director, Office of Water & Watersheds,  
Region 10.*

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## COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### The National Environmental Policy Act and Environmental Management Systems

**AGENCY:** Council on Environmental Quality.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability, Guide for Aligning National Environmental Policy Act processes with Environmental Management Systems.

**SUMMARY:** The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is publishing "Aligning National Environmental Policy Act Processes with Environmental Management Systems—A Guide for NEPA and EMS Practitioners" to assist Federal agencies in aligning their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes with their Environmental Management Systems (EMSs). CEQ used an interagency work group to develop

the guide and finalized it after considering public comments. The final guide is available from CEQ and at <http://www.NEPA.gov>.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the guide can be requested from CEQ. Electronic or facsimile requests for a copy of the guide are preferred because federal offices experience intermittent mail delays caused by security screening. Send electronic requests to NEPA Modernization (EMS-NEPA) at [horst\\_greczmiel@ceq.eop.gov](mailto:horst_greczmiel@ceq.eop.gov). Fax written requests to NEPA Modernization (EMS-NEPA) at (202) 456-0753. Written requests may also be submitted to NEPA Modernization (EMS-NEPA), Attn: Associate Director for NEPA Oversight, 722 Jackson Place, NW., Washington, DC 20503.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Horst Greczmiel at (202) 395-5750.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) established a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Task Force and is implementing recommendations to modernize the implementation of NEPA and make the NEPA process more effective and efficient. Additional information is available on the task force Web site at <http://ceq.oh.doe.gov/ntf>.

A proposed guide was developed to assist agencies with linking the NEPA process with Environmental Management Systems (EMS). CEQ requested public input and comments on the proposed guide, 71 FR 40520, Jul 17, 2006. All comments received are available at <http://ceq.oh.doe.gov/ntf/implementation.html>.

The final guide is being provided to Federal agencies to help them recognize the complementary relationship of EMS and NEPA and assist in aligning EMS elements with NEPA when establishing, implementing, and maintaining their EMS. The guide encourages the integration of EMS and NEPA as a means to bring substantial benefits to an agency's environmental performance and further our national environmental policy. For example:

Commitments and mitigation measures established in NEPA decision documents (e.g., Findings of No Significant Impact and Records of Decision) can be tracked and monitored through the EMS. The EMS provides a framework to improve environmental performance in ongoing day-to-day operations through EMS "operational controls." The tracking and monitoring of commitments and mitigation measures can contribute to training, internal auditing, and identification of appropriate corrective actions.

A major component of the NEPA process is communicating and involving the

interested public about a proposed action. An EMS can provide numerous opportunities for communicating with the public, and by providing information about the proposal under consideration, help focus public involvement.

The guide assumes that the reader has a basic understanding of both the NEPA analysis and document preparation processes and the basic elements of an EMS. A reference list was added to provide readers the opportunity to increase their understanding of NEPA and EMS. In addition to editorial revisions, the guide was also revised substantively.

CEQ specifically solicited public comment on the idea presented in the draft that a well constructed EMS can include the elements of the NEPA process and serve as the basis for complying with NEPA requirements. Numerous commenters interpreted this statement to mean that an EMS could replace the NEPA process, or took issue with such an approach. The final guide distinguishes between the typical NEPA process focus on proposed actions, and the typical EMS focus on ongoing activities and products and services. It states that NEPA and EMS are not functionally equivalent, but complementary. The guide highlights the complementary elements of NEPA and EMS and presents the conclusion that an EMS can provide a framework for an agency to better meet its NEPA responsibilities.

Several commenters raised the concern that the requirements of NEPA are more extensive than those found in a typical EMS. The final guide uses public involvement as an example to emphasize that an EMS has to include the more rigorous NEPA requirements if the EMS will provide the mechanism to support and meet the NEPA process requirements.

The guide describes specific ways EMS and NEPA processes can complement one another to improve how Federal agencies manage their impacts on the environment:

- Identification of environmental aspects in the development of an EMS can build on the environmental aspects identified in a previous NEPA analysis of a facility, activity, program, or policy. Conversely, a new NEPA analysis can consider the identified environmental aspects in an EMS when assessing potential environmental impacts of a proposed action. The EMS can provide a platform to use the information collected and analyses performed in the NEPA process on a going forward basis during implementation of proposed actions.

- Performance measurements and monitoring conducted as part of an EMS can provide comparable and verifiable data to improve environmental impact predictions in future NEPA analyses and documents.

- An EMS provides a systematic framework for an agency to monitor and continually improve its environmental performance. Agencies with an EMS may be able to use the data it generates to establish a record of environmental performance to support, for example: (a) Identifying categories of actions that normally require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); (b) finding no significant impact when performance practices are incorporated into a proposed action (which would conclude the Environmental Assessment (EA) process without the need to prepare an EIS); or (c) determining that a category of actions does not have individual or cumulative significant impacts and should properly be established as a categorical exclusion which would reduce the need to prepare either an EA or an EIS. Further, when a NEPA analysis is needed, the EMS approach of keeping environmental data up-to-date should facilitate the preparation of the NEPA documents.

- When an EMS has established environmental objectives and targets relevant to resource areas subject to NEPA mitigation measures, the EMS can ensure implementation and performance of mitigation measures through applicable measurement and monitoring programs.

CEQ recognizes the benefits of aligning these complementary processes and encourages Federal agencies to do so where appropriate.

Dated: April 5, 2007.

**James L. Connaughton,**  
Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality.

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## FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

### Sunshine Act Notices

**DATE AND TIME:** Tuesday, May 1, 2007 at 10 a.m.

**PLACE:** 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC.

**STATUS:** This meeting will be closed to the public.

**ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:** Compliance matters pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 437g.

Audits conducted pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 437g, 438(b) and title 26, U.S.C.

Matters concerning participation in civil actions or proceedings or arbitration.

Internal personnel rules and procedures or matters affecting a particular employee.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Robert Biersack, Press Officer, Telephone: (202) 694-1220.

**Mary W. Dove,**

*Secretary of the Commission.*

[FR Doc. 07-2084 Filed 4-24-07; 2:27 pm]

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[30-Day-07-06BC]

#### Agency Forms Undergoing Paperwork Reduction Act Review

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes a list of information collection requests under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). To request a copy of these requests, call the CDC Reports Clearance Officer at (404) 639-5960 or send an e-mail to [omb@cdc.gov](mailto:omb@cdc.gov). Send written comments to CDC Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC or by fax to (202) 395-6974. Written comments should be received within 30 days of this notice.

#### Proposed Project

National Survey of the Mining Population—New—National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

#### Background and Brief Description

Surveillance of occupational injuries, illnesses, and exposures has been an integral part of the work of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) since its creation by the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970. To improve its surveillance capability related to the occupational risks in mining, NIOSH is planning to conduct a national survey of mines and mine employees. No national surveys have specifically targeted the mining labor force since the 1986 Mining Industry Population Survey (MIPS). The mining industry has experienced many changes in the last 20 years; consequently, the MIPS data are no longer representative of the current mining industry labor force.

NIOSH conducted a pilot study for the proposed national survey in the fall of 2004 (OMB #0920-0633, expired 3/31/05). The pilot study was designed to emulate the main study design in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the recruitment materials, questionnaire, and survey procedures in acquiring complete, high quality data from a sample of 45 mining operations. Objective data collected in the pilot study included overall response rates and individual item response rates. Subjective data were collected using telephone logs, and participant and non-participant debriefing interviews. Data captured in the pilot study were used to guide improvements to maximize the performance of the various components of the full-scale study.

The proposed national survey will be based upon a probability sample of mining operations and their employees. The survey will be conducted in the five major mining sectors (*i.e.*, coal, metal, nonmetal, stone, and sand and gravel). The major objectives of the survey will be to: (1) Obtain denominator data so that mine accident, injury, and illness reports can be evaluated in relation to the population at risk; (2) understand the demographic and occupational characteristics of the mining industry workforce; (3) estimate the number and occupational characteristics of independent contractor employees used by mining operations; and (4) obtain mine level information on selected variables. The sampled mining operations will provide all survey data; individual mine operator and independent contractor employees will not be directly surveyed. As a result of this study, surveillance researchers and government agencies will be able to identify groups of miners with a disproportionately high risk of injury or illness. By capturing demographic (*e.g.*, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education level) and occupational characteristics (*e.g.*, job title, work location, work experience) of the mining workforce, these data will be a significant resource for the customization of interventions such as safety training programs.

Approximately 2272 mines will be sampled for the study. It is expected that this will yield 1,648 responding eligible mines (*i.e.*, mines in current operation and producing the commodity for which they were sampled), reporting data for approximately 24,452 employees. A survey packet will be mailed to each sampled mine. The mining operation will not be asked to report the names or any other identifying information for their employees. The survey respondent will have the option of completing either the