

below. Both meetings are open to the public. Seating at both meetings will be on a first-come basis and limited time will be provided for public comment. For further information concerning specific meetings, please contact the individuals listed with the announcements below.

(1) Metal Finishing Sector Subcommittee Meeting—December 16–17, 1997

The Metal Finishing Sector Subcommittee will hold an open meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 1997 and on Wednesday, December 17, 1997. The Subcommittee will meet both days from approximately 9:00 a.m. EDT to approximately 4:00 p.m. EDT. The meeting will be held at the Radisson Barcelo Hotel, 2121 P Street NW., Washington, DC. The hotel telephone number is 202–293–3100.

The Subcommittee will focus on implementation plans and issues associated with the Goals Program. We also anticipate having workgroup breakout sessions to discuss research and technology projects, risk assessment and characterization issues, the RCRA Bench marking Project, and training courses associated with the Metal Finishing Guidance Manual. An agenda will be available in early December.

For further information concerning meeting times and the agenda of this Metal Finishing Sector Subcommittee, please contact Bob Benson, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), at EPA by telephone on (202) 260–8668 in Washington, DC, by fax on (202) 260–8662, or by e-mail at benson.robert@epamail.epa.gov.

(2) Computers and Electronics Sector Subcommittee—January 14–15, 1998

Notice is hereby given that the Environmental Protection Agency will hold an open meeting of the Computers and Electronics Sector Subcommittee on Wednesday, January 14, 1998, from 8:30 a.m. PST until 5:00 p.m. PST and on Thursday, January 15, 1998 from 8:30 a.m. PST to 3:00 p.m. PST, at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel, 450 Powell Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. The telephone number is 415–392–7755 or 800–227–5480.

Both days, January 14 and 15, will be devoted partly to breakout sessions for the three subcommittee workgroups (Reporting and Information Access; Overcoming Barriers to Pollution Prevention, Product Stewardship, and Recycling; and Integrated and Sustainable Alternative Strategies for Electronics) and partly to plenary sessions. The Subcommittee will discuss progress on projects including:

BOLDER (Basic On-Line Disaster and Emergency Response); Beta-BOLDER, a project to test the BOLDER system transferability; Better BOLDER, a project to make the BOLDER facility emergency response plan information accessible to the public; CURE (Consolidated Uniform Report for the Environment), a project to submit environmental information on a single form; E-Works (Electronic Workers Health Project); Voluntary Program for Life Cycle Management of Electronic Products/State Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue; SPECIE (Superior Performance for the Environment through Community Involvement and Engagement), a project to develop a printed resource guide to strengthen community collaboration; Evaluation of Models and Development of Best Practices for Electronic Equipment Recovery/San Francisco Recycling; Green Track, a project to offer regulatory flexibility or other incentives to encourage facilities to improve environmental performance beyond current regulatory requirements; Definition of “Legitimate Recycling”; a project to seek consensus-based decisions on the recycling of computer parts, and define electronics-related activities the sector would recommend EPA exempt from existing solid waste regulations. Opportunity for public comment on major issues under discussion will be provided at intervals throughout the meeting.

For further information concerning this meeting of the Common Sense Initiative's Computers and Electronics Sector Subcommittee, please contact John J. Bowser, Acting DFO, U.S. EPA on (202) 260–1771, by fax on (202) 260–1096, by e-mail at bowser.john@epamail.epa.gov, or by mail at U.S. EPA (MC 7405), 401 M Street SW., Washington, DC 20460; Mark Mahoney, U.S. EPA Region 1 on (617) 565–1155; or David Jones, U.S. EPA Region 9 on (415) 744–2266.

Inspection of Subcommittee Documents: Documents relating to the above Sector Subcommittee announcements, will be publicly available at the meeting. Thereafter, these documents, together with the official minutes for the meetings, will be available for public inspection in room 2821M of EPA Headquarters, Common Sense Initiative Staff, 401 M Street SW., Washington, DC 20460, telephone number 202–260–7417. Common Sense Initiative information can be accessed electronically on our web site at <http://www.epa.gov/commonsense>.

Dated: November 21, 1997.

Gregory Ondich,

Acting Designated Federal Officer.

[FR Doc. 97–31275 Filed 11–26–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–5929–4]

National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology—Total Maximum Daily Load Committee; Public Meeting

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, PL 92463, EPA gives notice of a three day meeting of the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology's (NACEPT) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Committee. NACEPT provides advice and recommendations to the Administrator of EPA on a broad range of environmental policy issues. The TMDL Committee has been charged to provide recommendations for actions which will lead to a substantially more effective TMDL program. This meeting is being held to enable the Committee and EPA to hear the views and obtain the advice of a widely diverse group of stakeholders in the national Water Program.

In conjunction with the three day meeting, the FACA Committee members and the EPA will host two meetings designed to afford the general public greater opportunity to express its views on TMDLs and water related issues.

DATES: The three day public meeting will be held on January 21–23, 1998, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The full Committee meeting is scheduled to begin Wednesday, January 21, 1998, at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 5:30 p.m., and will be held at the Jewish Community Center, #2 Medical Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah. The meeting will reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 22, 1998, at the Jewish Community Center and is scheduled to adjourn at 3:00 p.m. On Friday, January 23, 1998, the Committee will meet at the University Park Hotel and Suites, 480 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City, Utah, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and is scheduled to conclude at 4:00 p.m.

The two public input sessions are scheduled in conjunction with the full Committee meeting and will both be held at the Jewish Community Center. The first will occur on Wednesday,

January 21, 1998, from 7:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. The second will occur on Thursday, January 22, 1998, from 3:30 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

FUTURE MEETING DATES: The Committee has one remaining meeting scheduled on May 4–6, 1998, in Atlanta, Georgia.

ADDRESSES: Materials or written comments may be transmitted to the Committee through Hazel Groman, Designated Federal Officer, NACEPT/TMDL, U.S. EPA, Office of Water, Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds, Assessment and Watershed Protection Division (4503F), 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hazel Groman, Designated Federal Officer for the Total Maximum Daily Load Committee, at 202–260–8798.

Dated: November 20, 1997.

Hazel Groman,

Designated Federal Officer.

[FR Doc. 97–31279 Filed 11–26–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[ER–FRL–5486–6]

Notice of Proposed Changes to Voluntary Environmental Impact Statement Policy

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of changes to existing policy and opportunity for public comment.

SUMMARY: EPA is proposing changes in its Statement of Policy for Voluntary Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), which it adopted and published in the **Federal Register** (Vol. 39, No. 89/ Tuesday, May 7, 1974/Notices/16186–16187). The proposed changes would update the EPA policy to reflect how Congress and the Courts have defined EPA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) obligations and to ensure that EPA's voluntary practices regarding NEPA compliance are consistent with practices provided in the NEPA regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The proposed changes will also encourage expansion of the increased discretionary use of voluntary EISs in circumstances where they can be particularly helpful for decision-making involving other federal agencies, cross-media issues, or other concerns such as environmental justice. The proposed changes will affect certain EPA standard-setting and cancellation procedures. EPA is

soliciting comments on these proposed changes.

DATES: Submit written comments on or before January 27, 1998. After addressing any comments received, EPA will issue a final policy in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS CONTACT: Marguerite Duffy at (202) 564–7148; E-mail: duffy.marguerite@epamail.epa.gov; or Joseph Montgomery at (202) 564–7157; E-mail: montgomery.joseph@epamail.epa.gov; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Federal Activities (2252–A), 401 M Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20460.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Unless otherwise exempted, Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) (hereafter “NEPA”), implemented by Executive Orders 11514 and 11991 and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500–1508, requires that Federal agencies prepare detailed environmental statements on proposals for legislation and other major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The objective of NEPA is to build into the Federal agency decision-making process an appropriate and careful consideration of all environmental impacts of proposed actions. Accordingly, under CEQ regulations, where major Federal actions will have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, a detailed environmental impact statement (EIS) is required; where it is believed that an action will have no significant impact, or where the level of impact is uncertain, agencies can prepare less detailed environmental assessments (EAs) to determine the level of impact and/or document a finding of no significant impact.

EPA is legally required to comply with the procedural requirements of NEPA for its research and development activities, facilities construction, wastewater treatment construction grants under Title II of the Clean Water Act, and EPA-issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for new sources. The Agency is exempted by statute for actions taken under the Clean Air Act and for most Clean Water Act programs. EPA is also exempted from the procedural requirements of environmental laws, including NEPA, for Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

response actions. For other programs, courts have consistently recognized that EPA procedures or environmental reviews under enabling legislation are functionally equivalent to the NEPA process and thus exempt from the procedural requirements in NEPA. However, as discussed below, it has been long-standing Agency policy to prepare EISs voluntarily for some actions.

EPA has long recognized the value of sound environmental analysis, the importance of public participation, and the desirability of integration of other environmental requirements across the range of its activities. EPA issued a “Statement of Policy” (Policy) in the **Federal Register** (Vol. 39, No. 89/ Tuesday, May 7, 1974/Notices/16186–16187) expressing the belief that preparation of environmental impact statements would have beneficial effects for certain of its regulatory actions. EPA decided that, while it was not legally bound to do so by Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA, it would voluntarily prepare environmental impact statements for specific regulatory actions relating to the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 1857 *et seq.*); Noise Control Act (42 U.S.C. 4901 *et seq.*); Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*); the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (33 U.S.C. 1401 *et seq.*); and, Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) (7 U.S.C. 135 *et seq.*, as amended by 7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*).

EPA believes that several aspects of the 1974 Voluntary EIS Policy have become outdated since its publication. EPA issued this Policy four years prior to CEQ promulgation of regulations implementing NEPA. CEQ's regulations state that while an EIS is required to document significant impacts, an EA will be adequate documentation to determine if an action will have no significant impact. EPA has gained extensive experience concerning what types of analysis will be useful to enhance environmental decision-making under particular circumstances. In addition, Congress, through statutory exemptions from NEPA requirements, and the Courts, through finding that EPA statutes provide an analysis functionally equivalent to what would be done under NEPA, have explicitly defined the legal role of NEPA analysis in EPA decision-making.

In October 1993, an EPA Workgroup on NEPA issued a report entitled “The National Environmental Policy Act and Environmental Protection Agency Programs.” This Report recommended that EPA revise its “voluntary EIS” Policy to: (1) Make it a “voluntary NEPA” policy under which EPA would