

solicitation, the DOE/NETL seeks applications on behalf of the Office of Building Technology Programs in DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) for innovative technologies that have the potential for significant energy savings in residential and commercial buildings. DOE is seeking to support projects that are advancing energy efficient equipment, envelope and whole building technologies. Specifically, the objective of the solicitation is to accelerate high-payoff technologies that, because of their risk, are unlikely to be developed in a timely manner without a partnership between industry and the Federal Government.

DATES: The solicitation will be available on the "Industry Interactive Procurement System" (IIPS) Web Page located at <http://e-center.doe.gov> on or about February 28, 2003. Applicants can obtain access to the solicitation from the address above or through DOE/NETL's Web site at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bonnie Dowdell, Contract Specialist, MS 921-107, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, 626 Cochran Mill Road, E-mail Address: Bonnie.Dowdell@netl.doe.gov, Telephone Number: 412-386-5879.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: DOE/NETL intends to select a group of projects programmatically balanced with respect to: (1) Technology category (equipment end uses, envelopes and whole buildings); (2) building type (residential and/or commercial); and (3) time of commercialization (short-term or long-term market potential of the technology). The solicitation will cover research and development on materials, components and systems applicable to both residential and commercial buildings. The solicitation will not support demonstration projects to deploy the technology on a large scale but will support proof of concept projects. The research and development areas of interest are as follows: *Whole Buildings*—Building Performance and Zero Energy; *Lighting*—Light Sources and Ballasts, Lighting Controls, Luminaries and Distribution Systems, and Lighting Impacts; *Space Conditioning Equipment*—Energy Conversion Efficiency, and Distribution, Storage, Control and System Integration; *Building Envelope*—Building Materials and Envelope Systems, and Windows; and Appliances.

The solicitation covers research in four technology maturation stages: Technology Maturation Stage 2 involves

applied research; Technology Maturation Stage 3 involves exploratory development (non-specific applications and bench-scale testing); Technology Maturation Stage 4 involves advanced development (specific applications and bench-scale testing); and Maturation Stage 5 involves engineering development (pilot-scale and/or field testing). For projects spanning more than one maturation stage, continuation decision points will be inserted at the completion of each stage. Multiple awards (8—12) are expected regardless of the technology maturation stage(s) proposed. It is DOE's desire to encourage the widest participation, including the involvement of small business concerns and small disadvantaged business concerns. In order to gain the necessary expertise to review applications, non-Federal personnel may be used as evaluators or advisors in the evaluation of applications, but will not serve as members of the technical evaluation team. This particular program is covered by Section 3001 and 3002 of the Energy Policy Act (EPA), 42 U.S.C. 13542 for financial assistance awards. EPA 3002 requires a cost share commitment of at least 20 percent from non-Federal sources for research and development projects. It is anticipated that \$16,000,000 in federal funding will be available however, not all of the necessary funds are currently available for this solicitation; the Government's obligation under any cooperative agreement awarded is contingent upon the availability of appropriated FY 2003 funds.

Once released, the solicitation will be available for downloading from the IIPS Internet page. At this Internet site you will also be able to register with IIPS, enabling you to submit an application. If you need technical assistance in registering or for any other IIPS function, call the IIPS Help Desk at (800) 683-0751 or E-mail the Help Desk personnel at IIPS_HelpDesk@e-center.doe.gov. The solicitation will only be made available in IIPS, no hard (paper) copies of the solicitation and related documents will be made available. Telephone requests, written requests, E-mail requests, or facsimile requests for a copy of the solicitation package will not be accepted and/or honored. Applications must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions and forms contained in the solicitation. The actual solicitation document will allow for requests for explanation and/or interpretation.

Issued in Pittsburgh, PA on January 29, 2003.

Dale A. Siciliano,

Deputy Director, Acquisition and Assistance Division.

[FR Doc. 03-3481 Filed 2-11-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Energy Information Administration

Policy Statement: Energy Information Administration Policy for Release of the Weekly Petroleum Status Report

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

ACTION: Policy Statement. Energy Information Administration Policy for Release of the Weekly Petroleum Status Report.

SUMMARY: The comments received represent a cross section of key interested parties that use the Weekly Petroleum Status Report (WPSR). There was strong support and opinions both for leaving the release time as it currently is and for moving the time to coincide with New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) trading hours. Reasonable arguments were made on both sides of the issue. After careful review of the comments, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) has concluded that it is in the overall best interest of WPSR users to change the release time to 10:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Wednesday.

EIA found the arguments for moving the release time compelling enough to shift its current policy. The leading arguments supporting this decision are summarized as follows: (1) It supports fairness, transparency, and market oversight functions by releasing the WPSR at a time when both European and United States markets are open, (2) it is expected to contribute to reduced market volatility by releasing the data when more traders are operating.

DATES: This policy becomes effective on Wednesday, February 26, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Requests should be directed to Ronald W. O'Neill. Mr. O'Neill may be contacted by telephone (202-586-2991), FAX (202-586-5846), or e-mail (ron.oneill@eia.doe.gov). These methods are recommended to expedite contact. His mailing address is Ronald W. O'Neill, M.S. EI-42, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585-0640.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or questions about the policy 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. Background
- II. Summary of Comments
- III. Current Actions

I. Background

The Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (Pub. L. 93-275, 15 U.S.C. 761 *et seq.*) and the DOE Organization Act (Pub. L. 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.

The WPSR data are based primarily on weekly company submissions of information as of 7 am Eastern Standard Time (EST) Friday. Weekly data are filed with EIA by 5 pm EST on the following Monday. In the past, the WPSR data were publicly released electronically at 9 am EST each Wednesday, and the printed version was available on Friday. For weeks that included holidays, release of the WPSR was typically delayed by one day.

On December 3, 2002, EIA issued a Federal Register notice (67 FR 71959) requesting public comments on a proposed policy for changes in the release time of the WPSR. In that notice, EIA discussed the reasons for the proposed change and proposed moving the release time to 10:10 am EST on Wednesday to coincide with normal

New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) and International Petroleum Exchange (IPE) trading hours. EIA also solicited suggestions for alternative release times.

II. Summary of Comments

In response to the Federal Register notice requesting comments on the proposed WPSR release time policy, EIA received 26 comments. The comments were from members of Congress, investment companies, state governments, and traders.

Comments fell into one of two categories: Either they were in favor of moving the release time or they favored keeping it at 9 am EST. Below is a brief summary of the major reasons given for supporting each category.

Comments in favor of the current release time included:

- Having the petroleum data available before the NYMEX opens allows the trading community to make qualified evaluations of the oil market before trading begins.

- For some in the non-commodities trading community receiving the data earlier gives them more timely information for their use.

Comments in favor of changing the release time included:

- Releasing the data when both the European and United States markets are open enhances fairness, efficiency, and competition by allowing a greater number of market participants equal trading access. It essentially levels the playing field.

- Releasing the EIA petroleum data while both markets are open will contribute to reduced market volatility and greater transparency. Releasing the data while more trading opportunities exist and more traders are operating reduces the likelihood that a small number of traders could create volatile price swings. Markets with greater liquidity are less likely to be manipulated.

- With current market turbulence, never has the need for market competition and transparency been greater. Important functions of market oversight by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) would be diminished if much of the business was shifted to overseas markets or the less regulated Over-the-Counter (OTC) markets.

- Maintaining the current release time could have the unintended effect of shifting important price discovery and risk management functions to an overseas market. The domestic market is made less relevant, and its benefits to consumers and the economy reduced, because businesses will be forced to

utilize markets open at the time, thus depriving them of an important competitive choice.

III. Current Actions

EIA WPSR Release Time Policy. EIA has established a policy for the release time of the WPSR. Under this policy, the WPSR will be publicly released electronically at 10:30 am EST each Wednesday. For weeks that include holidays, release of the WPSR will typically be delayed by one day.

EIA reserves the right to revisit or amend this policy. However, EIA shall not modify the WPSR release time policy without prior notification in the WPSR or the **Federal Register**.

Statutory Authority: Section 52 of the Federal Energy Administration Act (Pub. L. 93-275, 15 U.S.C. 790a).

Issued in Washington, DC, February 6, 2003.

Guy F. Caruso,

Administrator, Energy Information Administration.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OPP-2003-0041; FRL-7292-7]

Tribal Pesticide Program Council; Notice of Public Meeting

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Tribal Pesticide Program Council (TPPC) will hold a 2-day meeting, on March 13 and 14, 2003. This notice announces the location and times for the meeting and sets forth the tentative agenda topics.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, March 13, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., including a closed session from 4:30 to 5 p.m. and Friday March 14, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., including two closed sessions from 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Doubletree Hotel - 300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, Crystal City, VA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Georgia McDuffie, Field and External Affairs Division (7506C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460-0001; telephone number: (703) 605-0195; fax number: (703) 308-1850; e-mail address: mcduffie.georgia@epa.gov.