

previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information.

Dated: February 26, 2003.

**Deborah Y. Dietrich,**

*Director, Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office.*

[FR Doc. 03-5327 Filed 3-5-03; 8:45 am]

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## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7459-3]

### Draft Exposure and Human Health Evaluation of Airborne Pollution from the World Trade Center Disaster

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.

**ACTION:** Notice of extension of public comment period.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Research and Development (ORD) is announcing the extension of the public comment period for the external review draft (ERD) document, Exposure and Human Health Evaluation of Airborne Pollution from the World Trade Center Disaster (EPA/600/P-02/002A, October 2002). This draft document was prepared by ORD's National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) within the Office of Research and Development.

**DATES:** In the December 27, 2002, **Federal Register** (67 FR 79089), EPA announced a limited comment period through February 25, 2003. The Agency is now extending the public comment period to April 7, 2003. Technical comments should be in writing and must be postmarked by April 7, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** The primary distribution method for the ERD will be via ORD's Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ncea/wtc.htm>. This draft report, in PDF format, can be viewed and downloaded from the Internet for review and comment. In addition, a limited number of CD-ROM and paper copies of the ERD are available by contacting the Technical Information Staff, NCEA-W (8623D), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460; telephone: (202) 564-3261; facsimile: (202) 565-0050; e-mail: [nceadc.comment@epa.gov](mailto:nceadc.comment@epa.gov). Please provide your name and mailing address, and the title and EPA number of the requested publication.

**Comment Submission:** Comments on the ERD may be mailed to the Technical Information Staff, NCEA-W (8623D), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460; telephone: (202) 564-3261; facsimile: (202) 565-0050. Comments should be in writing. Please submit one unbound original with pages numbered consecutively, and three copies of the comments. For attachments, provide an index, number pages consecutively with the comments, and submit an unbound original and three copies. Electronic comments may be e-mailed to:

[nceadc.comment@epa.gov](mailto:nceadc.comment@epa.gov).

Please note that all technical comments received in response to this notice will be placed in a public record. For that reason, commentors should not submit personal information (such as medical data or home address), Confidential Business Information, or information protected by copyright. Due to limited resources, acknowledgments will not be sent.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information on the public comment period, contact the Technical Information Staff of the National Center for Environmental Assessment-Washington, telephone: (202) 564-3261; facsimile: (202) 565-0050; e-mail: [nceadc.comment@epa.gov](mailto:nceadc.comment@epa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Immediately following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on New York City's World Trade Center, many federal agencies, including the EPA, were called upon to focus their technical and scientific expertise on the national emergency issues. EPA, other federal agencies, New York City, and New York State public health and environmental authorities focused on numerous air monitoring activities to better understand the ongoing human health impact of the disaster. Many EPA offices and programs quickly became involved with these activities, providing scientific, engineering, public health, and management expertise to help cope with the aftereffects of the collapse of the World Trade Center.

As part of these activities, a human health evaluation of exposure to air pollutants resulting from the World Trade Center disaster was initiated. The primary purpose and scope of this draft report were to evaluate the environmental levels of various air pollutants to which the public could potentially be exposed as a result of the collapse of the towers. The draft report evaluates the measured outdoor levels of various air pollutants to which the public potentially had been exposed. These data were evaluated in terms of

available health benchmarks and typical background concentrations for New York City or other urban areas. The draft evaluation concludes that, with the exception of those exposed immediately following the collapse and perhaps during the next few days, people in the surrounding community are not likely to suffer from serious long-or short-term health effects.

While the primary focus of EPA's draft evaluation is on outdoor levels of various air pollutants to which the public could potentially be exposed as a result of the collapse of the towers, some information on indoor and occupational exposures is summarized. The incursion of dust and other contaminants into residences and buildings is being addressed via a number of other studies initiated in conjunction with the plans by EPA and its federal, state, and city partners to clean up residences impacted by the collapse of the World Trade Center.

The draft report also includes a discussion of rodent respiratory toxicology studies, conducted by EPA scientists, that exposed mice to fallen dust samples collected at or near Ground Zero on September 12 and 13, 2001. The purpose of these studies was to evaluate the toxicity of fine particulate matter dust on the respiratory tract of mice and to compare well-studied particulate matter reference samples, ranging from essentially inert to quite toxic, to those collected at the World Trade Center site. These studies found that fine particles were dominated by calcium containing compounds derived from World Trade Center building materials, and that a high exposure to World Trade Center fine particulate matter could cause mild lung inflammation and airflow obstruction in mice. These findings suggest that a similarly high exposure in people could cause short-term respiratory effects such as inflammation and cough.

Further, it is important to note that while this ERD is undergoing public review and comment, a process of external independent expert scientific peer review also is underway. These review processes are the usual steps that EPA takes to ensure full and open participation by interested parties. These steps also help EPA identify areas where a draft document could be improved to strengthen both clarity and completeness of the draft. Comments from the public and from the expert peer reviewers will be used to improve the draft report before it is finalized.

Finally, EPA scientists, in collaboration with other Federal and State environmental health

professionals, as well as colleagues in academia and medical institutions, will continue to analyze available data on human exposures to environmental contaminants resulting from the World Trade Center disaster. This continuing work will help us to better understand the potential human health impacts.

Dated: February 27, 2003.

**Art Payne,**

*Acting Director, National Center for Environmental Assessment.*

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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, NSD File No. L-00-72; FCC 03-31]

### Commission Seeks Comment on Staff Study Regarding Alternative Contribution Methodologies

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice; solicitation of comments.

**SUMMARY:** In this document, the Commission seeks comment on a staff study relating to alternative methodologies for calculating contributions to the federal universal service support mechanisms. We urge commenters to comment on the staff analysis of assessment levels under each approach and on the assumptions underlying these projections. Commenters are encouraged to provide their own estimates, projections, and data supporting or refuting the projections.

**DATES:** Comments are due on or before March 31, 2003. Reply comments are due on or before April 18, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** All filings must be sent to the Commission's Secretary: Marlene H. Dortch, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW., Suite TW-A325, Washington, DC 20554. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for filing instructions.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Diane Law Hsu, Deputy Division Chief, or Paul Garnett, Attorney, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, (202) 418-7400, TTY: (202) 418-0484.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a summary of the Commission's Public Notice in CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 98-171, 90-571, 92-237, 99-200, 95-116, 98-170, and NSD File No. L-00-72

released February 26, 2003. In this Public Notice, the Commission seeks comment on a staff study relating to alternative methodologies for calculating contributions to the federal universal service support mechanisms. We urge commenters to comment on the staff analysis of assessment levels under each approach and on the assumptions underlying these projections. Commenters are encouraged to provide their own estimates, projections, and data supporting or refuting the projections.

In the *Report and Order and Second Further Notice*, 67 FR 79525, December 30, 2002, the Commission adopted interim measures to maintain the viability of universal service in the near term. In addition to seeking comment on whether to retain a revenue-based system, the Commission invited comment on specific aspects of three connection-based proposals. The Commission first asked for comment on a proposed contribution methodology that would impose a minimum contribution obligation on all interstate telecommunications carriers and a flat charge for each end-user connection depending on the nature or capacity of the connection. Next, the Commission sought comment on a proposal to assess all connections based purely on capacity. Under this proposal, contribution obligations for each switched end-user connection would be shared between access and transport providers. Finally, the Commission sought comment on a proposal to assess providers of switched connections based on their working telephone numbers.

To facilitate discussion and analysis of the various alternatives discussed in the *Second Further Notice*, Commission staff has developed a working paper that estimates potential assessment levels under the newly modified revenue-based system and three connection-based proposals. The assumptions underlying the study are described in the staff paper. The study, and its underlying assumptions were created for the sole purpose of developing a more detailed record addressing these issues in the docket, and do not represent the policies or preferences of the Commission, Commissioners, or the staff.

We seek comment on the study, as well as its underlying assumptions. We specifically ask commenters to analyze the modeled assessment levels, burdens on residential and business customers, and projected industry shares under each approach. To further assist commenters in analyzing the study, the staff spreadsheet that generated the

study is available on the Commission's Web site for downloading at [http://www.fcc.gov/wcb/universal\\_service/welcome.html](http://www.fcc.gov/wcb/universal_service/welcome.html). This spreadsheet will provide access to the formulas utilized in the study and allow commenters to observe how changes to assumptions impact assessment levels and burdens. We recognize that estimates could differ significantly if different assumptions are utilized. We invite commenters to submit their own data and reasoning supporting or disagreeing with the various projections and assumptions. Comments submitted in response to this Public Notice shall be incorporated into the record for the *Second Further Notice*.

Pursuant to §§ 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, interested parties may file comments on or before March 31, 2003, and reply comments on or before April 18, 2003. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) or by filing paper copies.

Comments filed through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <<http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>>. Generally, only one copy of an electronic submission must be filed. If multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, however, commenters must transmit one electronic copy of the comments to each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions for e-mail comments, commenters should send an e-mail to [ecfs@fcc.gov](mailto:ecfs@fcc.gov), and should include the following words in the body of the message, "get form <your e-mail address>." A sample form and directions will be sent in reply.

Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, commenters must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). The Commission's contractor, Vistrionix, Inc., will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Suite 110, Washington, DC 20002. The filing