

assistance provided by the TRI program, both at Headquarters and in the Regions, to aid the reporting community; (2) streamline the collection and processing of the more than 90,000 TRI forms that EPA receives annually; and (3) improve the materials, including the context, documents and tools, that EPA develops for its annual public release of the TRI data to support their use and analysis of the data.

The on-line dialogue will be the first opportunity for stakeholder input in Phase 1. Once the dialogue has been analyzed, additional opportunities may be extended in the form of public meetings, more formal comment periods, or other methods which will be described in future notices.

Phase 2 of the stakeholder dialogue will focus on future directions for the program, including what data are collected in the TRI, how these data are characterized, and whether additional data should be collected. One key element will be clarifying the data elements on recycling and other waste management activities required by the Pollution Prevention Act. A future **Federal Register** notice will announce Phase 2.

### III. Availability of Documents

EPA is making available three papers which describe aspects of the TRI Program and raise issues for stakeholder discussion. The scope of each paper corresponds to a phase of the annual TRI reporting cycle. TRI data for a calendar year must be reported to EPA by July 1st after the end of that calendar year. Therefore, reporting years are the same as calendar years. The "reporting cycle" begins with EPA's compliance assistance activities, including the development of reporting forms and instructions that are generally mailed to facilities in March each year. Once EPA receives the forms, it enters the data from the forms (over 91,000 in 2000) in the TRI database. After entry into the database, EPA runs a series of data quality checks on both the facility identification information and on the chemical-specific data. After the data entry and data quality steps are completed, the TRI database is "frozen" for analysis and development of data products for release to the public. Generally, EPA announces the annual release of the TRI data by holding a press event or issuing a press release, and simultaneously notifying a wide range of stakeholders.

The first background paper for this stakeholder dialogue is entitled TRI Data Collection, Processing and Management, and addresses the TRI data process beginning with submission

of the forms and ending at the data "freeze." The second paper, TRI Data Release Issue Paper discusses TRI data products, the process for analyzing and releasing the TRI data, uses of the data, and issues and considerations associated with these aspects of the TRI program. The third paper is TRI Compliance Assistance Activities. TRI compliance assistance activities are carried out throughout the year with certain of the activities being closely aligned with the reporting cycle.

Dated: October 4, 2002.

**Elaine G. Stanley,**

*Director, Office of Information Analysis and Access.*

[FR Doc. 02-26175 Filed 10-11-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6561-07-P**

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OEI-2002-0008; FRL6724-5]

#### **Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the Environmental Protection Agency**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency, EPA.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed final *Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the Environmental Protection Agency* (herein after referred to as Information Quality Guidelines), in response to final Office of Management and Budget (OMB) information quality guidelines directing all federal agencies to develop and implement their own guidelines by October 1, 2002 (67 FR 8451, February 22, 2002). The EPA Information Quality Guidelines build upon on-going efforts to improve the quality of the data and analyses that support Agency policy and regulatory decisions and programs. EPA is announcing the availability of the Agency's final Information Quality Guidelines at the EPA Web site, [www.epa.gov/oei/qualityguidelines](http://www.epa.gov/oei/qualityguidelines). As described in the new Information Quality Guidelines, EPA is also introducing a Request for Correction process to allow affected persons to seek and obtain correction of information that EPA disseminates that they believe does not meet the EPA Information Quality Guidelines or the OMB information quality guidelines (67 FR 8451, February 22, 2002). Please read

the Information Quality Guidelines to learn more about this new Request for Correction process including where and how to submit a request for correction.

**DATES:** The EPA final Information Quality Guidelines were made available on October 2, 2002.

**ADDRESSES:** The Information Quality Guidelines can be found at the EPA Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/oei/qualityguidelines>. To obtain a written copy of the Information Quality Guidelines, you may contact: Ms. Evangeline Tsibris Cummings, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Information, Mail Code 2842T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20460; Telephone: 202-566-0621; or e-mail: [cummings.evangeline@epa.gov](mailto:cummings.evangeline@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In accordance with the OMB information quality guidelines, EPA published a notice in the **Federal Register** on April 30, 2002 (67 FR 21234) announcing the availability of EPA's draft Information Quality Guidelines and soliciting public comment by May 31, 2002. EPA extended the comment period to June 21, 2002 (67 FR 42254). After considering the extensive public comment, EPA revised its Information Quality Guidelines and submitted the revised draft to OMB in accordance with OMB's guidelines so OMB could review the draft Information Quality Guidelines for consistency with OMB's information quality guidelines. OMB completed its review and approved of the final EPA Information Quality Guidelines. EPA's general discussion of and responses to the public comments appears in Appendix A of EPA's Information Quality Guidelines.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Evangeline Tsibris Cummings, Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Information, Mail Code 2842T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20460. Telephone: 202-566-0621; e-mail: [cummings.evangeline@epa.gov](mailto:cummings.evangeline@epa.gov).

**Elaine Stanley,**

*Director, Office of Information Analysis and Access, Office of Environmental Information, EPA.*

[FR Doc. 02-26176 Filed 10-11-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560-50-P**