

.0104 PUBLIC INFORMATION - PART 2

(a) The provisions concerning requests for information in 40 CFR 2.100 to 2.121 (Subpart A) are incorporated by reference including subsequent amendments and editions, except that 40 CFR 2.106(b), 2.112(f), and 2.120 are not incorporated by reference.

(b) The following address for the Headquarters Freedom of Information Operations (1105) is substituted for the address 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20460 in 40 CFR 2.106(a) and 2.213(a): Division of Waste Management, 1646 Mail Services Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1646.

SUBPART A -- PROCEDURES FOR DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

2.100 General provisions.

- (a) This subpart contains the rules that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or Agency) follows in processing requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552. The Agency also has rules that it follows in processing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests for records submitted to it as Confidential Business Information (CBI). Such records are covered in subpart B of this part. Requests made by individuals for records about themselves under the Privacy Act of 1974 which are processed under 40 CFR part 16, will also be treated as FOIA requests under this subpart. This ensures that the requestor has access to all responsive records. Information routinely provided to the public as part of a regular EPA activity may be provided to the public without following this subpart.
- (b) When documents responsive to a request are maintained for distribution by agencies operating statutory-based fee schedule programs, such as, but not limited to, the Government Printing Office or the National Technical Information Service, EPA will inform the requester of the steps necessary to obtain records from these sources.

2.101 Where requests for records are to be filed.

- (a) You may request records by writing to the Records, FOIA, and Privacy Branch, Office of Environmental Information, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue (2822T), NW, Washington, DC 20460; e-mail: hq.foia@epa.gov. You may also access EPA Headquarters and Regional Freedom of Information Offices' Web sites at <http://www.epa.gov/foia> and submit a request via an online form.
[Note: The Remainder of §2.101(a) is not applicable to North Carolina and has not been reprinted here.]
- (b) EPA provides access to all records that the FOIA requires an agency to make regularly available for public inspection and copying. Each office is responsible for determining which of the records it generates are required to be made publicly available and for providing access by the public to them. The Agency will also maintain and make available for public inspection and copying a current subject-matter index of such records and provide a copy or a link to the respective Web site for Headquarters or the Regions. Each index will be updated regularly, at least quarterly, with respect to newly-included records.
- (c) All records created by EPA on or after November 1, 1996, which the FOIA requires an agency to make regularly available for public inspection and copying, will be made available electronically through EPA's worldwide Web site, located at <http://www.epa.gov>, or, upon request, through other electronic means. EPA will also include on its worldwide Web site the current subject-matter index of all such records.

2.102 Procedures for making requests.

- (a) *How made and addressed.* You may make a request for EPA records that are not publicly available under §2.201(a)-(b) by writing directly to the appropriate FOI Officer, as listed in §2.101(a). Only written requests for records will be accepted for processing under this subpart. For records located at EPA Headquarters, or in those instances when you cannot determine where to send your request, you may send it to the Records, FOIA, and Privacy Branch, Office of Environmental Information, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20460; e-mail: hq.foia@epa.gov. That office will forward your request to the regional FOI Office it believes most likely to have the records that you want. Your request will be considered received as of the date it is received by the correct FOI Office. Misdirected requests will not be considered received by EPA until the appropriate FOI Office receives the request. For proper handling, you

should mark both your request letter and its envelope or e-mail subject line "Freedom of Information Act Request." You should also include your name, mailing address, and daytime telephone number in the event we need to contact you.

- (b) EPA employees may attempt in good faith to comply with oral requests for inspection or disclosure of EPA records publicly available under §2.201(a)-(b), but such requests are not subject to the FOIA or the regulations in this part.
- (c) *Description of records sought.* Your request should reasonably describe the records you are seeking in a way that will permit EPA employees to identify and locate them. Whenever possible, your request should include specific information about each record sought, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, and subject matter. If known, you should include any file designations or descriptions for the records that you want. The more specific you are about the records or type of records that you want, the more likely EPA will be able to identify and locate records responsive to your request. If EPA determines that your request does not reasonably describe the records, it will tell you either what additional information you need to provide or why your request is otherwise insufficient. EPA will also give you an opportunity to discuss and modify your request to meet the requirements of this section. Should it be necessary for you to provide a revised description of the records you are seeking, the time necessary to do so will be excluded from the statutory 20 working day period (or any authorized extension of time) that EPA has to respond to your request as discussed in §2.104.
- (d) *Agreement to pay fees.* If you make a FOIA request, EPA will consider your request to be an agreement that you will pay all applicable fees charged under §2.107, up to \$25.00, unless you seek a waiver of fees. The EPA office responsible for responding to your request ordinarily will confirm this agreement in writing. When making a request, you may specify a willingness to pay a greater or lesser amount. Should it be necessary for you to provide a written agreement to pay additional fees, the time necessary to do so will be excluded from the statutory 20 working day period (or any authorized extension of time).

2.103 Responsibility for responding to requests.

- (a) *In general.* Except as stated in paragraphs (c), (d), (e), and (f) of this section, the EPA office that has possession of that record is the office responsible for responding to you. In determining which records are within the scope of a request, an office will ordinarily include only those records in its possession as of the date the request was received in the Headquarters or Regional FOI Office. If any other date is used, the office will inform you of that date.
- (b) *Authority to grant or deny requests.* The head of an office, or that individual's designee, is authorized to grant or deny any request for a record of that office or other Agency records when appropriate.
- (c) *Authority to grant or deny fee waivers or requests for expedited treatment.* The head of the Headquarters FOIA Office and Regional FOI Officers, or their designees, are authorized to grant or deny fee waivers or requests for expedited treatment.
- (d) *Consultations and referrals.* When a request to EPA seeks records in its possession that originated with another Federal agency, the EPA office receiving the request shall either:
 - (1) Consult with the Federal agency where the record or portion thereof originated and then respond to your request, or
 - (2) Direct the FOI Office to refer your request to the Federal agency where the record or portion thereof originated. Whenever all or any part of the responsibility for responding to a request has been referred to another agency, the FOI Office will notify you accordingly.
- (e) *Law enforcement information.* Whenever a request is made for a record containing information that relates to an investigation of a possible violation of law and was originated by another agency, the receiving office will either direct the FOI Office to refer the request to that other agency or consult with that other agency prior to making any release determination.

2.104 Responses to requests and appeals.

- (a) Unless the Agency and the requester have agreed otherwise, or when unusual circumstances exist as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, EPA offices will respond to requests no later than 20 working days from the date the request is received and logged in by the appropriate FOI Office. EPA will ordinarily respond to requests in the order in which they were received. If EPA fails to respond to your request within the 20 working day period, or any authorized extension of time, you may seek judicial review to obtain the records without first making an administrative appeal.
- (b) On receipt of a request, the FOI Office ordinarily will send a written acknowledgment advising you of the date it was received and of the processing number assigned to the request for future reference.
- (c) *Multitrack processing.* The Agency uses three or more processing tracks by distinguishing between simple and complex requests based on the amount of work and/or time needed to process the request, including limits

based on the number of pages involved. The Agency will advise you of the processing track in which your request has been placed and of the limits of the different processing tracks. The Agency may place your request in its slower track(s) while providing you the opportunity to limit the scope of your request in order to qualify for faster processing within the specified limits of the faster track(s). If your request is placed in a slower track, the Agency will contact you either by telephone or by letter, whichever is most efficient in each case.

- (d) *Unusual circumstances.* When the statutory time limits for processing a request cannot be met because of "unusual circumstances," as defined in the FOIA, and the time limits are extended on that basis, you will be notified in writing, as soon as practicable, of the unusual circumstances and of the date by which processing of the request should be completed. When the extension is for more than 10 working days, the Agency will provide you with an opportunity either to modify the request so that it may be processed within the 10 working day time limit extension or to arrange an alternative time period for processing the original or modified request.
- (e) *Expedited processing.*
 - (1) Requests or appeals will be taken out of order and given expedited treatment whenever EPA determines that such requests or appeals involve a compelling need, as follows:
 - (i) Circumstances in which the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or
 - (ii) An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal government activity, if the information is requested by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public.
 - (2) A request for expedited processing must be made at the time of the initial request for records or at the time of appeal.
 - (3) If you are seeking expedited processing, you must submit a statement, certified to be true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief, explaining in detail the basis for the request. For example, if you fit within the category described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section and are not a full-time member of the news media, you must establish that you are a person whose primary professional activity or occupation is information dissemination, although it need not be your sole occupation. If you fit within the category described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section, you must also establish a particular urgency to inform the public about the government activity involved in the request, beyond the public's right to know about government activity generally.
 - (4) Within 10 calendar days from the date of your request for expedited processing, the head of the Headquarters FOI Staff or Regional FOI Officer will decide whether to grant your request and will notify you of the decision. If your request for expedited treatment is granted, the request will be given priority and will be processed as soon as practicable. If your request for expedited processing is denied, any appeal of that decision will be acted on expeditiously.
- (f) *Grants of requests.* Once an office makes a determination to grant a request in whole or in part, it will release the records or parts of records to you and notify you of any applicable fee charged under §2.107. Records released in part will be annotated, whenever technically feasible, with the applicable FOIA exemption(s) at that part of the record from which the exempt information was deleted.
- (g) *Adverse determinations of requests.* Once the Agency makes an adverse determination of a request, the requestor will be notified of that determination in writing. An adverse determination consists of a determination to withhold any requested record in whole or in part; a determination that a requested record does not exist or cannot be located; a determination that what has been requested is not a record subject to the FOIA; a determination on any disputed fee matter, including a denial of a request for a fee waiver; or a denial of a request for expedited treatment.
- (h) *Initial denials of requests.* The Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrators, Regional Administrators, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, Associate Administrators, and heads of headquarters staff offices are delegated the authority to issue initial determinations. However, the authority to issue initial denials of requests for existing, located records (other than initial denials based solely on §2.204(d)(1)) may be redelegated only to persons occupying positions not lower than division director or equivalent. Each letter will include:
 - (1) The name and title or position of the person responsible for the denial;
 - (2) A brief statement of the reason(s) for the denial, including an identification of records being withheld (individual, or if a large number of similar records are being denied, by described category), and any FOIA exemption applied by the office in denying the request;
 - (3) An estimate of the volume of records or information withheld, in number of pages or in some other reasonable form of estimation. This estimate does not need to be provided if the volume is otherwise indicated through annotated deletions on records disclosed in part, or if providing an estimate would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption; and
 - (4) A statement that the denial may be appealed under, and a description of the requirements of, paragraph (j) of this section.

- (i) *Denial of fee waiver.* The letter denying a request for a fee waiver or expedited treatment will be signed by the head of the Headquarters FOI Staff or Regional FOI Officers.
- (j) *Appeals of adverse determinations.* If you are dissatisfied with any adverse determination of your request by an office, you may appeal that determination to the Headquarters Freedom of Information Staff, Records, Privacy and FOIA Branch, Office of Information Collection, Office of Environmental Information, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue (2822T), NW., Washington, DC 20460; e-mail: hq.foia@epa.gov. The appeal must be made in writing, and it must be submitted to the Headquarters FOI Staff no later than 30 calendar days from the date of the letter denying the request. The Agency will not consider appeals received after the 30-day limit. The appeal letter may include as much or as little related information as you wish, as long as it clearly identifies the determination being appealed (including the assigned FOIA request number, if known). For quickest possible handling, the appeal letter and its envelope should be marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." Unless the Administrator directs otherwise, the General Counsel or his/her designee will act on behalf of the Administrator on all appeals under this section, except that:
 - (1) In the case of an adverse initial determination by the General Counsel or his/her designee, the Administrator or his/her designee will act on the appeal;
 - (2) The Counsel to the Inspector General will act on any appeal where the Inspector General or his/her designee has made the initial adverse determination; however, if the Counsel to the Inspector General has signed the initial adverse determination, the General Counsel or his/her designee will act on the appeal;
 - (3) An adverse determination by the Administrator on an initial request will serve as the final action of the Agency; and
 - (4) If a requester seeks judicial review because the Agency has not responded in a timely manner, any further action on an appeal will take place through the lawsuit.
- (k) The decision on your appeal will be made in writing, normally within 20 working days of its receipt by the Headquarters Freedom of Information Staff. A decision affirming an adverse determination in whole or in part will contain a statement of the reason(s) for the decision, including any FOIA exemption(s) applied, and inform you of the FOIA provisions for judicial review of the decision. If the adverse determination is reversed or modified on appeal, you will be notified in a written decision. This written decision will either have the requested information that has been determined on appeal to be releasable attached to it, or your request will be returned to the appropriate office so that it may be reprocessed in accordance with the appeal decision.
- (l) If you wish to seek judicial review of any adverse determination, you must first appeal that adverse determination under this section, except when EPA has not responded to your request within the statutory 20 working day time limit. In such cases, you may seek judicial review without making an administrative appeal.

2.105 Exemption categories.

- (a) The FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b), establishes the following nine categories of information which are exempt from the mandatory disclosure requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552(a):
 - (1) (i) Specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy; and
 - (ii) Are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive order;
 - (2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;
 - (3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 U.S.C. 552(b)), provided that such statute:
 - (i) Requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue; or
 - (ii) Establishes particular criteria for withholding information or refers to particular types of information to be withheld;
 - (4) Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
 - (5) Inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the affected agency;
 - (6) Personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
 - (7) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information:
 - (i) Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings;
 - (ii) Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication;
 - (iii) Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
 - (iv) Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a

confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;

- (v) Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or
 - (vi) Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;
- (8) Contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
 - (9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

2.106 Preservation of records.

Each FOI Officer shall preserve all correspondence pertaining to the FOIA requests that it receives until disposition or destruction is authorized by title 44 of the United States Code or the National Archives and Records Administration's General Records Schedule 14. Copies of all responsive records should be maintained by the appropriate program office. Records shall not be disposed of while they are the subject of a pending request, appeal, or lawsuit under the FOIA.

2.107 Fees.

- (a) *In general.* The Agency will charge for processing requests under the FOIA in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section, except where fees are limited under paragraph (d) of this section or where a waiver or reduction of fees is granted under paragraph (l) of this section. Requesters will pay fees by check or money order made payable to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- (b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

- (1) *Commercial use request* means a request from or on behalf of a person who seeks information for a use or purpose that furthers his/her commercial, trade, or profit interests, which can include furthering those interests through litigation. FOI Officers will determine, whenever reasonably possible, the use to which a requester will put the requested records. When it appears that the requester will put the records to a commercial use, either because of the nature of the request itself or because an office has reasonable cause to doubt a requester's stated use, the FOI Officer will provide the requester a reasonable opportunity to submit further clarification.
- (2) *Direct costs* means those expenses that the Agency actually incurs in searching for and duplicating (and, in the case of commercial use requests, reviewing) records to respond to a FOIA request. Direct costs include, for example, the salary of the employee performing the work and the cost of operating duplication equipment. Not included in direct costs are overhead expenses such as the costs of space and heating or lighting of the facility in which the records are kept.
- (3) *Duplication* means the making of a copy of a record, or of the information contained in it, necessary to respond to a FOIA request. Copies can take the form of paper, microform, audiovisual materials, or electronic records (for example, magnetic tape, disk, or compact disk), among others. The Agency will honor a requester's specified preference of form or format of disclosure if the record is readily reproducible with reasonable efforts in the requested form or format.
- (4) *Educational institution* means a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, an institution of undergraduate higher education, an institution of graduate higher education, an institution of professional education, or an institution of vocational education, that operates a program of scholarly research. To be in this category, a requester must show that the request is authorized by, and is made under the auspices of, a qualifying institution and that the records are not sought for a commercial use but are sought to further scholarly research.
- (5) *Noncommercial scientific institution* means an institution that is not operated on a "commercial" basis, as that term is defined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, and that is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research which is not intended to promote any particular product or industry. To be in this category, a requester must show that the request is authorized by, and is made under the auspices of, a qualifying institution and that the records are not sought for a commercial use but are sought to further scientific research.
- (6) *Representative of the news media or news media requester* means any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term "news" means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media include television or radio stations broadcasting to the public at large and

publishers of periodicals (but only in those instances where they can qualify as disseminators of "news") who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public. For "freelance" journalists to be regarded as working for a news organization, they must demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through that organization. A publication contract would be the clearest proof, but FOI Officers will also look to the past publication record of a requester in making this determination. To be in this category, a requester must not be seeking the requested records for a commercial use. A request for records supporting the news-dissemination function of the requester will not be considered to be for a commercial use.

- (7) *Review* means the examination of a record located in response to a request in order to determine whether any portion of it is exempt from disclosure. It also includes processing any record for disclosure (for example, doing all that is necessary to redact it and prepare it for disclosure). Review costs are recoverable even if a record ultimately is not disclosed. Review time includes time spent considering any formal objection to disclosure made by a business submitter requesting confidential treatment, but does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.
 - (8) *Search* means the process of looking for and retrieving records or information responsive to a request. It includes page-by-page or line-by-line identification of information within records and also includes reasonable efforts to locate and retrieve information from records maintained in electronic form or format. Offices will ensure that searches are done in the most efficient and least expensive manner reasonably possible. For example, offices will not search line-by-line where duplicating an entire document would be quicker and less expensive.
- (c) *Fees to be charged.*
- (1) There are four categories of requests. Fees for each of these categories will be charged as follows:
 - (i) *Commercial use requests.* A requester seeking access to records for a commercial use will be charged for the time spent searching for the records, reviewing the records for possible disclosure, and for the cost of each page of duplication. The charges for searching for and/or reviewing the records may be charged even if no responsive records are found or if the records are located but are determined to be exempt from disclosure.
 - (ii) *Educational or non-commercial scientific requests.* Requesters from educational or scientific institutions, whose purpose is scholarly, noncommercial research, will be charged only for the cost of record duplication, except that the first 100 pages of duplication will be furnished at no charge.
 - (iii) *News media requests.* Requesters who are representatives of the news media, and whose purpose in seeking records is noncommercial, will be charged only for the cost of duplication, except that the first 100 pages of duplication will be furnished at no charge.
 - (iv) *All other requests.* Requesters not covered by one of the three categories above will be charged for the full cost of search and duplication, except that the first two hours of search time and the first 100 pages of duplication will be furnished without charge. The charges for searching for the records will be assessed even if no responsive records are found or if the records are located but are determined to be exempt from disclosure.
 - (2) In responding to FOIA requests, the Agency will charge the following fees unless a waiver or reduction of fees has been granted under paragraph (1) of this section:
 - (i) *Search.*
 - (A) Search fees will be charged for all requests except for those made by educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, or representatives of the news media subject to the limitations of paragraph (d) of this section. Offices will charge for time spent searching even if no responsive records are found or if the records are located but are determined to be exempt from disclosure.
 - (B) For searches and retrievals of requested records, either manually or electronically, conducted by clerical personnel, the fee will be \$4.00 for each quarter hour of time. For searches and retrievals of requested records, either manually or electronically, requiring the use of professional personnel, the fee will be \$7.00 for each quarter hour of time. For searches and retrievals of requested records, either manually or electronically, requiring the use of managerial personnel, the fee will be \$10.25 for each quarter hour of time.
 - (C) When searches and retrievals are conducted by contractors, requesters will be charged for the actual charges up to but not exceeding the rate which would have been charged had EPA employees conducted the search. The costs of actual computer resource usage in connection with such searches will also be charged, to the extent they can be determined.
 - (ii) *Duplication.* Duplication fees will be charged to all requesters, subject to the limitations of paragraph (d) of this section. For either a photocopy or a computer-generated printout of a record (no more than one copy of which need be supplied), the fee will be fifteen (15) cents per

page. For electronic forms of duplication, other than a computer-generated printout, offices will charge the direct costs of that duplication. Such direct costs will include the costs of the requested electronic medium on which the copy is to be made and the actual operator time and computer resource usage required to produce the copy, to the extent they can be determined.

- (iii) *Review.* Review fees will be charged only to requesters who make a commercial use request. Review fees will be charged only for the initial record review (that is, the review done when an office is deciding whether an exemption applies to a particular record or portion of a record at the initial request level). No charge will be made for review at the administrative appeal level for an exemption already applied. However, records or portions of records withheld under an exemption that is subsequently determined not to apply may be reviewed again to determine whether any other exemption not previously considered applies; the costs of that review will be charged when it is made necessary by a change of circumstances. Review fees will be charged at the same rates as those charged for a search under paragraph (c)(1)(i) of this section.
- (d) *Limitations on charging fees.*
 - (1) No search or review fees will be charged for requests by educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, or representatives of the news media.
 - (2) No search fee or review fee will be charged for a quarter-hour period unless more than half of that period is required for search or review.
 - (3) Except for requesters seeking records for a commercial use, offices will provide without charge:
 - (i) The first 100 pages of duplication, and
 - (ii) The first two hours of search.
 - (4) Whenever a total fee calculated under paragraph (c) of this section is \$14.00 or less for any request, no fee will be charged.
 - (5) The provisions of paragraphs (d)(3) and (4) of this section work together. This means that for requesters other than those seeking records for a commercial use, no fee will be charged unless the cost of search in excess of two hours plus the cost of duplication in excess of 100 pages totals more than \$14.00.
- (e) *Notice of anticipated fees in excess of \$25.00.* When the Agency determines or estimates that the fees to be charged under this section will amount to more than \$25.00, the Agency will notify the requester of the actual or estimated amount of the fees, unless the requester has indicated a willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. The amount of \$25.00 is cumulative for multi-office requests. If only a portion of the fee can be estimated readily, the Agency will advise the requester that the estimated fee may be only a portion of the total fee. When a requester has been notified that actual or estimated fees will amount to more than \$25.00, EPA will do no further work on the request until the requester agrees to pay the anticipated total fee. This time will be excluded from the twenty (20) working day time limit. EPA will memorialize any such agreement in writing. A notice under this paragraph will offer the requester an opportunity to discuss the matter with Agency personnel in order to reformulate the request to meet the requester's needs at a lower cost.
- (f) *Charges for other services.* Apart from the other provisions of this section, when an office chooses as a matter of administrative discretion to provide a special service—such as certifying that records are true copies or sending records by other than ordinary mail—the direct costs of providing the service ordinarily will be charged.
- (g) *Charging interest.* EPA may charge interest on any unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the date of billing the requester. Interest charges will be assessed at the rate provided in 31 U.S.C. 3717 and will accrue from the date of the billing until payment is received by the Agency. EPA will follow the provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97-365), as amended, and its administrative procedures, including the use of consumer reporting agencies, collection agencies, and offset. No penalty will be assessed against FOIA requesters for exercising their statutory right to ask that a fee be waived or reduced or to dispute a billing. If a fee is in dispute, penalties will be suspended upon notification.
- (h) *Delinquent requesters.* If requesters fail to pay all fees within 60 calendar days of the fees assessment, they will be placed on a delinquency list. Subsequent FOIA requests will not be processed until payment of the overdue fees has first been made.
- (i) *Aggregating requests.* When the Agency reasonably believes that a requester or a group of requesters acting together is attempting to divide a request into a series of requests for the purpose of avoiding fees, the Agency may aggregate those requests and charge accordingly. The Agency may presume that multiple requests of this type made within a 30-day period have been made in order to avoid fees. When requests are separated by a longer period, the Agency will aggregate them only if there exists a solid basis for determining that aggregation is warranted under all the circumstances involved. Multiple requests involving unrelated matters will not be aggregated.
- (j) *Advance payments.*
 - (1) For requests other than those described in paragraphs (j)(2) and (3) of this section, an office will not require the requester to make an advance payment (that is, a payment made before EPA begins or continues work on a request). Payment owed for work already completed (that is, a prepayment before copies are sent to a requester) is not an advance payment.

- (2) When the Agency determines or estimates that a total fee to be charged under this section will be more than \$250.00, it may require the requester to make an advance payment of an amount up to the amount of the entire anticipated fee before beginning to process the request, except when it receives a satisfactory assurance of full payment from a requester that has a history of prompt payment.
 - (3) When a requester has previously failed to pay a properly charged FOIA fee to the Agency within 30 calendar days of the date of billing, the Agency may require the requester to pay the full amount due, plus any applicable interest, and to make an advance payment of the full amount of any anticipated fee, before the Agency begins to process a new request or continues to process a pending request from that requester.
 - (4) When the Agency requires advance payment or payment due under paragraph (j)(3) of this section, the request will not be considered, and EPA will do no further work on the request until the required payment is made.
- (k) *Other statutes specifically providing for fees.* The fee schedule of this section does not apply to fees charged under any other statute that specifically requires an agency to set and collect fees for particular types of records. When records responsive to requests are maintained for distribution by agencies operating such statutorily based fee schedule programs, EPA will inform requesters of the steps for obtaining records from those sources so that they may do so most economically.
- (l) *Waiver or reduction of fees.*
- (1) Records responsive to a request will be furnished without charge or at a charge reduced below that established under paragraph (c) of this section when a FOI Office determines, based on all available information, that disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.
 - (2) To determine whether the first fee waiver requirement is met, FOI Offices will consider the following factors:
 - (i) *The subject of the request:* Whether the subject of the requested records concerns "the operations or activities of the government." The subject of the requested records must concern identifiable operations or activities of the Federal government, with a connection that is direct and clear, not remote.
 - (ii) *The informative value of the information to be disclosed:* Whether the disclosure is "likely to contribute" to an understanding of government operations or activities. The disclosable portions of the requested records must be meaningfully informative about government operations or activities in order to be "likely to contribute" to an increased public understanding of those operations or activities. The disclosure of information that already is in the public domain, in either a duplicative or a substantially identical form, would not be as likely to contribute to such understanding when nothing new would be added to the public's understanding.
 - (iii) The contribution to an understanding of the subject by the public is likely to result from disclosure: Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to "public understanding." The disclosure must contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject, as opposed to the dual understanding of the requester. A requester's expertise in the subject area and ability and intention to effectively convey information to the public will be considered. It will be presumed that a representative of the news media will satisfy this consideration.
 - (iv) *The significance of the contribution to public understanding:* Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute "significantly" to public understanding of government operations or activities. The public's understanding of the subject in question, as compared to the level of public understanding existing prior to the disclosure, must be enhanced by the disclosure to a significant extent. FOI Offices will not make value judgments about whether information that would contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government is "important" enough to be made public.
 - (3) To determine whether the second fee waiver requirement is met, FOI Offices will consider the following factors:
 - (i) *The existence and magnitude of a commercial interest:* Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. FOI Offices will consider any commercial interest of the requester (with reference to the definition of "commercial use request" in paragraph (b)(1) of this section), or of any person on whose behalf the requester may be acting, that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. Requesters will be given an opportunity in the administrative process to provide explanatory information regarding this consideration.
 - (ii) *The primary interest in disclosure:* Whether any identified commercial interest of the requester is sufficiently large, in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is "primarily in the commercial interest of the requester." A fee waiver or reduction is justified

where the public interest standard is satisfied and that public interest is greater in magnitude than that of any identified commercial interest in disclosure. FOI Offices ordinarily will presume that when a news media requester has satisfied the public interest standard, the public interest will be the interest primarily served by disclosure to that requester. Disclosure to data brokers or others who merely compile and market government information for direct economic return will not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

- (4) When only some of the requested records satisfy the requirements for a waiver of fees, a waiver will be granted for only those records.
- (5) Requests for the waiver or reduction of fees must address the factors listed in paragraphs (k) (1)-(3) of this section, insofar as they apply to each request. FOI Offices will exercise their discretion to consider the cost-effectiveness of their investment of administrative resources in deciding whether to grant waivers or reductions of fees and will consult the appropriate EPA offices as needed. Requests for the waiver or reduction of fees must be submitted along with the request.
- (6) When a fee waiver request is denied, EPA will do no further work on the request until it receives an assurance of payment or an appeal of the fee waiver adverse determination is made and a final appeal determination is made pursuant to §2.104(j).

2.108 Other rights and services.

Nothing in this subpart shall be construed to entitle any person, as a right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under the FOIA.

(c) The provisions concerning confidentiality of business information in 40 CFR 2.201 to 2.311 (Subpart B) are incorporated by reference including subsequent amendments and editions, except that 40 CFR 2.209(b) and (c), 2.301, 2.302, 2.303, 2.304, 2.306, 2.307, 2.308, 2.309, 2.310 and 2.311 are not incorporated by reference.

SUBPART B -- CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS INFORMATION

2.201 Definitions.

For the purposes of this subpart:

- (a) *Person* means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other public or private organization or legal entity, including Federal, State or local governmental bodies and agencies and their employees.
- (b) *Business* means any person engaged in a business, trade, employment, calling or profession, whether or not all or any part of the net earnings derived from such engagement by such person inure (or may lawfully inure) to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.
- (c) *Business information* (sometimes referred to simply as *information*) means any information which pertains to the interests of any business, which was developed or acquired by that business, and (except where the context otherwise requires) which is possessed by EPA in recorded form.
- (d) *Affected business* means, with reference to an item of business information, a business which has asserted (and not waived or withdrawn) a business confidentiality claim covering the information, or a business which could be expected to make such a claim if it were aware that disclosure of the information to the public was proposed.
- (e) *Reasons of business confidentiality* include the concept of trade secrecy and other related legal concepts which give (or may give) a business the right to preserve the confidentiality of business information and to limit its use or disclosure by others in order that the business may obtain or retain business advantages it derives from its rights in the information. The definition is meant to encompass any concept which authorizes a Federal agency to withhold business information under 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), as well as any concept which requires EPA to withhold information from the public for the benefit of a business under 18 U.S.C. 1905 or any of the various statutes cited in Section 2.301 through Section 2.309.
- (f) [Reserved]
- (g) Information which is *available to the public* is information in EPA's possession which EPA will furnish to any member of the public upon request and which EPA may make public, release or otherwise make available to any person whether or not its disclosure has been requested.
- (h) *Business confidentiality claim* (or, simply, *claim*) means a claim or allegation that business information is entitled to confidential treatment for reasons of business confidentiality, or a request for a determination that such information is entitled to such treatment.
- (i) *Voluntarily submitted information* means business information in EPA's possession--
 - (1) The submission of which EPA had no statutory or contractual authority to require; and
 - (2) The submission of which was not prescribed by statute or regulation as a condition of obtaining some benefit (or avoiding some disadvantage) under a regulatory program of general applicability, including such regulatory programs as permit, licensing, registration, or certification programs, but excluding programs concerned solely or primarily with the award or administration by EPA of contracts or grants.
- (j) *Recorded* means written or otherwise registered in some form for preserving information, including such forms as drawings, photographs, videotape, sound recordings, punched cards, and computer tape or disk.
- (k) [Reserved]
- (l) *Administrator, Regional Administrator, General Counsel, Regional Counsel, and Freedom of Information Officer* mean the EPA officers or employees occupying the positions so titled.
- (m) *EPA office* means any organizational element of EPA, at any level or location. (The term *EPA office* and *EPA Legal office* are used in this subpart for the sake of brevity and ease of reference. When this subpart requires that an action be taken by an *EPA office* or by an *EPA legal office*, it is the responsibility of the officer or employee in charge of that office to take the action or ensure that it is taken.)
- (n) *EPA legal office* means the EPA General Counsel and any EPA office over which the General Counsel exercises supervisory authority, including the various Offices of Regional Counsel. (See paragraph (m) of this section.)
- (o) A *working day* is any day on which Federal government offices are open for normal business, Saturdays, Sundays, and official Federal holidays are not working days; all other days are.

2.202 Applicability of subpart; priority where provisions conflict; records containing more than one kind of information.

- (a) Section 2.201 through 2.215 establish basic rules governing business confidentiality claims, the handling by EPA of business information which is or may be entitled to confidential treatment, and determinations by EPA of whether information is entitled to confidential treatment for reasons of business confidentiality.
- (b) Various statutes (other than 5 U.S.C. 552) under which EPA operates contain special provisions concerning the entitlement to confidential treatment of information gathered under such statutes. Section 2.301 through 2.311 prescribe rules for treatment of certain categories of business information obtained under the various statutory provisions. Paragraph (b) of each of those sections should be consulted to determine whether any of those sections applies to the particular information in question.
- (c) The basic rules of Sections 2.201 through 2.215 govern except to the extent that they are modified or supplanted by the special rules of Sections 2.301 through 2.311. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the basic rules and those of a special rule which is applicable to the particular information in question, the provision of the special rule shall govern.
- (d) If two or more of the sections containing special rules apply to the particular information in question, and the applicable sections prescribe conflicting special rules for the treatment of the information, the rule which provides greater or wider availability to the public of the information shall govern.
- (e) For most purposes, a document or other record may usefully be treated as a single unit of information, even though in fact the document or record is comprised of a collection of individual items of information. However, in applying the provisions of this subpart, it will often be necessary to separate the individual items of information into two or more categories, and to afford different treatment to the information in each such category. The need for differentiation of this type may arise, e.g., because a business confidentiality claim covers only a portion of a record, or because only a portion of the record is eligible for confidential treatment. EPA offices taking action under this subpart must be alert to this problem.
- (f) In taking actions under this subpart, EPA offices should consider whether it is possible to obtain the affected business's consent to disclosure of useful portions of records while protecting the information which is or may be entitled to confidentiality (e.g., by withholding such portions of a record as would identify a business, or by disclosing data in the form of industry-wide aggregates, multi-year averages or totals, or some similar form).
- (g) This subpart does not apply to questions concerning entitlement to confidential treatment or information which concerns an individual solely in his personal, as opposed to business, capacity.

2.203 Notice to be included in EPA requests, demands, and forms; method of asserting business confidentiality claim; effect of failure to assert claim at time of submission.

- (a) *Notice to be included in certain requests and demands for information, and in certain forms.* Whenever an EPA office makes a written request or demand that a business furnish information which, in the office's opinion, is likely to be regarded by the business as entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart, or whenever an EPA office prescribes a form for use by businesses in furnishing such information, the request, demand, or form shall include or enclose a notice which--
 - (1) States that the business may, if it desires, assert a business confidentiality claim covering part or all of the information, in the manner described by paragraph (b) of this section, and that information covered by such a claim will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in this subpart;
 - (2) States that if no such claim accompanies the information when it is received by EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the business; and
 - (3) Furnishes a citation of the location of this subpart in the Code of Federal Regulations and the Federal Register.
- (b) *Method and time of asserting business confidentiality claim.* A business which is submitting information to EPA may assert a business confidentiality claim covering the information by placing on (or attaching to) the information, at the time it is submitted to EPA, a cover sheet, stamped or typed legend, or other suitable form of notice employing language such as *trade secret*, *proprietary*, or *company confidential*. Allegedly confidential portions of otherwise non-confidential documents should be clearly identified by the business, and may be submitted separately to facilitate identification and handling by EPA. If the business desires confidential treatment only until a certain date or until the occurrence of a certain event, the notice should so state.
- (c) *Effect of failure to assert claim at time of submission of information.* If information was submitted by a business to EPA on or after October 1, 1976, in response to an EPA request or demand (or on an EPA-prescribed form) which contained the substance of the notice required by paragraph (a) of this section, and if no business confidentiality claim accompanied the information when it was received by EPA, the inquiry to the

business normally required by Section 2.204(c)(2) need not be made. If a claim covering the information is received after the information itself is received, EPA will make such efforts as are administratively practicable to associate the late claim with copies of the previously-submitted information in EPA files (see Section 2.204(c)(1)). However, EPA cannot assure that such efforts will be effective, in light of the possibility of prior disclosure or widespread prior dissemination of the information.

2.204 Initial action by EPA office.

- (a) *Situations requiring action.* This section prescribes procedures to be used by EPA offices in making initial determinations of whether business information is entitled to confidential treatment for reasons of business confidentiality. Action shall be taken under this section whenever an EPA office:
- (1) Learns that it is responsible for responding to a request under 5 U.S.C. 552 for the release of business information; in such a case, the office shall issue an initial determination within the period specified in Section 2.112;
 - (2) Desires to determine whether business information in its possession is entitled to confidential treatment, even though no request for release of the information has been received; or
 - (3) Determines that it is likely that EPA eventually will be requested to disclose the information at some future date and thus will have to determine whether the information is entitled to confidential treatment. In such a case this section's procedures should be initiated at the earliest practicable time, in order to increase the time available for preparation and submission of comments and for issuance of determinations, and to make easier the task of meeting response deadlines if a request for release of the information is later received under 5 U.S.C. 552.
- (b) *Previous confidentiality determination.* The EPA office shall first ascertain whether there has been a previous determination, issued by a Federal court or by an EPA legal office acting under this subpart, holding that the information in question is entitled to confidential treatment for reasons of business confidentiality.
- (1) If such a determination holds that the information is entitled to confidential treatment, the EPA Office shall furnish any person whose request for the information is pending under 5 U.S.C. 552 an initial determination (see §2.111 and §2.113) that the information has previously been determined to be entitled to confidential treatment, and that the request is therefore denied. The office shall furnish such person the appropriate case citation or EPA determination. If the EPA office believes that a previous determination which is issued by an EPA legal office may be improper or no longer valid, the office shall so inform the EPA legal office, which shall consider taking action under § 2.205(h).
 - (2) With respect to all information not known to be covered by such a previous determination, the EPA office shall take action under paragraph (c) of this section.
- (c) *Determining existence of business confidentiality claims.*
- (1) Whenever action under this paragraph is required by paragraph (b) (2) of this section, the EPA office shall examine the information and the office's records to determine which business, if any, are affected businesses (see §2.201(d)), and to determine which business if any, have asserted business confidentiality claims which remain applicable to the information. If any business is found to have asserted an applicable claim, the office shall take action under paragraph (d) of this section with respect to each such claim.
 - (2)
 - (i) If the examination conducted under paragraph (c) (1) of this section discloses the existence of any business which, although it has not asserted a claim, might be expected to assert a claim if it knew EPA proposed to disclose the information, the EPA office shall contact a responsible official of each such business to learn whether the business asserts a claim covering the information. However, no such inquiry need be made to any business--
 - (A) Which failed to assert a claim covering the information when responding to an EPA request or demand, or supplying information on an EPA form, which contained the substance of the statements prescribed by Section 2.203(a);
 - (B) Which otherwise failed to assert a claim covering the information after being informed by EPA that such failure could result in disclosure of the information to the public; or
 - (C) Which has otherwise waived or withdrawn a claim covering the information.
 - (ii) If a request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending at the time inquiry is made under this paragraph (c) (2), the inquiry shall be made by telephone or equally prompt means, and the responsible official contacted shall be informed that any claim the business wishes to assert must be brought to the EPA office's attention no later than the close of business on the third working day after such inquiry.
 - (iii) A record shall be kept of the results of any inquiry under this paragraph (c) (2). If any business makes a claim covering the information, the EPA office shall take further action under paragraph (d) of this section.

- (3) If, after the examination under paragraph (c) (1) of this section, and after any inquiry made under paragraph (c) (2) of this section, the EPA office knows of no claim covering the information and the time for response to any inquiry has passed, the information shall be treated for purposes of this subpart as not entitled to confidential treatment.
- (d) *Preliminary determination.* Whenever action under this paragraph is required by paragraph (c) (1) or (2) of this section on any business's claim, the EPA office shall make a determination with respect to each such claim. Each determination shall be made after consideration of the provisions of Section 2.203, the applicable substantive criteria in Section 2.208 or elsewhere in this subpart, and any previously-issued determinations under this subpart which are applicable.
 - (1) If, in connection with any business's claim, the office determines that the information may be entitled to confidential treatment, the office shall--
 - (i) Furnish the notice of opportunity to submit comments prescribed by paragraph (e) of this section to each business which is known to have asserted an applicable claim and which has not previously been furnished such notice with regard to the information in question;
 - (ii) Furnish, to any person whose request for release of the information is pending under 5 U.S.C. 552, a determination (in accordance with Section 2.113) that the information may be entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart and 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), that further inquiry by EPA pursuant to this subpart is required before a final determination on the request can be issued, that the person's request is therefore initially denied, and that after further inquiry a final determination will be issued by an EPA legal office; and
 - (iii) Refer the matter to the appropriate EPA legal office, furnishing the information required by paragraph (f) of this section after the time has elapsed for receipt of comments from the affected business.
 - (2) If, in connection with all applicable claims, the office determines that the information clearly is not entitled to confidential treatment, the office shall take the actions required by Section 2.205(f). However, if a business has previously been furnished notice under section 2.205(f) with respect to the same information, no further notice need to be furnished to that business. A copy of each notice furnished to a business under this paragraph (d)(2) and Section 2.205(f) shall be forwarded promptly to the appropriate EPA legal office.
- (e) *Notice to affected businesses; opportunity to comment.*
 - (1) Whenever required by paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the EPA office shall promptly furnish each business a written notice stating that EPA is determining under this subpart whether the information is entitled to confidential treatment, and affording the business an opportunity to comment. The notice shall be furnished by certified mail (return receipt requested), by personal delivery, or by other means which allows verification of the fact and date of receipt. The notice shall state the address of the office to which the business's comments shall be addressed (the EPA office furnishing the notice, unless the General Counsel has directed otherwise), the time allowed for comments, and the method for requesting a time extension under Section 2.205(b)(2). The notice shall further state that EPA will construe a business's failure to furnish timely comments as a waiver of the business's claim.
 - (2) If action under this section is occasioned by a request for the information under 5 U.S.C. 552, the period for comments shall be 15 working days after the date of the business's receipt of the written notice. In other cases, the EPA office shall establish a reasonable period for comments (not less than 15 working days after the business's receipt of the written notice). The time period for comments shall be considered met if the business's comments are postmarked or hand delivered to the office designated in the notice by the date specified. In all cases, the notice shall call the business's attention to the provisions of Section 2.205(b).
 - (3) At or about the time the written notice is furnished, the EPA office shall orally inform a responsible representative of the business (by telephone or otherwise) that the business should expect to receive the written notice, and shall request the business to contact the EPA office if the written notice has not been received within a few days, so that EPA may furnish a duplicate notice.
 - (4) The written notice required by paragraph (e)(1) of this section shall invite the business's comments on the following points (subject to paragraph (e)(5) of this section):
 - (i) The portions of the information which are alleged to be entitled to confidential treatment;
 - (ii) The period of time for which confidential treatment is desired by the business (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specified event, or permanently);
 - (iii) The purpose for which the information was furnished to EPA and the approximate date of submission, if known;
 - (iv) Whether a business confidentiality claim accompanied the information when it was received by EPA;
 - (v) Measures taken by the business to guard against undesired disclosure of the information to others;

- (vi) The extent to which the information has been disclosed to others, and the precautions taken in connection therewith;
 - (vii) Pertinent confidentiality determinations, if any, by EPA or other Federal agencies, and a copy of any such determination, or reference to it, if available;
 - (viii) Whether the business asserts that disclosure of the information would be likely to result in substantial harmful effects on the business' competitive position, and if so, what those harmful effects would be, why they should be viewed as substantial, and an explanation of the causal relationship between disclosure and such harmful effects; and
 - (ix) Whether the business asserts that the information is voluntarily submitted information as defined in Section 2.201(i), and if so, whether and why disclosure of the information would tend to lessen the availability to EPA of similar information in the future.
- (5) To the extent that the EPA office already possesses the relevant facts, the notice need not solicit responses to the matters addressed in paragraphs (e)(4)(i) through (ix) of this section, although the notice shall request confirmation of EPA's understanding of such facts where appropriate.
- (6) The notice shall refer to Section 2.205(c) and shall include the statement prescribed by Section 2.203(a).
- (f) *Materials to be furnished to EPA legal office.* When a matter is referred to an EPA legal office under paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the EPA office taking action under this section shall forward promptly to the EPA legal office the following items:
- (1) A copy of the information in question, or (where the quantity or form of the information makes forwarding a copy of the information impractical) representative samples, a description of the information, or both;
 - (2) A description of the circumstances and date of EPA's acquisition of the information;
 - (3) The name, address, and telephone number of the EPA employee(s) most familiar with the information;
 - (4) The name, address and telephone number of each business which asserts an applicable business confidentiality claim;
 - (5) A copy of each applicable claim (or the record of the assertion of the claim), and a description of when and how each claim was asserted;
 - (6) Comments concerning each business's compliance or noncompliance with applicable requirements of §2.203;
 - (7) A copy of any request for release of the information pending under 5 U.S.C. 552;
 - (8) A copy of the business's comments on whether the information is entitled to confidential treatment;
 - (9) The office's comments concerning the appropriate substantive criteria under this subpart, and information the office possesses concerning the information's entitlement to confidential treatment; and
 - (10) Copies of other correspondence or memoranda which pertain to the matter.

2.205 Final confidentiality determination by EPA legal office.

- (a) *Role of EPA legal office*
- (1) The appropriate EPA legal office (see paragraph (i) of this section) is responsible for making the final administrative determination of whether or not business information covered by a business confidentiality claim is entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart.
 - (2) When a request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending, the EPA legal office's determination shall serve as the final determination on appeal from an initial denial of the request.
 - (i) If the initial denial was issued under Section 2.204(b)(1), a final determination by the EPA legal office is necessary only if the requestor has actually filed an appeal.
 - (ii) If the initial denial was issued under Section 2.204(d)(1), however, the EPA legal office shall issue a final determination in every case, unless the request has been withdrawn. (Initial denials under Section 2.204(d)(1) are of a procedural nature, to allow further inquiry into the merits of the matter, and a requestor is entitled to a decision on the merits.) If an appeal from such a denial has not been received by the EPA Freedom of Information Officer on the tenth working day after issuance of the denial, the matter shall be handled as if an appeal had been received on that day, for purposes of establishing a schedule for issuance of an appeal decision under Section 2.117 of this part.
- (b) *Comment period; extensions; untimeliness as waiver of claim.*
- (1) Each business which has been furnished the notice and opportunity to comment prescribed by §2.204(d)(1) and §2.204(e) shall furnish its comments to the office specified in the notice in time to be postmarked or hand delivered to that office not later than the date specified for in the notice (or the date established in lieu thereof under this section).
 - (2) The period for submission of comments may be extended if, before the comments are due, a request for an extension of the comment period is made by the business and approved by the EPA legal office.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, the EPA legal office will not approve such an extension without the consent of any person whose request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending.

- (3) The period for submission of comments by a business may be shortened in the manner described in paragraph (g) of this section.
 - (4) If a business's comments have not been received by the specified EPA office on the date they are due, that office shall promptly inquire whether the business has complied with paragraph (b)(2) of this section. If the business has complied but the comments have been lost in transmission, duplicate comments shall be requested.
- (c) *Confidential treatment of comments for business.* If information submitted to EPA by a business as part of its comments under this section pertains to the business's claim, is not otherwise possessed by EPA, and is marked when received in accordance with Section 2.203(b), it will be regarded by EPA as entitled to confidential treatment and will not be disclosed by EPA without the business's consent, unless its disclosure is duly ordered by a Federal court, notwithstanding other provisions of this subpart to the contrary.
- (d) *Types of final determinations; matters to be considered.*
- (1) If the EPA legal office finds that a business has failed to furnish comments under paragraph (b) of this section by the specified due date, it shall determine that the business has waived its claim. If, after application of the preceding sentence, no claim applies to the information, the office shall determine that the information is not entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart and, subject to Section 2.210, is available to the public.
 - (2) In all other cases, the EPA legal office shall consider each business's claim and comments, the various provisions of this subpart, and previously issued determinations under this subpart which are pertinent, the materials furnished it under Section 2.204(f), and such other materials as it finds appropriate. With respect to each claim, the office shall determine whether or not the information is entitled to confidential treatment for the benefit of the business that asserted the claim, and the period of any such entitlement (e.g., until a certain date, until the occurrence of a specified event, or permanently), and shall take further action under paragraph (e) or (f) of this section, as appropriate.
 - (3) Whenever the claims of two or more businesses apply to the same information, the EPA legal office shall take action appropriate under the particular circumstances to protect the interests of all persons concerned (including any person whose request for the information is pending under 5 U.S.C. 552).
- (e) *Determination that information is entitled to confidential treatment.* If the EPA legal office determines that the information is entitled to confidential treatment for the full period requested by the business which made the claim, EPA shall maintain the information in confidence for such period, subject to paragraph (h) of this section, Section 2.209, and the other provisions of this subpart which authorize disclosure in specified circumstances, and the office shall so inform the business. If any person's request for the release of the information is then pending under 5 U.S.C. 552, the EPA legal office shall issue a final determination denying that request.
- (f) *Determination that information is not entitled to confidential treatment; notice; waiting period; release of information.*
- (1) Notice of denial (or partial denial) of a business confidentiality claim, in the form prescribed by paragraph (f)(2) of this section, shall be furnished--
 - (i) By the EPA office taking action under Section 2.204, to each business on behalf of which a claim has been made, whenever Section 2.204(d)(2) requires such notice; and
 - (ii) By the EPA legal office taking action under this section, to each business which has asserted a claim applicable to the information and which has furnished timely comments under paragraph (b) of this section, whenever the EPA legal office determines that the information is not entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart for the benefit of the business, or determines that the period of any entitlement to confidential treatment is shorter than that requested by the business.
 - (2) The notice prescribed by paragraph (f)(1) of this section shall be written, and shall be furnished by certified mail (return receipt requested), by personal delivery, or by other means which allows verification of the fact of receipt and the date of receipt. The notice shall state the basis for the determination, that it constitutes final agency action concerning the business confidentiality claim, and that such final agency action may be subject to judicial review under Chapter 7 of Title 5, United States Code. With respect to EPA's implementation of the determination, the notice shall state that (subject to section 2.210) EPA will make the information available to the public on the tenth working day after the date of the business's receipt of the written notice (or on such later date as is established in lieu thereof by the EPA legal office under paragraph (f)(3) of this section), unless the EPA legal office has first been notified of the business's commencement of an action in a Federal court to obtain judicial review of the determination, and to obtain preliminary injunctive relief against disclosure. The notice shall further state that if such an action is timely commenced, EPA may nonetheless make the information available to the public (in the absence of an order by the court to the contrary), once the court has denied a motion for a preliminary injunction in the action or has otherwise upheld the EPA determination, or whenever it appears to the EPA legal office, after reasonable notice to the business, that the business is not taking

appropriate measures to obtain a speedy resolution of the action. If the information has been found to be temporarily entitled to confidential treatment, the notice shall further state that the information will not be disclosed prior to the end of the period of such temporary entitlement to confidential treatment.

- (3) The period established in a notice under paragraph (f)(2) of this section for commencement of an action to obtain judicial review may be extended if, before the expiration of such period, a request for an extension is made by the business and approved by the EPA legal office. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the EPA legal office will not approve such an extension without the consent of any person whose request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending.
 - (4) After the expiration of any period of temporary entitlement to confidential treatment, a determination under this paragraph (f) shall be implemented by the EPA legal office by making the information available to the public (in the absence of a court order prohibiting disclosure) whenever--
 - (i) The period provided for commencement by a business of an action to obtain judicial review of the determination has expired without notice to the EPA legal office of commencement of such an action;
 - (ii) The court, in a timely-commenced action, has denied the business' motion for a preliminary injunction, or has otherwise upheld the EPA determination; or
 - (iii) The EPA legal office, after reasonable notice has been provided to the business, finds that the business is not taking appropriate measures to obtain a speedy resolution of the timely-commenced action.
 - (5) Any person whose request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending at the time notice is given under paragraph (f)(2) of this section shall be furnished a determination under 5 U.S.C. 552 stating the circumstances under which the information will be released.
- (g) *Emergency situations.* If the General Counsel finds that disclosure of information covered by a claim would be helpful in alleviating a situation posing an imminent and substantial danger to public health or safety, he may prescribe and make known to interested persons such shorter comment period (paragraph (b) of this section), post-determination waiting period (paragraph (f) of this section), or both, as he finds necessary under the circumstances.
- (h) *Modification of prior determinations.* A determination that information is entitled to confidential treatment for the benefit of a business, made under this subpart by an EPA legal office, shall continue in effect in accordance with its terms until an EPA legal office taking action under this section, or under §2.206 or §2.207, issues a final determination stating that the earlier determination no longer describes correctly the information's entitlement to confidential treatment because of change in the applicable law, newly-discovered or changed facts, or because the earlier determination was clearly erroneous. If an EPA legal office tentatively concludes that such an earlier determination is of questionable validity, it shall so inform the business, and shall afford the business an opportunity to furnish comments on pertinent issues in the manner described by § 2.204(e) and paragraph (b) of this section. If, after consideration of any timely comments submitted by the business, the EPA legal office makes a revised final determination that the information is not entitled to confidential treatment, or that the period of entitlement to such treatment will end sooner than it would have ended under the earlier determination, the office will follow the procedure described in paragraph (f) of this section. Determinations under this section may be made only by, or with the concurrence of, the General Counsel.
- (i) *Delegation and redelegation of authority.* Unless the General Counsel otherwise directs, or this subpart otherwise specifically provides, determinations and actions required by this subpart to be made or taken by an EPA legal office shall be made or taken by the appropriate Regional Counsel whenever the EPA office taking action under Section 2.204 or Section 2.206(b) is under the supervision of a Regional Administrator, and by the General Counsel in all other cases. The General Counsel may redelegate any or all of the authority under this subpart to any attorney employed by EPA on a full-time basis under the General Counsel's supervision. A Regional Counsel may redelegate any or all of his authority under this subpart to any attorney employed by EPA on a full-time basis under the Regional Counsel's supervision.

2.206 Advance confidentiality determinations.

- (a) An advance determination under this section may be issued by an EPA legal office if--
 - (1) EPA has requested or demanded that a business furnish business information to EPA;
 - (2) The business asserts that the information, if submitted, would constitute voluntarily submitted information under Section 2.201(i);
 - (3) The business will voluntarily submit the information for use by EPA only if EPA first determines that the information is entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart; and
 - (4) The EPA office which desires submission of the information has requested that the EPA legal office issue a determination under this section.
- (b) The EPA office requesting an advance determination under this section shall--

- (1) Arrange to have the business furnish directly to the EPA legal office a copy of the information (or, where feasible, a description of the nature of the information sufficient to allow a determination to be made), as well as the business's comments concerning the matters addressed in Section 2.204(e)(4), excluding, however, matters addressed in Section 2.204 (e)(4)(iii) and (e)(4)(iv); and
- (2) Furnish to the EPA legal office the materials referred to in Section 2.204(f) (3), (7), (8), and (9).
- (c) In making a determination under this section, the EPA legal office shall first determine whether or not the information would constitute voluntarily submitted information under section 2.201(i). If the information would constitute voluntarily submitted information, the legal office shall further determine whether the information is entitled to confidential treatment.
- (d) If the EPA legal office determines that the information would not constitute voluntarily submitted information, or determines that it would constitute voluntarily submitted information but would not be entitled to confidential treatment, it shall so inform the business and the EPA office which requested the determination, stating the basis of the determination, and shall return to the business all copies of the information which it may have received from the business (except that if a request under 5 U.S.C. 552 for release of the information is received while the EPA legal office is in possession of the information, the legal office shall retain a copy of the information, but shall not disclose it unless ordered by a Federal court to do so). The legal office shall not disclose the information to any other EPA office or employee and shall not use the information for any purpose except the determination under this section, unless otherwise directed by a Federal court.
- (e) If the EPA legal office determines that the information would constitute voluntarily submitted information and that it is entitled to confidential treatment, it shall so inform the EPA office which requested the determination and the business which submitted it, and shall forward the information to the EPA office which requested the determination.

2.207 Class determinations.

- (a) The General Counsel may make and issue a class determination under this section if he finds that--
 - (1) EPA possesses, or is obtaining, related items of business information;
 - (2) One or more characteristics common to all such items of information will necessarily result in identical treatment for each such item under one or more of the provisions in this subpart, and that it is therefore proper to treat all such items as a class for one or more purposes under this subpart; and
 - (3) A class determination would serve a useful purpose.
- (b) A class determination shall clearly identify the class of information to which it pertains.
- (c) A class determination may state that all of the information in the class--
 - (1) Is, or is not, voluntarily submitted information under Section 2.201(i);
 - (2) Is, or is not, governed by a particular section of this subpart, or by a particular set of substantive criteria under this subpart;
 - (3) Fails to satisfy one or more of the applicable substantive criteria, and is therefore ineligible for confidential treatment;
 - (4) Satisfies one or more of the applicable substantive criteria; or
 - (5) Satisfies one or more of the applicable substantive criteria during certain period, but will be ineligible for confidential treatment thereafter.
- (d) The purpose of a class determination is simply to make known the Agency's position regarding the manner in which information within the class will be treated under one or more of the provisions of this subpart. Accordingly, the notice of opportunity to submit comments referred to in Section 2.204(d)(1)(ii) and Section 2.205(b), and the list of materials required to be furnished to the EPA legal office under Section 2.204(d)(1)(iii), may be modified to reflect the fact that the class determination has made unnecessary the submission of materials pertinent to one or more issues. Moreover, in appropriate cases, action based on the class determination may be taken under Section 2.204(b)(1), Section 2.204(d), Section 2.205(d), or Section 2.206. However, the existence of a class determination shall not, of itself, affect any right a business may have to receive any notice under Section 2.204(d)(2) or Section 2.205(f).

2.208 Substantive criteria for use in confidentiality determinations.

Determinations issued under Sections 2.204 through 2.207 shall hold that business information is entitled to confidential treatment for the benefit of a particular business if--

- (a) The business has asserted a business confidentiality claim which has not expired by its terms, nor been waived nor withdrawn;
- (b) The business has satisfactorily shown that it has taken reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the information, and that it intends to continue to take such measures;

- (c) The information is not, and has not been, reasonably obtainable without the business's consent by other persons (other than governmental bodies) by use of legitimate means (other than discovery based on a showing of special need in a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding);
- (d) No statute specifically requires disclosure of the information; and
- (e) Either--
 - (1) The business has satisfactorily shown that disclosure of the information is likely to cause substantial harm to the business's competitive position; or
 - (2) The information is voluntarily submitted information (see Section 2.201(i)), and its disclosure would be likely to impair the Government's ability to obtain necessary information in the future.

2.209 Disclosure in special circumstances.

- (a) *General.* Information which, under this subpart, is not available to the public may nonetheless be disclosed to the persons, and in the circumstances, described by paragraphs (d) through (f) of this section. (This section shall not be construed to restrict the disclosure of information which has been determined to be available to the public. However, business information for which a claim of confidentiality has been asserted shall be treated as being entitled to confidential treatment until there has been a determination in accordance with the procedures of this subpart that the information is not entitled to confidential treatment.)
- (b) See 15A NCAC 13A .0104(c)
- (c) See 15A NCAC 13A .0104(c)
- (d) *Court-ordered disclosure.* EPA may disclose any business information in any manner and to the extent ordered by a Federal court. Where possible, and when not in violation of a specific directive from the court, the EPA office disclosing information claimed as confidential or determined to be confidential shall provide as much advance notice as possible to each affected business of the type of information to be disclosed and to whom it is to be disclosed, unless the affected business has actual notice of the court order. At the discretion of the office, subject to any restrictions by the court, such notice may be given by notice in the Federal Register, letter sent by certified mail return receipt requested, or telegram.
- (e) *Disclosure within EPA.* An EPA office, officer, or employee may disclose any business information to another EPA office, officer, or employee with an official need for the information.
- (f) *Disclosure with consent of business.* EPA may disclose any business information to any person if EPA has obtained the prior consent of each affected business to such disclosure.
- (g) Record of disclosures to be maintained. Each EPA office which discloses information to Congress, a committee or subcommittee of Congress, the Comptroller General, or another Federal agency under the authority of paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, shall maintain a record of the fact of such disclosure for a period of not less than 36 months after such disclosure. Such a record, which may be in the form of a log, shall show the name of the affected businesses, the date of disclosure, the person or body to whom disclosure was made, and a description of the information disclosed.

2.210 Nondisclosure for reasons other than business confidentiality or where disclosure is prohibited by other statute.

- (a) Information which is not entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart shall be made available to the public (using the procedures set forth in Sections 2.204 and 2.205) if its release is requested under 5 U.S.C. 552, unless EPA determines (under Subpart A of this part) that, for reasons other than reasons of business confidentiality, the information is exempt from mandatory disclosure and cannot or should not be made available to the public. Any such determination under subpart A shall be coordinated with actions taken under this subpart for the purpose of avoiding delay in responding to requests under 5 U.S.C. 552.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subpart, if any statute not cited in this subpart appears to require EPA to give confidential treatment to any business information for reasons of business confidentiality, the matter shall be referred promptly to an EPA legal office for resolution. Pending resolution, such information shall be treated as if it were entitled to confidential treatment.

2.211 Safeguarding of business information; penalty of wrongful disclosure.

- (a) No EPA officer or employee may disclose, or use for his or her private gain or advantage, any business information which came into his or her possession, or to which he or she gained access, by virtue of his or her official position or employment, except as authorized by this subpart.
- (b) Each EPA officer or employee who has custody or possession of business information shall take appropriate measures to properly safeguard such information and to protect against its improper disclosure.

- (c) Violation of paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section shall constitute grounds for dismissal, suspension, fine, or other adverse personnel action. Willful violation of paragraph (a) of this section may result in criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1905 or other applicable statute.
- (d) Each contractor or subcontractor with the United States Government, and each employee of such contractor or subcontractor, who is furnished business information by EPA under Sections 2.301(h), 2.302(h), 2.304(h), 2.305(h), 2.306(j), 2.307(h), 2.308(i), or 2.310(h) shall use or disclose that information only as permitted by the contract or subcontract under which the information was furnished. Contractors or subcontractors shall take steps to properly safeguard business information including following any security procedures for handling and safeguarding business information which are contained in any manuals, procedures, regulations, or guidelines provided by EPA. Any violation of this paragraph shall constitute grounds for suspension or debarment of the contractor or subcontractor in question. Willful violation of this paragraph may result in criminal prosecution.

2.212 Establishment of control offices for categories of business information.

- (a) The administrator, by order, may establish one or more mutually exclusive categories of business information, and may designate for each such category an EPA office (hereinafter referred to as a *control office*) which shall have responsibility for taking actions (other than actions required to be taken by an EPA legal office) with respect to all information within such category.
- (b) If a control office has been assigned responsibility for a category of business information, no other EPA office, officer, or employee may make available to the public (or otherwise disclose to persons other than EPA officers and employees) any information in the category without first obtaining the concurrence of the control office. Requests under 5 U.S.C. 552 for release of such information shall be referred to the control office.
- (c) A control office shall take the actions and make the determinations required by Section 2.204 with respect to all information in any category for which the control office has been assigned responsibility.
- (d) A control office shall maintain a record of the following, with respect to items of business information in categories for which it has been assigned responsibility:
 - (1) Business confidentiality claims;
 - (2) Comments submitted in support of claims;
 - (3) Waivers and withdrawals of claims;
 - (4) Actions and determinations by EPA under this subpart;
 - (5) Actions by Federal courts; and
 - (6) Related information concerning business confidentiality.

2.213 Designation by business of addressee for notices and inquiries.

- (a) A business which wishes to designate a person or office as the proper addressee of communications from EPA to the business under this subpart may do so by furnishing in writing to the Headquarters Freedom of Information Operations (1105), Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460, the following information: the name and address of the business making the designation; the name, address, and telephone number of the designated person or office; and a request that EPA inquiries and communications (oral and written) under this subpart, including inquiries and notices which require reply within deadlines if the business is to avoid waiver of its rights under this subpart, be furnished to the designee pursuant to this section. Only one person or office may serve at any one time as a business's designee under this subpart.
- (b) If a business has named a designee under this section, the following EPA inquiries and notices to the business shall be addressed to the designee:
 - (1) Inquiries concerning a business's desire to assert a business confidentiality claim, under Section 2.204(c)(2)(i)(A);
 - (2) Notices affording opportunity to substantiate confidentiality claims, under § 2.204(d)(1) and § 2.204(e);
 - (3) Inquiries concerning comments, under Section 2.205(b)(4);
 - (4) Notices of denial of confidential treatment and proposed disclosure of information, under § 2.205(f);
 - (5) Notices concerning shortened comment and/or waiting periods under Section 2.205(g);
 - (6) Notices concerning modifications or overrulings of prior determinations, under Section 2.205(h);
 - (7) Notices to affected businesses under Sections 2.301(g) and 2.301(h) and analogous provisions in Sections 2.302, 2.303, 2.304, 2.305, 2.306, 2.307, and 2.308; and
 - (8) Notices to affected businesses under Section 2.209.
- (c) The Freedom of Information Officer shall, as quickly as possible, notify all EPA offices that may possess information submitted by the business to EPA, the Regional Freedom of Information Offices, the Office of General Counsel, and the offices of Regional Counsel of any designation received under this section. Businesses making designations under this section should bear in mind that several working days may be

required for dissemination of this information within EPA and that some EPA offices may not receive notice of such designations.

2.214 Defense of Freedom of Information Act suites; participation by affected business.

- (a) In making final confidentiality determinations under this subpart, the EPA legal office relies to a large extent upon the information furnished by the affected business to substantiate its claim of confidentiality. The EPA legal office may be unable to verify the accuracy of much of the information submitted by the affected business.
- (b) If the EPA legal office makes a final confidentiality determination under this subpart that certain business information is entitled to confidential treatment, and EPA is sued by a requester under the Freedom of Information Act for disclosure of that information, EPA will:
 - (1) Notify each affected business of the suit within 10 days after service of the complaint upon EPA;
 - (2) Where necessary to preparation of EPA's defense, call upon each affected business to furnish assistance; and
 - (3) Not oppose a motion by any affected business to intervene as a party to the suit under rule 24 (b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
- (c) EPA will defend its final confidentiality determination, but EPA expects the affected business to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in this defense.

2.215 Confidentiality agreements.

- (a) No EPA officer, employee, contractor, or subcontractor shall enter into any agreement with any affected business to keep business information confidential unless such agreement is consistent with this subpart. No EPA officer, employee, contractor, or subcontractor shall promise any affected business that business information will be kept confidential unless the promise is consistent with this subpart.
- (b) If an EPA office has requested information from a State, local, or Federal agency and the agency refuses to furnish the information to EPA because the information is or may constitute confidential business information, the EPA office may enter into an agreement with the agency to keep the information confidential, notwithstanding the provisions of this subpart. However, no such agreement shall be made unless the General Counsel determines that the agreement is necessary and proper.
- (c) To determine that an agreement proposed under paragraph (b) of this section is necessary, the General Counsel must find:
 - (1) The EPA office requesting the information needs the information to perform its functions;
 - (2) The agency will not furnish the information to EPA without an agreement by EPA to keep the information confidential; and
 - (3) Either:
 - (i) EPA has no statutory power to compel submission of the information directly from the affected business, or
 - (ii) While EPA has statutory power to compel submission of the information directly from the affected business, compelling submission of the information directly from the business would--
 - (A) Require time in excess of that available to the EPA office to perform its necessary work with the information,
 - (B) Duplicate information already collected by the other agency and overly burden the affected business, or
 - (C) Overly burden the resources of EPA.
- (d) To determine that an agreement proposed under paragraph (b) of this section is proper, the General Counsel must find that the agreement states--
 - (1) The purpose for which the information is required by EPA;
 - (2) The conditions under which the agency will furnish the information to EPA;
 - (3) The information subject to the agreement;
 - (4) That the agreement does not cover information acquired by EPA from another source;
 - (5) The manner in which EPA will treat the information; and
 - (6) That EPA will treat the information in accordance with the agreement subject to an order of a Federal court to disclose the information.
- (e) EPA will treat any information acquired pursuant to an agreement under paragraph (b) of this section in accordance with the procedures of this subpart except where the agreement specifies otherwise.

§2.216 - 2.300 [Reserved]

§2.301, 2.302, 2.303, 2.304 See 15A NCAC 13A .0104(c)

2.305 Special rules governing certain information obtained under the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended

- (a) Definitions. For purposes of this section:
- (1) *Act* means the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended, including amendments made by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.
 - (2) *Person* has the meaning given it in Section 1004(15) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 6903(15).
 - (3) *Hazardous* waste has the meaning given it in Section 1004(15) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 6903(15).
 - (4) *Proceeding* means any rulemaking, adjudication, or licensing conducted by EPA under the Act or under regulations which implement the Act including the issuance of administrative orders and the approval or disapproval of plans (e.g. closure plans) submitted by persons subject to regulation under the Act, but not including determinations under this subpart.
- (b) Applicability. This section applies only to information provided to or obtained by EPA under Section 3001(b) (3) (B), 3007, or 9005 of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 6921 (b)(3)(B), 6927, or 6995. Information will be considered to have been provided or obtained under sections 3001(b) (3) (B), 3007, or 9005 of the Act if it was provided in response to a request from EDA made for any of the purposes stated in the Act or if its submission could have been required under those provisions of the Act regardless of whether a specific section was cited as the authority for any request for the information or whether the information was provide directly to EPA or through some third person.
- (c) Basic rules which apply without change. Sections 2.201 through 2.207 and 2.209 through 2.215 apply without change to information to which this section applies.
- (d) [Reserved]
- (e) Substantive criteria for use in confidentiality determinations. Section 2.208 applies without change to information to which this section applies; however, no information to which this section applies is voluntarily submitted information.
- (f) [Reserved]
- (g) Disclosure of information relevant in a proceeding.
- (1) Under Section 3007(b) and 9005(b) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 6927(b) and 6995(b)), any information to which this section applies may be disclosed by EPA because of the relevance of the information in a proceeding under the Act, notwithstanding the fact that the information otherwise might be entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart. Disclosure of information to which this section applies because of its relevance in a proceeding shall be made only in accordance with this paragraph (g).
 - (2)-(4) The provisions of section 2.301(g) (2), (3), and (4) are incorporated by reference as paragraphs (g) (2), (3), and (4), respectively, of this section.
- (h) Disclosure to authorized representatives.
- (1) Under Sections 3001(b)(3)(B), 3007(b), and 9005(b) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 6921(b)(3)(B), 6927(b), and 6995(b)), EPA possesses authority to disclose to any authorized representative of the United States any information to which this section applies, notwithstanding the fact that the information might otherwise be entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart. Such authority may be exercised only in accordance with paragraph (h)(2) or (h)(3) of this section.
 - (2)-(3) The provisions of Section 2.301(h) (2) and (3) are incorporated by reference as paragraphs (h) (2) and (3), respectively, of this section.
 - (4) At the time any information is furnished to a contractor, subcontractor, or State or local government agency under this paragraph (h), the EPA office furnishing the information to the contractor, subcontractor, or State or local government agency shall notify the contractor, subcontractor, or State or local government agency that the information may be entitled to confidential treatment and that any knowing and willful disclosure of the information may subject the contractor, subcontractor, or State or local government agency and its employees to penalties in section 3001(b)(3)(B), 3007(b)(2), or 9005(b)(1) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 6921(b)(3)(B), 6927(b), or 6995(b)).

§2.306, 2.307, 2.308, 2.309, 2.310, 2.311 See 15A NCAC 13A .0104(c).

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