



Resolution 08-11
Approved September 21, 2008
Branson, Missouri

As certified by
R. Steven Brown
Executive Director

SUPPORTING WORK ON CONTAMINATED SITE RESPONSE TO EMERGING CONTAMINANTS AND RELATED RISK COMMUNICATION ISSUES

WHEREAS, it is the stated goal of the ECOS-DoD Sustainability Work Group (Work Group) to coordinate and work collaboratively with the federal agencies and other organizations of state and local officials; and

WHEREAS, it is further the goal of the Work Group to exchange information and ideas across state and jurisdictional boundaries and to further solutions to create sustainable bases and ranges in harmony with local communities; and

WHEREAS, the Work Group has focused its efforts on the response to emerging contaminants at DoD sites, and

WHEREAS, the ECOS-DoD Sustainability Work Group's Emerging Contaminant Task Group (Task Group) hosted a forum in November 2005 for state and federal stakeholders to assess emerging contaminant issues facing regulators and the regulated community; and

WHEREAS, the forum resulted in the recommendation of 22 priority items for the Task Group to address in the areas of policy, communication, process, risk assessment, and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Task Group has developed four work products in response to the priorities identified at the forum:

- A **State Survey on Emerging Contaminants** and a summary of survey responses. In 2006 the Task Group developed a 21 question online survey to assess the emerging contaminant issues with which the states are most concerned. Officials from 38 state environmental agencies and two public health agencies responded to the survey. The survey results, which were posted on the ECOS website in January 2007, have provided the Task Group with a better understanding of current state priorities regarding emerging contaminants and confirmed that the Task Group is addressing emerging contaminant issues of high relevance to the states. Summary available at: http://www.ecos.org/section/sustainability_work_group
- A paper on **Risk Communication Principles**. This paper provides information and resources on the issues pertaining to risk communication on Emerging Contaminants. It also establishes five principles the Emerging Contaminant Task Group believes should be followed by both state and federal stakeholders conducting risk communication, whether at the internal, interagency or public level. The paper was created to improve coordination among stakeholders conducting risk communication and to provide a starting point for reconciliation should stakeholders disagree on how the risks of a particular emerging

contaminant should be communicated. Available at:
http://www.ecos.org/section/sustainability_work_group

- An issue paper providing recommendations on the **Identification and Selection of Toxicity Values/Criteria for CERCLA and Hazardous Waste Site Risk Assessments in the Absence of IRIS Values**. This paper provides recommendations on the identification and selection of toxicity values for chemicals lacking an EPA Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) toxicity value. The recommendations are designed to assist the States, DoD and EPA in identifying the best toxicity values to use during the risk assessment process. Available at: http://www.ecos.org/section/sustainability_work_group
- An issue paper addressing the **Initiation of Emerging Contaminants Characterization and Response Actions for Protection of Human Health**. This paper explores the situations where DoD action may be taken requiring the use of funds, especially for actions not previously identified in budgets or where it is not yet clear what concentration may trigger site characterization or cleanup. It also examines some key conditions, considerations, statutory authorities, or criteria that could be used to evaluate potential response actions with a related expenditure of funds. Available at: http://www.ecos.org/section/sustainability_work_group

WHEREAS, emerging contaminant pollution prevention was raised as a priority issue for the Task Group at the November 2005 forum, and as a result, the Work Group sponsored a Forum addressing sustainability including emerging contaminant pollution prevention in November 2006.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

ECOS expresses its continued support for the collaborative process being undertaken by the States, DoD, EPA and Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry to address emerging contaminants.

ECOS supports the continued exchange of emerging contaminant information among the states, DoD and EPA.

ECOS recognizes the uncertainties of our understanding of the potential impacts of emerging contaminants in the environment and urges that appropriate resources be directed to understanding the emerging risks associated with emerging contaminants in order to address their human and environmental impacts as expeditiously as possible.

ECOS endorses the concepts embodied in the Task Group's Risk Communication Principles paper and encourages the States, DoD and EPA to use the principles to address emerging contaminant issues, particularly in the context of addressing remediation of contaminated sites. These principles follow as appendix A.

ECOS endorses the concepts embodied in the Task Group's Identification and Selection of Toxicity Values/Criteria for CERCLA and Hazardous Waste Site Risk Assessments in the Absence of IRIS Values paper and encourages the States, DoD and EPA to use the principles to address emerging contaminant issues.

ECOS endorses the concepts embodied in the Task Group's issue paper addressing the Initiation of Emerging Contaminants Characterization and Response Actions for the Protection of Human

Health and encourages the States, DoD and EPA to use the principles to address emerging contaminant issues.

APPENDIX A

ECOS-DoD Sustainability Work Group Emerging Contaminant Risk Communication Principles

The following five principles represent fundamental concepts that the ECOS-DOD Sustainability Work Group believes should be followed by all stakeholders engaging in EC risk communication. By following these principles and developing policies consistent with them, the Work Group hopes that all parties will improve EC communication/coordination and message clarity to the public, while decreasing conflict at all stages.

- The ECOS-DOD Sustainability Workgroup supports the use of effective risk communication techniques to reduce conflicts due to miscommunication and poor communication practices. These techniques strive to reduce miscommunication, and build trust and credibility. Early communications with the public should be applied as soon as practicable following contaminant identification. Specific principles of good risk communication applicable to the communication of EC issues are delineated in the resources section.
- The ECOS-DOD Sustainability Workgroup recommends that risk communication specialists be involved in emerging contaminant projects from the time a contaminant's presence is identified on site--not as an after thought. Early involvement of communications professionals on emerging contaminant issues will assist with all levels of communications and reduce the chances of conflict due to miscommunication.
- The ECOS-DOD Sustainability Workgroup recommends early coordination between regulatory agencies, DoD, public health and resource agencies for issues on emerging contaminants. This includes sharing drafts of fact sheets, public notices, and other public documents to ensure that each party is aware of the other's position on an issue.
- The ECOS-DOD Sustainability Workgroup recognizes that different agencies have different missions that may give rise to different messages to the public. To reduce conflict and confusion in the public arena, the Work Group strongly supports the sharing of information and coordination on the causes of these different messages. The workgroup further recommends early and often sharing of information, and most importantly, before public statements are released.
- The ECOS-DOD Sustainability Workgroup recognizes that when addressing emerging contaminant issues, agency positions shift due to new data, information, or technology and that a critical component of good risk communication is articulating to the public when a cleanup level or public health advisory is based on limited, old, or uncertain data or technology. Again, the Workgroup recommends early and often interagency sharing of information and coordination on public information when new information becomes available.