

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



stantial conservation of natural resources and a significant diversion of materials from landfills.

In 1995 WasteWi\$e partners saved about \$59 million in purchasing costs through efforts to reduce transport packaging. Reduction in transport packaging is a key cost-cutting opportunity for many companies.

EPA's "Second-Year Progress Report," (Document Number: EPA530-R-96-016) is available through the RCRA/Superfund Hotline at 1-800-424-9346.

—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
11/04/96

AGENDA ANNOUNCED FOR THIRD MEETING OF FOOD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

■(WASHINGTON) The Environmental Protection Agency announced the agenda for the third meeting of the Food Safety Advisory Committee which will be held on Nov. 14-15, in Fairfax, VA. The meeting is open to the public.

Recently formed as a subcommittee under the auspices of EPA's Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology, the new advisory committee was established to assist the Agency with the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), signed into law on Aug. 3. The new law amends both the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to provide a protective regulatory scheme for pesticides.

The Food Safety Committee is made up of approximately 45 representatives from the general public, environmental and public interest groups, the public health community, the chemical industry, agriculture and other pesticide user groups, food processors, federal and state governments, academia and

others. Margie Fehrenbach of EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs is the Committee's designated federal officer (703-305-7090).

—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
11/04/96

U.S.-CANADA REPORT SHOWS PARTICULATE HEALTH DANGERS, ACID-RAIN PROGRESS

■(WASHINGTON) The United States and Canada recently jointly released their third biennial Progress Report on acid rain and other air quality issues under the 1991 United States/Canada Bilateral Air Quality Agreement. The report contains the first five-year review of the Agreement to determine its effectiveness in addressing transboundary air pollution.

Since the last progress report, health effects studies indicate that acidic aerosols and other types of particulate matter have adverse health effects in both countries. Both governments also report substantial progress in reducing emissions and effects of acid rain.

The 110 biggest sulfur dioxide (SO₂)-emitting power plants and other utilities in the United States were in compliance with the acid rain reduction requirements of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments in 1995, the first year of the program (SO₂ is one of the prime ingredients in the formation of acid rain). SO₂ emissions in this country also declined sharply in 1995, decreasing to 5.3 millions tons annually from 1980 levels of 10.9 million tons (a 51 percent decline). The 1995 SO₂ levels were 3.4 million tons better than required under the Clean Air Act.

The report cites studies showing reduction in surface water sulfates, leading to water quality improvement in the northeastern United States and Canada, as well as a decrease in lake nitrate concentrations in the Adirondacks; however, the report cites other studies indicating that nitrogen deposition at current levels could reduce the benefits of acid rain reduction in the long term.

In addition, the study finds no evidence of widespread forest decline from acid deposition, with some exceptions in some especially sensitive regions.

The five-year review of the Air Quality Agreement in the report concludes that, overall, both governments have been successful in fulfilling their obligations under the pact, particularly regarding acid rain control.

—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
11/05/96

EPA STOPS DISCHARGE OF OIL AND GAS WELL POLLUTANTS

■(WASHINGTON) Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol M. Browner increased protection to public health and the coastal waters along the Gulf of Mexico and Cook Inlet, Alaska, by requiring coastal oil and gas production facilities to stop pollutant discharges into the Gulf of Mexico and reduce such discharges into Cook Inlet, eliminating nearly two billion pounds of contaminants that annually reach these waters.

Under a final Clean Water Act rule, Browner set limits for pollutants discharged into coastal waters from oil and gas production facilities along the Gulf of Mexico and Cook Inlet, Alaska, the last two remaining U. S. coastal areas receiving such discharges. These limitations are expected to reduce current discharges of toxic pollutants, including arsenic, cadmium and lead, by more than two hundred thousand pounds per year; conventional pollutants, such as oil, grease and solids, by approximately 2.8 million pounds per year; and non-conventional pollutants, such as chlorides, ammonia, and aluminum, by approximately 1.5 billion pounds per year. The major waste streams being limited are produced water, drilling fluids and drill cuttings. EPA is conducting additional studies on discharges from Cook Inlet before any additional action is considered.

At the same time under the rule, Browner incorporated into federal law state issued zero-discharge standards already in place for such facilities along the California, Florida and Alabama coasts and along the North Slope of Alaska.

EPA estimates that total annual costs of the final rule are \$16.2 million.

—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
11/07/96

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING FOR '96 ELECTIONS REACHES \$469 MILLION

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Senate and House candidates involved in Tuesday's general election raised \$562 million and spent \$469 million from Jan. 1, 1995, through Oct. 16, 1996. This represents a modest increase over 1994 totals. Congressional campaign fundraising increased by 8 percent, while

Continued on next page

"I have a habit of comparing the phraseology of communiques, one with another across the years, and noting a certain similarity of words, a certain similarity of optimism in the reports which followed the summit meetings and a certain similarity in the lack of practical results during the ensuing years."

Margaret Thatcher
London Times
June 1, 1984