



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

May 17, 2021

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Corrective Actions for Audit Report No. 20-P-0062, *EPA Needs to Improve Its Emergency Planning to Better Address Air Quality Concerns During Future Disasters*, issued December 16, 2019

FROM: Sean W. O'Donnell 

TO: David Gray, Acting Regional Administrator
Region 6

Thank you for your April 1, 2021 memorandum, which outlined Region 6's corrective actions and completion dates for two recommendations issued in the subject Office of Inspector General report. The report contained six recommendations, and all but Recommendations 5 and 6 were unresolved when the report was issued. Region 6 was the action official for Recommendations 4 and 6.

Based on the information provided, including a copy of the *Crisis Communication Plan* updated by your office, we agree that Region 6's corrective actions meet the intent of Recommendations 4 and 6. The attachment details Region 6's corrective actions and our assessment of these actions. All recommendations for which Region 6 was the action official for the subject report are now resolved and the corrective actions completed.

We will post this memorandum on our public website at www.epa.gov/oig.

Attachment

cc: Josephine Hah, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Region 6
Kecia Thornton, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Land and Emergency Management
Michael Benton, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of the Administrator
Andrew LeBlanc, Agency Follow-Up Coordinator
José Kercado, Backup Agency Follow-Up Coordinator
Charles J. Sheehan, Deputy Inspector General
Edward S. Shields, Associate Deputy Inspector General
Katherine Trimble, Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Rashmi Bartlett, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation
Christine El-Zoghbi, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation
James Hatfield, Associate Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Renee McGhee-Lenart, Acting Director, Air Directorate, Office of Evaluation,
Office of Inspector General

Attachment

Completion of Corrective Actions for Audit Report No. 20-P-0062, *EPA Needs to Improve Its Emergency Planning to Better Address Air Quality Concerns During Future Disasters*, issued December 16, 2019

Recommendation	Corrective action	OIG assessment	Next steps
<p>4. Develop and implement, in coordination with the states, a plan to inform residents in fenceline and nearby communities about adverse health risks resulting from multiple facility startups and shutdowns during emergencies and to limit these residents' exposure to air toxics.</p>	<p>Region 6 developed an environmental justice communication protocol, which is included in the EPA's <i>Crisis Communication Plan</i>.</p>	<p>Region 6 provided us with the updated <i>Crisis Communication Plan</i>. The plan specifically cites fenceline communities and states: "In addition, for each incident EPA will develop and implement, in coordination with states and locals, a plan to inform residents in fence line and nearby communities about adverse health risks resulting from multiple facility startups and shutdowns during emergencies and limit these residents' exposure to air toxics in particular."</p> <p>The corrective action taken by Region 6 meets the intent of the recommendation; therefore, we now consider this recommendation both resolved and completed.</p>	<p>No further action needed.</p> <p>Recommendation 4 has been resolved and is completed.</p>
<p>6. Conduct environmental justice training for community liaisons and Incident Command System staff, thereby fulfilling that element of the EPA's <i>Crisis Communication Plan</i>.</p>	<p>Region 6 created a new staff training module for communicating with environmental justice communities, hosted two trainings in May and July 2020 with its emergency response personnel to increase environmental justice awareness, and hosted a series of environmental justice training sessions with emergency response staff and the Regional Response Support Corps.</p>	<p>We accepted the Agency's planned corrective action in our final report; therefore, this recommendation was resolved upon report issuance. Region 6 has since implemented its corrective actions for this recommendation.</p>	<p>No further action needed.</p> <p>Recommendation 6 is completed.</p>