



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

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

October 22, 2021

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Notification of Evaluation:
Effectiveness of EPA's Oversight of Testing and Certification Program for Residential
Wood Heaters
Project No. OSRE-FY22-0026

FROM: Patrick Gilbride, Director 
Implementation, Execution, and Enforcement Directorate
Office of Special Review and Evaluation

TO: Joseph Goffman, Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Air and Radiation

Lawrence Starfield, Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

The Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to begin an evaluation of EPA's oversight of its testing and certification program for residential wood heaters. This evaluation is part of OIG's oversight plan for fiscal year 2022 and addresses the following fiscal year 2022 top management challenge for the Agency: enforcing environmental laws and regulations.

Our objective is to determine whether EPA effectively uses its oversight and enforcement authority to ensure that all residential wood heaters reaching consumers are properly tested and certified in accordance with established standards. We plan to conduct work in EPA headquarters; however, we may also choose to include a sample of regions in our evaluation and to conduct work at laboratories and third-party certifiers in selected regions. The evaluation will be conducted using *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. The anticipated benefits of this evaluation include improved operational efficiency and greater human health and environmental protections.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the evaluation process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the evaluation. Throughout the evaluation, we will provide updates on a regular basis.

We respectfully note that OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. Similarly, EPA Manual 6500, *Functions and Activities of the Office of Inspector General* (1994), requires that each EPA

employee cooperate with and fully disclose information to OIG. Also, Administrator Michael S. Regan, in an April 28, 2021 email message to EPA employees, conveyed his “expectation that EPA personnel provide OIG timely access to records or other information” and observed that “full cooperation with the OIG is in the best interest of the public we serve.” We will request that you immediately resolve the situation if an Agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested materials to OIG or otherwise fails to cooperate with OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the administrator and include the incident in the *Semiannual Report to Congress*.

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

cc: Janet McCabe, Deputy Administrator
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