



THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 31 2013

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reaffirmation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's
1995 Policy on Evaluating Health Risks to Children

FROM: Gina McCarthy 

TO: Deputy Administrator
General Counsel
Assistant Administrators
Inspector General
Chief Financial Officer
Chief of Staff
Associate Administrators
Regional Administrators

I am reaffirming the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 1995 Policy on Evaluating Health Risks to Children¹ to ensure that we will continue to consistently and explicitly consider the best-available science when evaluating the environmental-health risks to infants and children in all the risk assessments and risk characterizations that help form the basis for the environmental and public-health standards that we set for the nation. This reaffirmation strengthens the EPA's commitment to leadership in children's environmental health as well as the leadership role of the Office of Children's Health Protection in ensuring that EPA programs and regions are successful in their efforts to protect children's health. It also supports the agency's ongoing implementation of Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health and Safety Risks.²

New scientific data continue to show that children frequently have a greater potential for exposure to, and toxicity from, environmental hazards. Our assessments must strive to keep up with these advances in knowledge. Since the inception of the 1995 policy, numerous risk-assessment tools and guidance documents have been developed or updated with the intent of furthering children's health protection at the EPA³, and new documents useful in implementing the 1995 policy will continue to be developed in the future.

¹ Attached and <http://www.epa.gov/stpc/2poleval.htm>

² <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/1997/04/23/97-10695/protection-of-children-from-environmental-health-risks-and-safety-risks>

³ Guidance useful for protecting children's health includes: A Framework for Assessing Environmental Risks to Children; Supplemental Guidance for Assessing Susceptibility from Early-Life Exposure to Carcinogens, Updated Exposure Factors Handbook, Guidance on Selecting Age Groups for Monitoring and Assessing Childhood Exposures to Environmental Contaminants, Guidelines for Developmental Toxicity Risk Assessment, and Guidelines for Reproductive Toxicity Risk Assessment.

In addition to risk-assessment tools and guidance, a *Guide to Considering Children's Health When Developing EPA Actions* was developed as a tool for the EPA's rule writers.⁴ This guide and other resources are available in the children's health section of the Action Development Process Library.⁵ Additionally, the Office of Children's Health Protection, in conjunction with the Office of Policy, offers children's health training for rule writers.⁶

I want to ensure that our tools and guidances for applying children's health will continue to be used across the agency and that our actions are consistent with our 1995 policy reaffirmed in this memo. I ask that staff and managers consider how children's health will be affected by the EPA actions, such as documenting children's environmental-health assessments, for example.

The EPA continues its commitment to protecting children's health. Our longstanding reliance on the 1995 Policy on Evaluating Health Risks to Children has enabled us to make sound public-health decisions that reflect not only data on adults but also on children whenever possible. This policy continues to encourage much-needed research to provide the child-specific data required to thoroughly evaluate the health risks children in all life stages face from pollution in our air, land and water. In the long run, healthier children mean healthier adults - a great benefit for the nation.

I am confident that each of your offices will partner with the Office of Children's Health Protection to support the reaffirmation of this policy that is so important to our nation's future. If you have questions or need assistance in addressing children's health issues, please contact the Office of Children's Health Protection at (202) 564-2188.

Attachment

cc: Deputy Assistant Administrators
Deputy Chiefs of Staff
Deputy Associate Administrators
Deputy Regional Administrators
Director, Office of Children's Health Protection

⁴ [http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/ADPguide.htm/\\$File/EPA_ADG_Guide_508.pdf](http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/ADPguide.htm/$File/EPA_ADG_Guide_508.pdf)

⁵ <http://intranet.epa.gov/adplibrary/statutes/13045.htm>

⁶ See <http://intranet.epa.gov/orpm/training/bydate.htm> for training schedule.