



# At a Glance

## Why We Did This Review

This is a quick reaction report that addresses lapses in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) pesticide inspections in North Dakota. This issue came to our attention during the course of ongoing work to assess the EPA's oversight of state inspections required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

FIFRA regulates the sale and use of pesticides in the United States through the registration and labeling of pesticide products. Pesticides are widely used in agricultural, commercial and household settings and have the potential to pollute air, water and land. An EPA inspector or a credentialed state inspector conducts inspections of pesticide establishments and imported pesticides to ensure compliance with FIFRA.

**This report addresses the following EPA goal or cross-agency strategy:**

- *Ensuring the safety of chemicals and preventing pollution.*

Send all inquiries to our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391 or visit <http://www.epa.gov/oig>.

The full report is at:  
[www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2015/20150223-15-P-0099.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2015/20150223-15-P-0099.pdf)

## ***Quick Reaction Report: EPA Pesticide Inspections Must Resume in North Dakota to Determine Compliance and Protect Human Health and the Environment***

### What We Found

EPA Region 8 is not conducting inspections at establishments that produce pesticides in North Dakota. Further, North Dakota does not have a state inspector with qualifications equivalent to a federal inspector to conduct inspections on the EPA's behalf. As a result, federal inspections of establishments that produce pesticides in North Dakota have not occurred for 14 years.

EPA Region 8 staff stated that FIFRA inspections have not been conducted because North Dakota officials do not want federal inspections conducted in their state. The failure to conduct inspections increases the risk that pesticides are not in compliance with federal law, which could result in potential risks from toxics being undetected and adverse human health and environmental impacts occurring.

Since 2011, EPA Region 8 has also failed to conduct inspections of pesticides imported into North Dakota. Since that time, approximately 1,300 pesticide imports to the United States have come through North Dakota and none have been inspected. EPA Region 8's failure to inspect imported pesticides to ensure compliance with federal law creates a potential risk not only for residents in North Dakota but residents in other states and locations in the United States.

**The long-standing lapse in conducting FIFRA inspections in North Dakota may result in exposure to unsafe pesticides and pose risks to human health and the environment.**

### Recommendations and Planned Corrective Actions

We recommend that the Regional Administrator, Region 8, immediately initiate FIFRA producer establishment and import inspections in North Dakota, establish an inspection plan, and compile a list of the number of producer establishments and import inspections conducted annually in Region 8. We also recommend that the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance review Region 8's fiscal year 2015 End-of-Year report and confirm that inspections in North Dakota have been initiated.

The agency agreed with our recommendations and has proposed acceptable corrective actions. All recommendations are resolved.