



# At a Glance

## Why We Did This Review

We conducted this review in response to a congressional request for information about U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforcement results overall and, specifically, for Region 7 in fiscal year (FY) 2010.

EPA is responsible for enforcing many environmental laws across the country. EPA directs much of its enforcement towards sectors with histories of high noncompliance as part of its national enforcement initiatives. EPA annually reports environmental and monetary enforcement results to Congress and the public.

### **This report addresses the following EPA Goal or Cross-Cutting Strategy:**

- *Enforcing environmental laws*

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at (202) 566-2391.

The full report is at:  
[www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2013/20130228-13-P-0168.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2013/20130228-13-P-0168.pdf)

## ***Response to Congressional Request on EPA Enforcement***

### **What We Found**

EPA enforcement data show that the amount of monetary results EPA regions achieve from concluded enforcement cases varies from year to year and from region to region. While the number of enforcement cases concluded for FYs 2006 through 2011 remained relatively constant, the overall monetary results varied. The variations are linked to when and where in the nation a few large cases are concluded. These few large cases can result in unusually large monetary results in any given year. National Enforcement Initiatives (NEIs) set by EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance drove the majority of these large cases.

In FY 2010, Region 7 concluded two enforcement cases with large monetary results. Both cases were pursued under EPA's NEIs. The two cases accounted for 24 percent of all of EPA's monetary enforcement results for FY 2010 and 98 percent of Region 7's monetary results for FY 2010. Region 7's results typically fell in the middle of the 10 regions. We found that from FYs 2006 through 2011, Region 7's enforcement results, regulated facilities, and staff allocated to enforcement were proportional with each other. Large cases took several years to close and relied on coordination with the U.S. Department of Justice, companies, and courts, which meant that EPA did not have full control over the year in which a case was settled.

There are no recommendations associated with this report. The Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance and Region 7 agreed with the Office of Inspector General's conclusion that enforcement results can vary from year to year and from region to region based on when and where large cases are concluded.