



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

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

September 9, 2015

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Project Notification:  
Review of Public Protections From Mercury Contamination in Fish  
Project No. OPE-FY15-0061

**FROM:** Kathlene Butler, Acting Director for Water Evaluations  
Office of Program Evaluation

**TO:** Ken Kopocis, Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Office of Water

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to begin research on existing public protections for mercury contamination in fish. This project is a discretionary assignment included in the OIG's Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Plan. The OIG's objective for this assignment is to determine the extent the EPA ensures federal, state and tribal risk communication efforts protect the public from mercury contamination through the consumption of fish.

The OIG plans to conduct work within the Office of Water, EPA regions, and with states and tribes. Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used to conduct this project. The anticipated benefit of this project is to improve the effectiveness of risk communication efforts to ensure the protection of populations most affected by the consumption of mercury-contaminated fish.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a regular basis to you and your staff. The specific method and frequency of updates can be determined during our meeting to discuss the objective and purpose of the assignment.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978 to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. We will request your resolution if an agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records to the OIG, or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the Administrator and include the incident in the Semiannual Report to Congress.

The project will be supervised by Johnny Ross, Project Manager. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact me at (404) 562-9736 or butler.kathlene@epa.gov; or Johnny Ross at (404) 562-9863 or ross.johnny@epa.gov.

cc: David Bloom, Agency Follow-Up Official  
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