EPA INFORMATION PROCEDURES

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

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Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19, dated 07/07/2005

WEB CONTENT TYPES AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

This procedure establishes the steps for keeping content on the EPA website current, while still providing access to information that is outdated but may still be useful or relevant to EPA web visitors.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This procedure is applicable to all EPA web content accessible to the public, regardless of where it is located (i.e., on EPA static and dynamic servers or at any other location on the World Wide Web that hosts EPA content) except that it does not apply to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) web content or any content required to be posted by regulation. For purposes of this procedure, "website" or "web pages" are used interchangeably. This procedure does not replace existing legal responsibilities and policies including records management requirements.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this procedure includes the EPA Chief Information Officer (CIO), the Office of External Affairs and Environmental Education (OEAEE), the Office of Environmental Information (OEI), the EPA Web Council, the EPA Web Workgroup, and any other person involved in the publication of EPA web content.

4. BACKGROUND

EPA's website is a fundamental communication tool for every Agency program and Region. With the fast-paced growth of EPA's website, effective management of information is essential. Distinguishing content types and identifying appropriate review schedules are critical to keeping the website current and up-to-date. Otherwise, web visitors may have difficulty locating information or determining what information accurately describes current EPA policy decisions and activities.

5. AUTHORITY

CIO 2180.0 (formerly 2191.0) Web Governance and Management Policy, 09/07/2006 (http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/ciopolicy/2191.pdf)

Linda A. Travers and Seth Oster Memorandum, "Restructuring EPA's Web Site", April 15, 2010

Molly A. O'Neill and Lisa Lybbert Memorandum, "Improving EPA's Public Access Web Site", April 14, 2008 (http://yosemite.epa.gov/OEI/Webguide.nsf/policy/improve_Web_memo)

OMB Memorandum M-05-04, Clay Johnson III, Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, "Policies for Federal Agency Public Websites," December 17, 2004. (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda/fy2005/m05-04.pdf

6. PROCEDURE

EPA Web content owners and providers are ultimately responsible for the content they publish. Content on the EPA website should be current and maintained using the Web Content Types and Review Schedule (step 1) and the Web Content Review Actions (step 2) charts. The content type will determine how often the content must be reviewed. As a reminder when creating or maintaining content, sensitive or confidential information is not permitted on EPA.gov. For more information, refer to FIPS 199, Standards for Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems.

Outdated content should be updated or identified as outdated. Obsolete content must be removed. OEAEE may notify a content owner about outdated or obsolete content for which the owner is responsible. If that content is not updated, identified as outdated, or removed, as appropriate, within three months from the date of notification, OEAEE will ask OEI to remove the content from the public access server. In the case of outdated pages, OEI and OEAEE will work with OIG to resolve any concerns but OEI and OEAEE cannot take OIG pages down due to the OIG's statutory independence.

Steps for efficiently maintaining web content:

1. At content creation (new web pages) or when reviewing existing content that has not had a content type assigned, assign web content one of the following content types, described in the Web Content Types and Review Schedule table below. Each content type has an associated review schedule; depending on the content type, content will be reviewed either quarterly (i.e., every three months), annually, or every three years. (see table on following page)

Web Content Types and Review Schedule

Definition	Content Type	Review Schedule
If it is…	**content is considered…**	**and should be reviewed every…**
News, News releases, Calendars, Comment schedules, Meeting Agendas, Requests for Proposals, job announcements, etc.	Announcements & Schedules	3 months
Lists of links, bibliographies, recommended resource lists, hubs, etc.	Collections & Lists	year
A list of the addresses, phone/FAX numbers, and affiliations of a specific individual, group of people, companies, organizations, publications, etc., including additional information such as professional titles or credentials.	Contact Information	3 months
Models, Methods, Maps, Data Files, Databases, Glossaries, Software, Tutorials, etc.	Data & Tools	year
Factsheets, Frequent Questions pages, Basic Info pages, etc.	Overviews & Factsheets	year
Internal and external policies, guidance and guidelines related to agency operations and/or regulatory compliance & enforcement. Includes proposed rules, MOUs, Judicial Decisions, International Agreements, etc.	Policies & Guidance	year
In-depth information, toxicity assessments, budgets, strategic plans, conference proceedings, etc.	Reports & Assessments	3 years
A written record of dictated or recorded speech. Includes correspondence.	Speeches, Testimony & Transcripts	3 years

2. When the content, based on the content type, is due for review at the end of each quarter, year, or three years, the content owner or reviewer must review it. Reviews should be done sooner if it otherwise becomes apparent that the content has changed or is inaccurate. For content in the Web Content Management System (Web CMS), the system will automatically send the content owner or provider an e-mail notification alerting him or her to the content's impending review deadline. Use the Web Content Review Actions table below to select the action to take following your review of the web content. Refer to Section 9 for definitions of terms used in table.

Web Content Review Actions

If the content…	the content is…	and you should…
reflects current EPA decisions and activities, regardless of when the information was originally created and published, **Note:** There are many years-old regulations, policies and programmatic descriptions posted on EPA's site that are still accurate and have not been superseded by more recent information.	current	validate, supplement if necessary or desired, and republish the content.
can be updated to accurately reflect the Agency's most recent policy decisions, programs or activities,	outdated	validate, update and republish the content.
does not reflect current EPA policy decisions, programs or activities**, but still provides information** that is of use for research purposes.	outdated	keep the content on the public access website for historical reference purposes. Apply the **outdated page disclaimer and image** (http://www.epa.gov/epafiles/outdatedpages.htm). Once content is designated as outdated, the review cycle for content is every three years regardless of content type specified. Note that the disclaimer and image are not required to be displayed for content in PDF format.
does not reflect current EPA policy decisions, programs or activities, or if it has been superseded,	obsolete	remove/retire the content, since it is no longer useful or relevant. In Web CMS, retired content will be removed from the website, but a copy is kept in the repository. If the page is not a Web CMS application, determine if the content needs to be maintained as a record according to the EPA Records Schedule 095.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

CIO 2171.0 Information Access Policy (http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2171.0.pdf)

Web Guide (http://www.epa.gov/Webguide/)

Web Content Management System (Web CMS) Website (http://yosemite.epa.gov/OEI/webguide.nsf/webcms)

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Information Officer/Assistant Administrator, Office of Environmental Information, and the Associate Administrator for External Affairs and Environmental Education are jointly responsible for monitoring compliance with this procedure. Collaborating with the EPA Web Council, the Web Workgroup, and other appropriate entities, OEI and OEAEE shall monitor compliance with this procedure.

OEAEE and OEI lead the Web Council through a National Web Content Manager and National Web Infrastructure Manager, respectively. Collaborating with the Web Council, the Web Workgroup, and other appropriate entities, OEI and OEAEE develop procedures, standards, and guidance for epa.gov.

Assistant and Regional Administrators and senior managers at the equivalent level have responsibility for all content on the EPA website owned by their program or Region.

EPA organizations and employees are responsible for creating records that document their activities; filing records for safe storage and efficient retrieval; maintaining the records and applying final disposition in accordance with appropriate Agency Records Schedules.

Web page content owners and providers, and their managers, are responsible for ensuring that any content they publish for public access complies with this procedure.

9. DEFINITIONS

1. **Content**, for the purpose of this procedure, is EPA data, documents, text, graphics or other information, that is accessible to the public and published either on EPA's website or elsewhere on the World Wide Web.

2. **Content owners or providers** are EPA employees who create, manage, own or are otherwise responsible for the content posted on a web page. A content owner or provider must assign all web content a content type and must keep the content current, or otherwise handle it as described in this procedure.

3. **Content review** is the process of determining whether content is still current, outdated, or obsolete.

4. **Current** refers to content on the EPA website that reflects EPA's most recent policy, regulations, programmatic activities and responsibilities. Some content remains 'current,' in that it continues to reflect EPA's most recent decisions and activities, including information pertaining to activities that have been completed or closed out, despite the significant amount of time that may have passed since its original publication date.

5. **Obsolete** refers to content on the EPA website that no longer reflects current EPA policy, responsibilities and programmatic activities, and is not useful or relevant to the public. This information includes ephemeral information about short-lived announcements and activities.

6. **Outdated** refers to content on the EPA website that was created in the past, and may or may not reflect current EPA policy, responsibilities and programmatic activities, but that is still useful to the public as reference or background information. It includes regulations, guidance and policies that are no longer used or enforced, or that have been superseded by more recently released decisions. Such information often provides invaluable historical context to current decisions, requirements and activities. For purposes of this procedure, such information is not considered to be obsolete or useless.

7. **Republish:** Reposting a web page once again using the same content with a new date**.** The Web CMS system will automatically assign a new date for the next content review.

8. **Retire:** the action of removing a web page from the website by either physically removing the page or, in Web CMS, expiring or otherwise deleting a file.

9. **Validate:** The process of confirming the accuracy of the content.

10. **Web Content Management System (Web CMS)** is a software application within which web content is created, managed, and published. It provides structure to what is otherwise "unstructured content," and that structure enables content development, integration and reuse. Web CMS automates many of the functions and procedures that, when performed manually, incur a large labor burden and consequently often go undone. This includes functions such as metadata tagging, workflow management, and content lifecycle review. Web CMS-managed content enables integration of cross-office topical sites, and provides better search options based on the use of metadata and a repository to dynamically create the web pages. It is also much more easily rendered in multiple formats, e.g., Web, XML, mobile device-friendly, or PDF for print.

10. WAIVERS

There are no waivers from this procedure.

11. RELATED PROCEDURES, STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

EPA website procedures, standards and guidance are provided in the EPA Web Guide. (http://yosemite.epa.gov/oei/webguide.nsf/standards-guidance).

All EPA CIO policies on information technology and information management can be found at http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/.

Your Records Liaison Officer can help you to determine the most appropriate methods to capture and maintain records. For additional guidance, call the Records Help Desk. http://intranet.epa.gov/records/about.htm

FIPS 199, Standards for Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems, Feb. 2004 (http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/PubsFIPS.html)

12. MATERIAL SUPERSEDED

CIO 2183.0 Policy (formerly 2190.8) Access to Current and Outdated Information on EPA's website (http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/ciopolicy/2190_8.pdf)

13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about this procedure, please contact the Office of Environmental Information's Policy and Program Management Branch in the Office of Information Analysis and Access.

Malcolm D. Jackson
Assistant Administrator
and Chief Information Officer
Office of Environmental Information