

## **EPA Issues Public Involvement Policy**

EPA Administrator Christie Whitman issued the new Public Involvement Policy on June 6, 2003. The policy gives clear guidance to EPA staff on effective ways to involve the public in all of the agency's programs and activities. The Public Involvement Policy recommends these seven basic steps for effective public involvement: 1) plan and budget; 2) identify whom to involve; 3) consider providing assistance; 4) provide information; 5) conduct involvement; 6) review, use input and provide feedback and 7) evaluate public involvement.

The new Policy recognizes: the public's changing needs, new statutes and regulations; expanded public participation techniques and media (e.g. Internet); the importance of partnerships and technical assistance; and increased state, tribal and local government capacity to carry out programs. EPA also released the "Framework for Implementing EPA's Public Involvement Policy" and EPA's "Response to Public Comments on the Draft 2000 Public Involvement Policy." The policy, framework and EPA's responses are posted at:

<http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/policy2003.htm>

The policy is not a rule and is not legally enforceable. It supplements public involvement requirements under existing laws and regulations and enables EPA to implement them in the most effective ways. The new policy does not replace existing established laws or regulations governing public participation requirements.

### Appendices:

Christie Todd Whitman, U.S. EPA Administrator, issued EPA's Public Involvement Policy on June 6, 2003, after three years of development, review and comment. The new Policy applies to all EPA environmental programs. It provides clear guidance to EPA staff on effective ways to involve the public in EPA's regulatory and program implementation decisions.

The Policy recommends seven basic steps for effective public involvement. The Policy, EPA's response to Comments and the Framework for Implementing the Policy are posted at:

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