President Clinton's Executive Order on Reducing Toxic Emissions from Federal Facilities

[EPA press release - August 4, 1993]

President Clinton signed an Executive Order yesterday that reduces toxic emissions from federal facilities and requires federal agencies to report publicly on any release of toxic pollutants.

EPA led the Administration's effort to draft the Executive Order and will monitor compliance with it. Carol M. Browner, EPA Administrator, said, "We in the federal government must lead the way in reducing the use of environmentally harmful materials. Pollution prevention makes economic sense. We'll save money on raw materials, we'll have less waste to dispose of, and we'll protect American citizens and our environment."

The attached White House press release provides additional details on the executive order.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
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President Signs Pollution Prevention Order for Federal Agencies Says Agencies Must Comply With Community Right-To-Know Laws

Washington--Emphasizing that the federal government should set an example and become the leader in pollution prevention, President Clinton has signed an Executive Order that by 1999 reduces by half toxic emissions from federal facilities and requires them to report any release of toxic pollutants to the public.

"With this Executive Order the federal facilities will set the example for the rest of the country and become the leader in applying pollution prevention to daily operations, purchasing decisions and policies. In the process, federal facilities will reduce toxic emissions, which helps avoid cleanup costs and promotes clean technologies," said the President, who signed the Executive Order on Tuesday (8/3).

In his speech commemorating Earth Day, the President directed federal agencies to prepare an Executive Order that would set a voluntary goal of a 50 percent reduction by 1999 of their release of toxic pollutants. This goal should be achieved by reducing or eliminating the use of toxic chemicals during production before they become waste, the President said in April.
"By stopping pollution at its source, rather than waiting for it to become waste that must somehow be disposed of, the federal government can make a significant contribution to protecting the public health and our environment. At the same time, this initiative builds strong domestic and international markets for clean technologies, which helps to reduce pollution during the production of goods and services," the President said.

The initiative also requires federal facilities that manufacture, process, or use toxic chemicals to publicly report their wastes and releases under the Emergency Planning and Community Right To Know Act. Under the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) requirements of this new law, federal facilities will report their toxic emissions to the Environmental Protection Agency and to the states where the chemicals are emitted. The public can obtain this information from a national computer database and from their respective states.

In addition to the establishment of voluntary reduction goals and right-to-know reporting of toxic emissions, the Executive Order also requires review and, where necessary, revision of existing procurement practices. This provision will help eliminate or reduce procurement of extremely hazardous substances and chemicals used by federal facilities in manufacturing and processing.

The Executive Order will provide the public and local governments with information concerning potential chemical hazards present in their communities. Federal facilities will be developing emergency response plans with community participation.