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EPA Announces Schedule for Dioxin Assessment

Release date: 08/29/2011

Contact Information: Latisha Petteway (News Media Only), petteway.latisha@epa.gov, 202-564-3191, 202-564-4355

WASHINGTON - The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that it plans to complete the non-cancer portion of EPA's *Reanalysis of Key Issues Related to Dioxin Toxicity and Response to NAS Comments*, and post the final non-cancer assessment to the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) by the end of January 2012. After completing the non-cancer portion, EPA will finalize the cancer portion of the dioxin reanalysis as quickly as possible.

The decision to split the dioxin assessment into two portions, one being the cancer assessment and the other being the non-cancer assessment, follows the release by the Science Advisory Board (SAB) of its final review report of EPA's *Reanalysis of Key Issues Related to Dioxin Toxicity and Response to NAS Comments* on August 26, 2011. This reanalysis report responded to the recommendations and comments included in the National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) 2006 review of EPA's 2003 draft dioxin assessment.

The SAB report indicates that EPA selected the most appropriate scientific studies to support the non-cancer health assessment and the oral reference dose derived in the draft assessment. The SAB also commended EPA for a clear and logical reanalysis document that responded to many of the recommendations offered previously by the NAS. Specifically, the SAB acknowledged that the process the agency used to identify, review and evaluate the scientific literature was both comprehensive and rigorous, and the SAB report noted that "the criteria for study selection have been clearly articulated, well justified, and applied in a scientifically sound manner."

Dioxins are toxic chemicals that share a similar chemical structure and act through a similar mechanism. While dioxin levels in the environment have been declining since the early seventies, dioxins remain a concern because they will continue to enter the food chain through releases from soils and sediments, and they have been the subject of a number of federal and state regulations and cleanup actions.

More information on dioxin: <http://www.epa.gov/dioxin/>

More information on IRIS: <http://www.epa.gov/IRIS/>

More information on the SAB Report:
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/WebReportsLastMonthBOARD/9DE6A0825A9C050F85257412005EA22A?OpenDocument&TableRow=2.3#2>

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Last updated on Tuesday, September 06, 2011

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