



Re: FOIA Request 2025-EPA-04546 - Request For Clarification

From Colleen Zimmerman <czimmerman@peer.org>
Date Wed 8/13/2025 11:32 AM
To Newton, Jonathan <AO_FOIA@epa.gov>
Cc Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov <Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov>; Kyla Bennett <KBennett@peer.org>

Hi Jonathan,

Can you please confirm that the FOIA request is being processed?

Thank you,
Colleen

Colleen Zimmerman (she/her)
Staff Counsel, FOIA Manager
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER)
962 Wayne Ave., Suite 610, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: (202) 464-2293
czimmerman@peer.org | www.peer.org

From: Colleen Zimmerman <czimmerman@peer.org>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:04 AM
To: Newton, Jonathan <AO_FOIA@epa.gov>
Cc: Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov <Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov>; Kyla Bennett <KBennett@peer.org>
Subject: Re: FOIA Request 2025-EPA-04546 - Request For Clarification

Hi Jonathan,

I'd like to provide clarification on the following item of PEER's request:

(7) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that discuss how the EPA Staff Locator is "redundant" and/or "inefficient." (Date Range for Record Search: From 1/20/2025 To 3/14/2025).

Please see attached an email conversation between PEER's Science Policy Director, Dr. Kyla Bennett, and EPA staff regarding EPA's Staff Locator. We believe that the following offices and individuals may be custodians of the documents we requested: EPA Press Office <Press@epa.gov>; Ryan, Jini <Ryan.Jini@epa.gov>; Widener, Charles (Chuck) <Widener.Charles@epa.gov>. Additionally, the email correspondence should provide clarification as to what we are seeking.

Please contact me if you require any further clarification with respect to this item of our request. If I do not receive a response from you, I will assume that this clarification is sufficient, and you will continue to process this FOIA request.

Thank you,
Colleen

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From: Colleen Zimmerman
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Newton, Jonathan <AO_FOIA@epa.gov>
Cc: Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov <Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov>; Kyla Bennett <KBennett@peer.org>
Subject: RE: FOIA Request 2025-EPA-04546 - Request For Clarification

Hi Jonathan,

Thank you for getting back to me about this FOIA request. Can we schedule a phone call this week to discuss your request for clarification? I've cc'ed my colleague, Dr. Kyla Bennett, who would like to join as well. Please see below our availability:

Tuesday: 9am – 5pm
Wednesday: 2pm – 5pm
Thursday: 2pm – 5pm
Friday: 9am – 5pm

If these dates do not work for you, please let me know and we can look to next week.

Thanks,
Colleen

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Staff Counsel, FOIA Manager
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From: Newton, Jonathan <AO_FOIA@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 25, 2025 4:31 PM
To: Colleen Zimmerman <czimmerman@peer.org>
Cc: Newton.Jonathan@epa.gov
Subject: FOIA Request 2025-EPA-04546 - Request For Clarification

Dear Colleen Zimmerman:

The Office of the Administrator has received your 03/14/2025 FOIA request, designated 2025-EPA-04546, which states:

- (1) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that show EPA employees who "weren't doing their jobs"; (2) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails,

memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that show EPA employees who "were obstructionists"; (3) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that show EPA employees who "weren't there"; (4) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that show EPA employees who "didn't exist"; (5) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that show EPA employees who have "been working for other companies or other entities...while being paid by the United States government"; (6) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that discuss the removal of the public facing EPA Staff Locator, the reasons for its removal, who made the decision to remove it; and (7) Any documents, including but not limited to, emails, memos, spreadsheets, texts, letters, notes, and Microsoft Teams chats, that discuss how the EPA Staff Locator is "redundant" and/or "inefficient." Please see attached for more information. ((Date Range for Record Search: From 1/20/2025 To 3/14/2025)

Upon review we have determined that this broad description does not meet the requirements of a proper FOIA request. EPA regulations require FOIA requesters to "reasonably describe the records sought." 40 CFR §2.102 (b)(1). "A request should include specific (*emphasis added*) information about the records sought, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, and subject matter." 40 CFR §2.102(b)(3). Your request for does not describe, among other things, specific names or recipients. Please clarify your request by including additional details to describe the records you are seeking with reasonable specificity; in the interim your request will be placed on hold. If we have not received clarification regarding your request within 30 calendar days your request will be considered withdrawn and administratively closed.

Thank you for your assistance and your interest in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Newton
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator