EPAINFORMATION PROCEDURES

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EPA LIBRARY NETWORK PROCEDURE:

Library Materials Dispersion

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish Agency-wide procedures by which libraries in the EPA Library Network reduce, disperse or dispose of their library contents when appropriate.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

These procedures apply to all Program and Regional offices with libraries within the EPA Library Network.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this interim policy includes Assistant Administrators, Deputy Assistant Administrators, Regional Administrators, Deputy Regional Administrators, Assistant Regional Administrators, Associate Administrators, Senior Information Officials, Information Management Officers, Library Managers and EPA staff.

4. BACKGROUND

The responsible disposal/dispersion of an EPA library materials requires planning, time and resources. The process also requires considerable expertise in a number of areas, particularly library and government property management. *Although it may be tempting to dispose of library materials quickly, the loss of important and unique materials could have serious future consequences if the Agency cannot document scientific findings or enforcement actions.* Additional information on dispersion of materials is found at
http://intranet.epa.gov/epahqirc/natlibra/documents/library_procedures_digitization_dispersion_062906.doc

5. AUTHORITY

Agency Delegation 1-19 GENERAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND MISCELLANEOUS, Paragraph 2(b)

6. PROCEDURES

All EPA Libraries must:

- Ensure the preservation of EPA's publications (research reports, guidance materials, policy statements, etc.) by:

    1. Maintaining Agency documents that currently exist only in paper until they can be digitized at EPA Cincinnati and added to the National Environmental Publications Information System (NEPIS). NEPIS will be the Agency's electronic document repository.

    2. Dispersing unique EPA materials to the designated document repositories at Headquarters, RTP and Cincinnati.

- Follow all applicable government property rules and regulations.

- Obtain the advice of the Office of General Counsel or the Office of Regional Counsel to avoid the inadvertent dispersal of documents that support rulemaking or litigation.

- Consult EPA staff experts in different disciplines (biology, toxicology, engineering, etc.) for valuable input on what materials to keep locally.

- Update cataloging records for both paper and electronic documents in the OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) database. (Records are downloaded from OCLC to EPA's Online Library System (OLS). This is particularly important as materials are physically moved to other locations and electronic documents are created.

- Discourage the establishment of divisional or branch "mini-libraries." These collections are seldom cataloged or maintained over time.

- Use the Federal Records Centers (FRCs) as appropriate for records storage but not as document repositories.

    Document requests referred to the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) at the US Dept of Commerce do not substitute for the need to preserve EPA materials in-house as stated above.

Dispersion Criteria

Each EPA library will need to make decisions about the materials in their physical collections. There are five basic choices:

- Continue to keep items onsite
- Send paper-only EPA documents to NEPIS for digitization
- Send selected items to a designated EPA repository for retention
- Disperse or donate items to other libraries
- Recycle items

Choices will be largely based on a particular location's capacity to store and maintain a paper document collection; this capacity will vary significantly. The following criteria are meant to assist those locations that are downsizing their collections. Consequently, the following "Keep" list is divided into two parts. Part A describes high-priority items: those locations planning to maintain either full or basic (core) collections may choose to keep those materials onsite. Part B discusses material that can be removed from the local

site and "kept" by an EPA repository. The overall goal of both parts is to maintain at least one or two copies of valuable publications within the Agency—with access via interlibrary loan—until they can be digitized.

Which Publications to "Keep"

Part A: Types of Materials to Consider for Retention Onsite at Full or Core Collections

- Required for litigation purposes.
- Routinely used by local staff. This applies particularly to those titles not available electronically.
- Paper copies of current journal subscriptions that are being maintained as part of license agreements.
- Relevant to the parent organization's core mission.
- State or local publications describing environmental conditions within the particular EPA Region, e.g., state geological surveys. These publications often go out-of-print.
- Up-to-date, of current value. Note: Currency of content cannot be judged by the publication date alone.
- Regions should consider keeping a set of Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) from the current year as well as past years to support compliance/enforcement/legal staff. CFRs could be kept in an accessible file room in those locations without a library.
- OCA Reading Rooms and public dockets are legally mandated. It will be necessary to reassign these functions to other EPA organizations.

Part B: Types of Materials to Consider for Dispersion to EPA Repository Libraries

- Unique or rare EPA materials that are not frequently used onsite and are not available electronically. ("Unique" in this context means only one EPA library owns that particular title.) Each library received a list of its unique holdings in August, 2005. It is important that extensive coordination occur so that in cases where several copies of a document exist at least one of these is kept somewhere within the EPA Library Network , preferably at a repository, and is cataloged with the current location.
- Out-of-print publications that are useful and are difficult to borrow or replace.
- Materials that have historical significance (e.g., baseline studies) but are not needed by EPA staff at the local site.

Which Publications to Donate/Disperse to Non-EPA Libraries

- Materials that duplicate those held in an EPA library (repository) that has agreed to maintain them permanently.
- Materials that are electronically available on a long-term basis, particularly those included in NEPIS.
- Multiple copies unless there is an overriding reason to keep somewhere at EPA

Any usable publications that are not needed locally and cannot be maintained onsite or at an EPA repository library.

EPA publications, particularly technical reports, that are not currently in the inventory of the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) can be sent to NTIS. Note that NTIS usually requires that a completed input form (SF 298) accompany the technical report.

Which Publications to Recycle

- Anything published commercially that is outdated (old software books, the 2nd edition of a title now in its 9th edition, etc.).
- Items in poor physical condition unless 1) content is rare or 2) the item is the last copy in EPA and is not available elsewhere electronically.
- Items which remain unclaimed when offered to other institutions.
- Microfilm of journals that are available online via open access archives.
  NOTE: ADD EXEMPTIONS IF APPROPRIATE

Note: It is important to dispose of any library items in an environmentally responsible manner. Additional research on this topic is underway and the results will be distributed.

Microfiche

Since a large number of EPA reports have never been distributed in paper, most EPA libraries have a significant collection of EPA reports on microfiche. Some libraries have other fiche collections as well, e.g., environmental impact statements. Again, availability of the materials in other formats or at other Agency locations should be considered. If a decision is made to disperse the fiche collections, they can be donated or sold as units.

Who Will Accept EPA Library Materials?

Institutions that may accept dispersed materials are listed below in order of preference.

- EPA Repository libraries should be given first choice of to-be-dispersed materials for possible digitization and/or inclusion in the repository collections. More detailed procedures will be forthcoming.
- Other EPA libraries.
- Other federal government agency libraries.
- State Libraries and state environmental agency libraries.
- Colleges and universities with environmental studies curricula.
- University and public libraries that have collections of government documents. Many have been designated as federal depository libraries by the US Government Printing Office. In addition, RTP staff have offered to coordinate EPA's dispersal activities with the Government Printing Office in order to identify and preserve "fugitive" Agency documents for public access.
- Listservers are presently being used successfully by EPA libraries to announce availability of materials. This practice gives libraries on the listservers the chance to choose and request specific items.
- The Library of Congress, due to space restrictions, will only accept materials fitting its selection criteria. Federal libraries can find detailed instructions for **Transfer of Surplus Library Materials to the Library of Congress** at http://www.loc.gov/acq/fedsus.html. In general, the Library of Congress will no longer accept donations of bound or unbound

serials of any age or donations of science books older than 5 years.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

(i)   EPA FY 2007 LIBRARY PLAN: National Framework for the Headquarters and Regional Libraries dated August 15, 2006.

(ii)   Acting Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information's email memorandum dated 12/12/06 to Agency management.

(i)   Deputy Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information's email memorandum dated 2/1/07 and 2/27/07 to Agency management.

(i)   Director, Office of Information Analysis and Access' (OEI) email to Agency management dated 12/21/06.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<u>Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information</u> -The AA/OEI has the overall responsibility for the management of the EPA Library Network including setting policy and supporting procedures, standards and guidance to ensure the effective oversight of the EPA Library Network.

<u>Assistant Administrators and Regional Administrators</u> – AAs and RAs with libraries within the EPA Library Network have the management responsibility of their individual libraries and ensure compliance with Agency-wide policies, procedures, standards and guidance relating to the Library Network.

<u>National Library Program Manager</u> – The Library Program Manager resides in OEI's Office of Information Analysis and Access and has the day-to-day responsibility to provide assistance and guidance to offices in the operation of the EPA Library Network.

9. DEFINITIONS

Acquisition – The purchase or receipt of new *materials* into the *physical collection*.

Convenience Copy – A convenience copy of a record is, by definition, a non-record with no evidential value. Convenience copies are often referred to as 'technical reference' because staff keep them at their desks or in the office and refer to them in the performance of their duties. Regional libraries often keep convenience copies of reports and other records for this kind of reference.

Deaccession – The removal of library *materials* from the *physical collection*. Deaccessioning usually occurs when a library weeds out obsolete *materials*, but also occurs when a library is closed. During deaccessioning, *materials* are removed from the library catalog and *disposed* or *dispersed* (transferred to another library) and catalogs are updated to reflect actions taken.

Digitization – The conversion of hard copy documents into digital form.

Disposal – The destruction of library *materials*, following appropriate procedures for disposal of government property.

Dispersion – The transfer of library *materials* to other libraries. A library's *physical collection* may be transferred whole or in parts. *Materials* may be dispersed internally, to other EPA libraries, or to external libraries, such as those of other federal agencies, state governments, or universities.

Materials – May include books, journals, reports, multimedia, and other physical objects. Generally, library materials do not include official *records*, but convenience copies of records may be included.

Patrons – Anyone authorized to use the *materials* and *services* of the library. May include EPA staff and contractors and/or the public.

Physical collection – The physical *materials* that the library provides to *patrons*, such as books, journals, reports, and other materials. A *physical collection* may be frozen, which means no new items are *acquired*. It may also be *disposed* or *dispersed*, meaning destroying or giving away the *materials* in the collection. Physical collections may also be digitized so that they may be access electronically. Digitizing a physical collection raises important considerations for copyright, cost, and usability.

Public Information Centers – Space where EPA Regions provide local public access to their documents. This sometimes occurs in the Regional library's *reading room*, but it can also happen in a custom space for that purpose, such as a *public information center*. In some cases the public may be able to view Agency records at these locations.

Reading room – A space open to *patrons*, which provides seating and working areas for using *library materials* and *library services*. A library can exist without a *reading room*, but for patrons to use its physical materials they must check them out of the library and use them back at their own desk. A reading room may serve more than just the library. Often reading rooms in EPA Regions are used as *public information centers*.

Records – The documents that provide necessary and sufficient evidence of the operations, policies, and organization of the Region. The official definition of *records* is provided below. *Records* may be requested by the public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be viewed at a local *public information center*. *Convenience copies* of records may be distributed to allow easy reference to the contents of the record. Convenience copies are not records.

"Records include all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the United States Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value in them." (44 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Sec. 3301).

Services – Any service provided by the library. The most common services are answering questions and doing research (called reference), providing access to online databases, and interlibrary loan to retrieve materials from other libraries.

10. WAIVERS

Waivers to this procedure must be approved by the Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information/Chief Information Officer. Waiver requests must be submitted

in writing by the requesting office's Senior Information Official (SIO)

11. RELATED POLICIES, STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

CIO Policy 2106.0 INTERIM POLICY – EPA LIBRARY NETWORK dated XXXX

12. MATERIAL SUPERSEDED

This interim policy supersedes the EPA Library Systems Manual 2130 dated January 1977.

13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

None

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and Chief Information Officer
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