



**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Pacific Southwest Region  
Emergency Prevention and Preparedness Program Update  
For the California State Emergency Response Commission  
Meeting in Mather, CA on Thursday, October 31, 2013**

**Presidential Executive Order on Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security**

President Obama signed an Executive Order on August 1, 2013 to improve the safety and security of chemical facilities and reduce the risks of hazardous chemicals to workers and communities. The order directs the federal government to:

- Improve operational coordination with state and local partners (including State Emergency Response Commissions, Local Emergency Planning Committees and Tribal Emergency Response Commissions)
- Enhance Federal agency coordination and information sharing
- Modernize policies, regulations and standards, and
- Work with stakeholders to identify best practices.

The fact sheet about the Executive Order can be found on the White House website at:  
The White House Fact Sheet: Executive Order on Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/01/fact-sheet-executive-order-improving-chemical-facility-safety-and-security>

The actual Executive Order can be found on the White House website at:

Presidential Executive Order: Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/01/executive-order-improving-chemical-facility-safety-and-security>

One of the first products under the Executive Order is the recent, federal multi-agency chemical advisory on “Safe Storage, Handling, and Management of Ammonium Nitrate.” The link is: [www.epa.gov/emergencies/docs/chem/AN\\_advisory.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/emergencies/docs/chem/AN_advisory.pdf) .

Here is the link to the news release from EPA Headquarters on August 30, 2013:

“EPA, OSHA and ATF Provide Information and Lessons Learned About the Safe Storage, Handling and Management of Ammonium Nitrate”

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/d0cf6618525a9efb85257359003fb69d/a15398fb5fc51da185257bd7006f1a64!OpenDocument>

**U.S. EPA Region 9 Recent Activities to Improve Coordination for Chemical Safety**

The EPA’s Pacific Southwest Region recently has been involved in several multi-agency (federal, state and local) activities with the goal of improving chemical facility safety. Those activities include:

- Participation in an informal discussion with the hazardous materials emergency response community to improve chemical facility and responder safety as well as worker, community and environmental protection. The session was moderated by Paul Penn, president of EnMagine, at the Continuing Challenge Workshop in Sacramento on the evening of Sept. 5, 2013. A summary document was produced called “What Should Be Done?” and it was provided to members of the national workgroup for implementing the President’s Executive Order.
- Participation in California’s Interagency Refinery Task Force, managed by the California Environmental Protection Agency, was recently formed to enhance coordination and regulation of the state’s refineries and to strengthen emergency preparedness in response to future refinery incidents. Creation of the Task Force was a recommendation of the State’s Interagency Working Group on Refinery Safety, developed in response to the August 2012 Chevron Richmond Refinery incident. The inaugural meeting included representatives from the California Air Resources Board, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Department of Industrial Relations, the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, the California Department of Public Health, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority, and the Office of the State Fire Marshall as well as representatives from Certified Unified Program Agencies and Air Pollution Control Districts with refineries in their jurisdictions. Follow-up actions include the establishment of two sub-work groups, one focusing on emergency response and preparedness and another focusing on prevention and enforcement.

**Gina McCarthy Confirmed as EPA Administrator**

Gina McCarthy was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the U.S. EPA’s new Administrator on July 18, 2013. Prior to her appointment as Administrator, she served as the Assistant Administrator of EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation. During her career, which spans over 30 years, she worked at both the state and local levels on environmental issues and helped coordinate policies on economic growth, energy, transportation and the environment. Previously, McCarthy served as the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. McCarthy received a Bachelor of Arts in social anthropology from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a combined Master of Science in Environmental Engineering and Planning Policy from Tufts University. One of EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy’s seven major themes announced on September 4 to meet the environmental challenges ahead includes “Taking Action on Toxics and Chemical Safety.”

**Federal Regional Response Team to Meet at South Lake Tahoe on Nov. 4 to 6**

The EPA Pacific Southwest has announced updated plans regarding the next federal Regional Response Team (RRT) meeting, co-chaired with the U.S. Coast Guard. That meeting, to be hosted by the U.S. Forest Service, will be held Nov. 4 to 6 in the Emerald Bay Room at the Forest Service’s Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit at 35 College Drive in South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

On the meeting agenda for the afternoon of Mon. Nov. 4, there will be a special presentation from the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security about the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) program. On Tuesday morning, Nov. 5 agenda, there will be a 90-minute workshop on the 2012 Nevada Bio-Hazard Response and Recovery Exercise After-Action Report. On the morning of Wed. Nov. 6, the RRT meeting will be a table top exercise sponsored by several federal, state and local environmental response agencies. The table top exercise will provide an opportunity for local, state and federal agencies to explore the consequences of a spill event that has the potential to impact Lake Tahoe. The exercise is designed to build relationships between responding and coordinating agencies, and provide a forum to discuss the update for the Lake Tahoe Geographic Response Plan that guide environmental response operations in the Lake Tahoe community. Exercise objectives will focus on ensuring timely and appropriate notifications of a spill, establishing effective command structures, and clarifying jurisdictional authorities. California SERC and LEPC members are invited to attend, participate and/or observe the RRT meeting and exercise. The agenda and more information for these sessions will be available on the RRT website at: [www.rrt9.org](http://www.rrt9.org).

#### **EPA Updates Oil and Gas Standards for Storage Tanks**

The EPA recently issued updates to the 2012 oil and natural gas standards for storage tanks. The updates will phase in emission control deadlines, starting with higher-emitting tanks first, and will provide the time needed to ramp up the production and installation of controls. Storage tanks that emit 6 or more tons of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) a year must reduce emissions by 95 percent. This news release may be found on EPA's website ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)) under news releases for August 5, 2013.

#### **EPA Pacific Southwest EPP Program Contact**

For more information about the U.S. EPA's Emergency Prevention and Preparedness program for California, you may contact the liaison, Mike Ardito, at 415-972-3081 or by email at [ardito.michael@epa.gov](mailto:ardito.michael@epa.gov).