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RCRA/SUPERFUND HOTLINE MONTHLY SUMMARY

JUNE 87

2. EPA Waste Minimization Program Activities

What is EPA currently doing in the area of waste minimization?

For the past two years, the Office of Solid Waste has been actively involved in the area of waste minimization. In a 1986 report to Congress required under Section 8002(r) of RCRA, EPA stated that incentives for waste minimization are strong and growing. Since data was scarce on existing waste minimization programs, EPA stated that it would report back to Congress in 1990 on the need for "command and control" regulations for waste minimization. Under Section 8002(r) Congress had asked EPA to look at desirability and feasibility for "command and control" regulations.

As it is presently structured, the Agency's waste minimization program has two principle objectives: (1) evaluate the need for regulations for waste minimization and present this evaluation along with appropriate recommendations in a report to Congress in 1990, and (2) foster the use of waste minimization through technology transfer and information dissemination activities. In order to achieve these goals, OSW developed its 1987 and 1988 Fiscal Year programs to focus on gathering information and data to determine waste minimization trends and to develop information dissemination and technology transfer activities.

Presently, OSW activities include:

- (1) Revising the requirement for a narrative statement for waste minimization in biennial reports. The current format consists of a "blank page" with instructions to provide a "narrative description of waste minimization activities. The revised biennial report will consist of yes/no questions which will indicate generators' awareness of waste minimization, specific questions about waste minimization techniques, and volume of toxicity of data.
- (2) Initiating a computerized data and information retrieval system for waste minimization.

- (3) Developing waste minimization policy statements which will be non-binding and reflect EPA's ideas on what does and does not constitute waste minimization.
- (4) Co-Sponsoring two meetings "National Roundtable of State Waste Reduction Programs" and Woods Hole III "Waste Minimization - The Hurdles Ahead".