address disposal requirements. These provisions require owners of alternate disposal technologies, incinerators and chemical waste landfills to submit permit applications to and obtain approvals from EPA. Additionally, EPA prescribes technical and operational criteria that these facilities must meet to qualify for consideration by the Agency. EPA may include in an approval any other requirements or provisions that are necessary to ensure the operation of the facility will not present an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment.

To meet its statutory obligations, EPA must obtain sufficient information to conclude that the operation of a disposal facility does not result in an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment. EPA requests only the information that the Agency needs to reach a decision to grant or deny an applicant's request for a disposal approval. EPA uses the information submitted by each permit applicant to determine if the applications meet the technical and operational criteria for a disposal facility and to make a finding that the operation of the facility will not result in an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment.

Responses to the collection of information are required in order for respondents to obtain or retain benefits (see 40 CFR parts 761.60, 761.70 and 761.75). Respondents may claim all or part of a notice confidential. EPA will disclose information that is covered by a claim of confidentiality only to the extent permitted by, and in accordance with, the procedures in TSCA section 14 and 40 CFR part 2.

Burden Statement: The annual public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average approximately 334 hours per response for an estimated 32 respondents. These estimates include the time needed to review instructions; develop, acquire, install and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information.

No person is required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control numbers for EPA's regulations are displayed in 40 CFR Part 9.

Respondents/Affected Entities: Operators of PCB disposal facilities.

Estimated No. of Respondents: 32.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 10,688 hours.

Frequency of Collection: On occasion.

Changes in Burden Estimates: There is a reduction of 6,232 hours in the total estimated respondent burden as compared with that identified in the Information Collection Request (ICR) most recently approved by OMB, from 16,920 hours currently to an estimated 10,688 hours. The prior ICR assumed an equal number of applications to conduct research and development (R&D) in PCB disposal as applications for commercial disposal of PCBs. However, based on experience gained since the last ICR, EPA's revised calculations now account for the fact that EPA receives twice as many R&D applications as commercial applications. The average burden for R&D applications is only 60 hours, versus 880 hours for commercial applications.

According to the procedures prescribed in 5 CFR 1320.12, EPA has submitted this ICR to OMB for review and approval. Any comments related to the renewal of this ICR should be submitted as described above.

Dated: June 9, 1997.

Richard T. Westlund,

Acting Director, Regulatory Information Division.

[FR Doc. 97–15367 Filed 6–11–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–5839–3]

Air Pollution Control; Proposed Actions on Clean Air Act Grants to the South Coast Air Quality Management District

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed determinations with request for comments and notice of opportunity for public hearing.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency has made two proposed determinations that reductions in expenditures of non-Federal funds for the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) in Diamond Bar, California are a result of non-selective reductions in expenditures. These determinations, when final, will permit the SCAQMD to keep the financial assistance awarded to it by EPA for FY–96, and to be awarded financial assistance for FY–97 by EPA, under section 105(c) of the Clean Air Act (CAA).

DATES: Comments and/or requests for a public hearing must be received by EPA at the address stated below by July 14, 1997.

ADDRESSES: All comments and/or requests for a public hearing should be mailed to: R. Michael Stenburg, Grants and Program Integration Office (Air-8), Air Division, U.S. EPA Region IX, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, California 94105–3901; FAX (415) 744–1076.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: R. Michael Stenburg, Grants and Program Integration Office (Air-8), Air Division, U.S. EPA Region IX, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, California 94105–3901 at (415) 744–1182.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the authority of Section 105 of the CAA, EPA provides financial assistance (grants) to the SCAQMD, whose jurisdiction includes Los Angeles and Orange Counties in southern California, to aid in the operation of its air pollution control programs. In FY–96, EPA awarded the SCAQMD $7,084,731, which represented approximately 8.4% of the SCAQMD's budget.

Section 105(c)(1) of the CAA, 42 U.S.C. 7405(c)(1), provides that ''[n]o agency shall receive any grant under this section during any fiscal year when its expenditures of non-Federal funds for recurrent expenditures for air pollution control programs will be less than its expenditures were for such programs during the preceding fiscal year. In order for [EPA] to award grants under this section in a timely manner each fiscal year, [EPA] shall compare an agency's prospective expenditure level to that of its second preceding year.'' EPA may still award financial assistance to an agency not meeting this requirement, however, if EPA, ''after notice and opportunity for public hearing, determines that a reduction in expenditures is attributable to a non-selective reduction in the expenditures in the programs of all Executive branch agencies of the applicable unit of Government.'' CAA section 105(c)(2). These statutory requirements are repeated in EPA's implementing regulations at 40 CFR 35.210(a).

In its FY–96 section 105 application, the SCAQMD projected expenditures of non-Federal funds for recurrent expenditures (or its maintenance of effort (MOE)) of $78,452,571. This MOE would have been sufficient to meet the MOE requirements of the CAA, i.e. it

would have been equal to or greater than the MOE for the previous year (FY–95). Subsequently, however, the SCAQMD submitted to EPA final documentation which shows that its actual FY–96 MOE was $76,882,860. This amount represents a shortfall of $520,712 from the MOE of $77,403,572 for the preceding fiscal year (FY–95). In order for the SCAQMD to be eligible to keep its FY–96 grant, EPA must make a determination under section 105(c)(2).

Furthermore, in its FY–97 § 105 grant application the SCAQMD projected MOE of $67,362,724. This amount represents a shortfall of $9,520,136 from the actual FY–96 MOE of $76,882,860. In order for the SCAQMD to be eligible to be awarded its FY–97 grant, EPA must make a determination under section 105(c)(2).

The SCAQMD is a single-purpose agency whose primary source of funding is emission fee revenue. It is the ''unit of Government'' for section 105(c)(2) purposes. The SCAQMD submitted documentation to EPA which shows that over the last five years emission reductions brought on by a combination of regulated and voluntary emission reductions and actions to minimize fee increases on businesses have reduced fee revenues from stationary sources from a high of $66,914,362 in 1991–1992 to approximately $49,147,500 in 1996–1997. As a result, the SCAQMD has instituted hiring/salary freezes, furloughs, and layoffs, has reduced its equipment purchases and contract expenditures, and has instituted new programs to reduce costs such as permit streamlining, computer-assisted permit processing, and privatization efforts.

Therefore, the SCAQMD's MOE reductions resulted from a loss of fee revenues due to circumstances beyond its control. EPA proposes to determine that the SCAQMD's lower FY–96 and FY–97 MOE levels meet the section 105(c)(2) criteria as resulting from a non-selective reduction of expenditures. Pursuant to 40 CFR 35.210, these determinations will allow the SCAQMD to keep the funds received from EPA for FY–96 and be awarded financial assistance for FY–97.

This notice constitutes a request for public comment and an opportunity for public hearing as required by the Clean Air Act. All written comments received by July 14, 1997 on this proposal will be considered. EPA will conduct a public hearing on this proposal only if a written request for such is received by EPA at the address above by July 14, 1997.

If no written request for a hearing is received, EPA will proceed to both final determinations. While notice of the final determinations will not be published in the **Federal Register**, copies of the determinations can be obtained by sending a written request to R. Michael Stenburg at the above address.

Dated: June 3, 1997.

David P. Howekamp,

Director, Air Division, U.S. EPA, Region 9.

[FR Doc. 97–15366 Filed 6–11–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–5840–2]

Performance Evaluation Studies Supporting Administration of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to transfer components of the laboratory performance evaluation (PE) studies programs that the Agency has conducted to assess laboratories testing drinking water and wastewater to the private sector. Under the externalized program, EPA would issue standards for the operation of the program, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) would develop standards for private sector PE suppliers and would evaluate and accredit PE suppliers, and the private sector would develop and manufacture PE materials and conduct PE studies. The results of these studies would be made available to the study participants (participating analytical laboratories and in the case of DMRQA studies to permittees) and to those government organizations that have the responsibility for administering programs supported by the studies (e.g., state, federal agency). This decision should ensure the continued viability of the existing PE programs and should permit the eventual expansion of environmental laboratory PE studies to other media and analytes while maintaining government oversight.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen W. Clark, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW), U.S. EPA, 401 M Street, SW., Washington DC 20460 [telephone number (202) 260–7159]; Rick Colbert, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA), U.S. EPA Ariel Rios, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington DC 20044 [telephone number (202) 564–2320]; or Robert Graves, Office of Research and Development (ORD), U.S. EPA/NERL, 26 W. Martin Luther King Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45268 [telephone number (513) 569–7197].

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Since the 1970s, EPA has been conducting laboratory PE studies to support the various water programs administered by the States and EPA under the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. In a PE study, a participating laboratory analyzes a test sample (a PE sample) that is prepared and distributed by the entity conducting the study. In the EPA-supported PE studies, a single EPA contractor prepared test samples which were sent to participating laboratories for analysis. EPA then scored the results against statistically-based or empirically-based performance criteria to determine whether the laboratory demonstrated acceptable performance. The results were then supplied to the study participants and the government agencies responsible for reviewing the performance of said participants.

What is the Purpose of a PE Study?

PE studies are a valuable indicator of a laboratory's competency to analyze water samples. The studies are used to assess a laboratory's ability to conduct analysis and produce meaningful and reliable environmental data. In some States, the State may certify or accredit individual laboratories to conduct analysis within the State. The PE studies serve as one component of the overall federal program to assure quality in environmental measurement to implement the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act. EPA has also relied on the data to assess the capability of the nation's environmental laboratory community to conduct analysis for certain analytes. If EPA found that a disproportionate number of laboratories did not seem able to properly analyze the samples for a given analyte, EPA used that information to identify areas where additional method development was warranted.

EPA has been conducting three PE study programs to support nationwide implementation of water programs:

Water Supply (WS) study program, which includes chemistry, microbiology, and radiochemistry PE studies, supports implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, laboratory certification programs are administered primarily by States (and, in very limited instances, by EPA). Many State drinking water laboratory certification programs have required ''successful'' participation in EPA's Water Supply (WS) PE study