

**Supporting Statement (Part B: Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods)  
of the Request for  
OMB Review and Approval of**

**Generic Clearance of  
ATSDR Exposure Investigations (EI)**

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Reinstatement with Change**

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Science Support Branch (SSB)  
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## **B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

Although no statistical methodology is used for the investigations, we will use this section of the submission to describe how the data are collected.

### **B.1 Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods**

Since the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) does not use the exposure investigation (EI) results to generalize or estimate the total exposed population, the respondent universe and statistical methods for determining sample size are not a factor. ATSDR does, however, need to know the potential size of the population to be sampled and since many EIs are location-based, we estimate the potential respondent universe based on street maps and census information.

### **B.2 Procedures for the Collection of Information**

A list of questions (based on the list in Attachment 3) is administered either in person or over the phone. Several procedures may be used to sign up participants, such as newsletters or recruitment posters. The principal investigator, or team, is identified by name along with qualifications or experience in conducting similar EIs. The questions listed in Attachment 3 are not required to be used, but are used as the basis for building an appropriate list of questions for the EI.

The EI team may also recruit participants at public availability meetings. Based on ATSDR's experience recruiting and interviewing subjects for investigations, the response rate is close to 100%.

#### *Quality Control Procedures*

Prior to the interviews, the EI team is trained on the site-specific questions to be asked (e.g., the purpose of each question, how to capture answers, place for comments, etc.). Once developed, the list of questions is not changed unless the team discovers the need for an important addition. Participants are re-interviewed if a question is added. The list of questions and individual's answers are stored in a secure database or locked filing cabinet.

Each participant is given information regarding the name of the EI, a telephone number to answer questions, and the address of the ATSDR website where they can find more information about the EI, if applicable. Each participant receives a copy of their personal results.

### **B.3 Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Non-response**

An EI is usually requested by officials of a state health agency, county health departments, the EPA, the general public and ATSDR staff in order to address community health concerns. To

evaluate potential exposure, ATSDR is generally looking for participants that are the most highly exposed. We identify them through a location or an activity that they engage in. If activity based (e.g., fishing, working, etc.) we may need to contact people to encourage their participation.

Ours is not a response rate as the term is typically used in research or evaluation to show the legitimacy of a study. We invite people to participate in our sampling based on who would likely be most exposed. Generally, we look for 10-100 participants in the most exposed category. Getting participants has not been a problem since communities have been requesting the sampling before we arrive. Since our goal for participation is a wide range and participants usually request the sampling, we usually have close to a 100% response rate. However, because we are interpreting each individual's response to his or her specific exposure and not attempting to determine population level exposures, we can interpret results without 100% participation.

#### **B.4 Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken**

The EI team will use questions consistent with or similar to those in Attachment 3 to generate EI-specific lists of questions when conducting EIs. The questions will be submitted to OMB for review in each EI Generic Information Collection (GenIC) submittal package.

#### **B.5 Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data**

Statistical calculations are not used to determine participation in EIs. Rather, all the community residents with the greatest likelihood of exposure are asked to participate.