



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Comments Received on the New ICR entitled "Assessment of Environmental Performance Standards and Ecolabels for Federal Procurement" (EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0838)

FROM: David Widawsky, Director
Chemistry, Economics and Sustainable Strategies Division

David Widawsky 6/29/15

TO: Angela Hofmann, Director
Regulatory Coordination Staff

Background

On March 19, 2015, EPA published a Notice in the Federal Register (80 FR 06275) titled "Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposals, Submissions, and Approvals: Assessment of Environmental Performance Standards and Ecolabels for Federal Procurement; EPA ICR No. 2516.01, OMB Control No. 2070-new." (See <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0838-0001>). This Notice refers to EPA's intention to request new Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance of an information collection related to the assessment of environmental performance standards and ecolabels for Federal procurement.

In addition to public notice and comment requirement that the above Notice initiates, OMB regulations at 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1)) require agencies to consult with potential respondents and data users about specific aspects of an information collection request (ICR) before submitting it to OMB for review and approval.

EPA solicited input on the following questions:

Are the data that EPA seeks under this ICR available from any public source, or already collected by another EPA office or by another agency? If so, where can the data be found?

Is it clear what is required for data submission? If not, are there any suggestions for clarifying instructions?

Would you be interested in an electronic/data submission option? What type of alternative would you be most likely to utilize – web form, diskette, CD-ROM?

For electronic submission, how should signature requirements be handled – Private Key Infrastructure, PINS and passwords, signed paper cover sheet?

Do you agree with EPA's estimated burden and costs (the ICR addresses only the costs associated with paperwork)? Are the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) labor rates accurate? If you have any reason to consider the BLS labor rates as used by EPA inaccurate or inappropriate, explain your rationale.

Public Comments

All but two of the comments received via the Federal Docket Management System and via email correspondence were related to other questions posed in the Federal Register Notice, not related to the ICR (e.g., panel membership and qualifications for the Stakeholder Panels and Governance Committee, or to volunteer particular standards for assessment).

Comments received from NSF International and the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA) spoke specifically to the Information Collection Request and provided suggestions. The comments were supportive of our information collection mechanisms, indicating neither that NSF International nor BIFMA were aware of any previous attempt to collect the requested data and that the information was not currently being collected by any other agencies. Additionally, BIFMA noted that the information sought was critical to effectively determining how well existing standards and ecolabels would measure up to EPA guidance. In their comment, NSF International noted the clarity of the information request, and was supportive of our approach to collect submissions under the ICR via web submission form, and noted a preference for a PIN and password infrastructure for electronic submission. BIFMA indicated a preference for electronic submission of materials as a way to streamline information collection, and expressed doubt that a PIN and password system were necessary. Both BIFMA and NSF International agreed with EPA's cost estimates and the Bureau of Labor Statistics labor rates that were presented.

Response to Comments

EPA would like to thank the entities that submitted comments for this ICR. EPA has carefully reviewed the comments submitted and believes that changes to the ICR narrative are not warranted for the following reasons:

The burden estimates presented in the ICR supporting statement are reasonable estimates for the average submitters and EPA recognizes that some respondents may have a higher or lower burden. It is clear from the comments received that this effort is not duplicative of any other agency efforts.

The mechanisms for information collection used under the Assessment of Environmental Performance Standards and Ecolabels for Federal Procurement are in line with the comments received, and will not require any substantive changes to the ICR.