

9521.1986(04)

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr. Alfred B. Devereaux, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
State of Florida Department of Environmental Regulation
Twin Towers Office Building
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-8241

Dear Mr. Devereaux:

Thank you for your July 7, 1986, letter expressing concern about the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) policy for expanding public involvement opportunities in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permitting program.

EPA's public involvement program is designed to provide information and uncover citizen concerns while there is still opportunity to address them during the permit review process. We encourage the States to integrate early public involvement activities into the permitting process to ensure responsive and effective permitting.

RCRA and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments mandate the Agency respond to citizens' concerns and provide a defined role for the public in the decisionmaking process. The Guidance on Expanded Public Involvement in the RCRA Permitting Program allows great flexibility to Regions and States to provide such opportunity as appropriate in each community. This guidance is relevant to both new and existing facilities, whether it is for closure or operations.

The guidance does not state that every RCRA facility must have an expanded public involvement program, but rather that specific facilities be targeted for expanded public involvement, and it provides criteria for targeting these facilities:

- facilities that receive wastes from a Superfund site;
- facilities that are environmentally significant;
- facilities that are already controversial or have the potential to become controversial; and
- facilities for treatment and incineration, existing or proposed.

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We believe that it is important for the States to apply this guidance in administering their permit programs. We encourage the States to review the permit applications to discover which are or may become controversial and develop an expanded public involvement program for those permits. If you have any further questions concerning the implementation of this program, please contact Vanessa Musgrave in the EPA Permits and State Programs Division, Office of Solid Waste, at (202) 382-4751.

Sincerely,

Lee M. Thomas

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