



# 1996 Region 8 Press Releases

## **December**

[Letter to the Editor on Self-Audits](#)

## **November**

[Clean Water Act Against City of Watertown](#)

## **October**

[Environmental Education Grants](#)

[Teller County Water Wells](#)

## **September**

[Samsonite Corporation - Hammer Award](#)

[Radon and Cancer](#)

## **August**

[Mt. Zirkel](#)

## **July**

[Metro Area Businesses Cut Pollution](#)

[Green Lights/Energy Star Programs](#)

[Air Pollution Prevented in Boulder/Denver](#)

## **June**

[Toxics Release Inventory \(TRI\)](#)

[TRI Data Release Questions & Answers](#)

[Utah Awards](#)

## **May**

[Hayden Power Plant Settlement](#)

[Air Pollution Control Pact to Protect Wilderness Area](#)

[Summitville Mine](#)

## **April**

[Amoco Oil Company](#)

## **March**

[EPA Regional Administrator Resigned](#)

## **February**

[Train Derailment Near Red Cliff](#)

## **January**

[Public Service Company](#)

[Top of Page](#)

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [Region 8 News & Information](#) | [1997 Region 8 Press Releases](#) | [EPA Headquarters News & Events](#) | [Comments](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]

---

**URL:** <http://www.epa.gov/region08/news/news96.html>

Last Update: December, 1997



United States Environmental Protection  
Agency Region 8

Office of Communication and Public  
Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana, North  
Dakota, South Dakota,  
Utah, Wyoming

---

Letters Editor

**The Denver Post**

P.O. Box 1709  
Denver, CO 80201  
Dec. 14, 1996

Editor:

Somewhere in Colorado a plant manager finds, to his horror, that he's been violating an environmental law. If he steps forward, what will happen to him?

Across town, Acme Widget's CEO is breaking the same law on purpose and saving money. She knows the government lacks enough inspectors to check every pollution discharge. If she confesses one day, what should happen to her?

The Environmental Protection Agency favors treating them differently. The Heritage Foundation prefers sweeping protection for polluters. In a Dec. 1 essay in the *Post*, Jessica Gavora of the Foundation's New Citizenship Project faulted EPA for opposing state programs that would protect polluters.

At issue are "self-audit" programs where companies voluntarily find and correct pollution problems. EPA issued a policy supporting such an approach in January 1996. We agreed to greatly reduce fines and forgo criminal charges for companies that voluntarily disclose. We can forgo the "punitive" portion of a fine except in cases of serious harm, repeated violations, or where a company gets an unfair advantage over competitors by *not* complying with the law. We also agreed not to ask for the results of audits to trigger investigations *unless* we had other reasons to suspect violations.

Some state programs, though, go much further. They offer *immunity* from enforcement **and** *privilege* for the information. That means no penalty, even where the circumstances were outrageous. And the public never learns about the violations. EPA cannot support that and could be forced to take back environmental programs that have been "delegated" to states.

EPA's self-audit policy works. Already, 83 U.S. firms have disclosed problems found in audits and we have settled 18 of those cases, most without any penalty. Americans want environmental enforcement strong *and* fair. EPA is committed to that balance.

Jack McGraw  
Acting Regional Administrator

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 14, 1996

---

## NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

A consent decree settling the penalty portion of the Clean Water Act case against the City of Watertown was lodged today in U.S. District Court in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The action, brought on behalf of the EPA by the U.S. Department of Justice, alleged numerous violations including allowing the discharge of pollutants above acceptable levels from the City's wastewater treatment plant to the Big Sioux River.

The settlement calls for the City to pay a cash penalty of \$550,000. There is a 30-day period for the public to comment on the proposed settlement and people can review the consent decree at the public documents section at the Sioux Falls public library.

An earlier consent decree entered by the Court in December 1995, requires the City to comply with all conditions of its water quality "pretreatment" permit by the end of 1997. The City determined that full compliance required major modifications to its facility. That work is now underway.

"EPA is satisfied with this settlement and is pleased that the City is now on the right track toward complying with the Clean Water Act," said Carol Rushin, EPA's enforcement chief in Denver. "It is crucial for communities to understand the serious impacts that pre-treatment violations bring to public health and the environment. It is also important that communities-- like industries and individuals--comply with the nation's environmental laws."

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

# RELEASE AT WILL

OCTOBER, 2, 1996

---

**DENVER, Colo--**From inner-city kids to the Blackfeet Tribe in Montana, from universities to Girl Scout troops, seventeen environmental education projects in six western states will share nearly \$143,000 in grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for 1996- 97.

Denver's Green City Data Project\* will train teachers to use the outdoors and students' own neighborhoods as "laboratories" to teach environmental lessons. In northwest Montana 75 youths from 8 to 17 years of age will learn about wise use of resources in a natural resources camp on the Blackfeet Reservation.\*

Universities will test the effectiveness of teaching math in an environmental context,\* work with science and biology teachers to perform actual environmental studies with their students\* and educate teachers in environmental topics, building in an Internet component. In their "No-trace Camping" project, Wyoming Girl Scouts will teach others how to camp with minimal impact on their surroundings.

The National Environmental Education Act makes small amounts available each year for grants to enhance teachers' skills and environmental knowledge, strengthen state, local or tribal programs, promote environmental careers and educate the public.

For 1996-97, 215 projects across the nation shared \$2.1 million.

State-by-state, the regional projects and their grant amounts are:

## COLORADO

- Colorado State University \$11,286
  - \*Marcella Wells
- Green City Data Project \$5,000
  - \*Linda Baggus
- Keystone Center \$5,000

## **MONTANA**

- Blackfeet Tribe \$5,000
  - \*Carol Murray
- Montana State University Extension \$5,000
- Northern Plains Council \$5,000
- Montana Project Learning Tree \$5,000

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

- University of North Dakota \$13,684
- North Dakota Council of the Arts \$5,000

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

- South Dakota School of Mines \$18,082
- South Dakota State University \$5,000

## **UTAH**

- Utah State University \$21,849
- University of Utah, Red Butte \$5,000
- Utah Society of Env. Educators \$5,000
- Utah Valley College \$4,978

## **WYOMING**

- University of Wyoming--Wyoming
  - Geographic Alliance \$17,621
- Wyoming Girl Scouts \$4,996
  - \*Jane Caller



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

---

Sixteen private water wells tested last week by the Environmental Protection Agency near the troubled Teller County Water and Sanitation District showed no signs of the ethylene dibromide (EDB) that had tainted the District's wells, EPA reported today.

Recent information showed levels of EDB in the Teller County municipal wells to be higher than allowed by state and federal regulations. Concerned homeowners in the vicinity had asked EPA to sample their wells for the contaminant. EDB is listed by federal health officials as a "probable human carcinogen". EPA banned the pesticide in 1983.

EPA on-scene coordinator, Joyce Ackerman, said "It is difficult to draw conclusions from the private well sampling due to the complex geology in this region." She encourages people within a half-mile radius of the county wells to call her at 1-800-227-8917 ext. 6822 to have their well tested.

If EPA locates any private well users with contaminated water, the agency will offer bottled water and assistance in finding a permanent treatment option.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]





United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

# Environmental News

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 10, 1996

---

**DENVER---Vice President Gore's "Hammer Award" will be presented to Denver-based Samsonite Corporation tomorrow, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.**

The company will accept the award on behalf of all regional participants in the 33/50 Program, a unique, voluntary toxics reduction program. The 33/50 Program's purpose was to challenge industry to reduce environmental releases of 17 toxic chemicals by 33 percent in 1992 and by 50 percent in 1995. More than 100 companies in EPA's six-state region participated in the 33/50 Program. Nationally, more than 1,300 companies representing 5,000 facilities participated.

The key to the success of the 33/50 Program was flexibility. The program did not dictate to participants how to reach pollution reduction goals. Nor did it specify technologies for companies to use or require elaborate new reporting mechanisms. It simply set a broad national target for reducing pollution, and asked companies to devise their own ways to meet reduction goals.

As part of the president's reinventing government initiative, the National Performance Review, under the leadership of Vice President Gore, typically presents a Hammer Award to federal teams that "put customers first, cut red tape and empower employees." Because it surpassed many of the 33/50 Program's goals, Samsonite, was chosen to receive the award as a representative of all the regional 33/50 industry partners and EPA.

EPA Deputy Administrator Fred Hansen will present to Samsonite the Hammer Award and a 33/50 participation award during an 11 a.m. press availability session at the Colorado Regional White House Conference on Environmental Technologies. The conference begins tomorrow at 9 a.m. in Hearing

Room 1 of the Jefferson County Administration Building at 100 Jefferson County Parkway in Golden.

Hansen commented that the 33/50 Program is an excellent example of what the president's regulatory reinvention initiative seeks to accomplish. "We have moved away from focusing on process and punishment and are now striving for partnership and results," said Hansen. "Our environmental programs must work better and cost less to meet future resource challenges."

Samsonite Corporation, with its international headquarters in Denver, is a leading manufacturer of luggage. The company has met or exceeded objectives of the 33/50 Program. Its corporate strategy underscores solid and hazardous waste reductions that go beyond compliance with the law.

For example, the company's Denver facility switched from using flammable, hazardous solvents to wash small parts to a natural process using corn cob husk pellets. The pellets accomplished what the solvents did, but also slashed emissions of hazardous air pollutants and volatile organic compounds. This new process not only improved worker health and safety conditions at the facility, it reduced hazardous waste storage and disposal costs as well. In addition, the company has stopped using ozone-depleting chemicals and nearly eliminated all other hazardous air pollutants from its manufacturing processes.

Company officials emphasize that environmental, health and safety concerns overlap, affecting the company, employees and community. Their strategy is to view pollution as waste. And waste is viewed as a manufacturing defect, which all employees strive to eliminate.

Hansen commended Samsonite's achievements to reach the goals of the 33/50 Program. He added that by cooperating rather than confronting, government and industry can accomplish far more for less.

"This program proves that government and industry can work together to protect public health and safety at a reasonable cost and without added burdensome regulations," remarked Hansen. "Companies know that reducing pollution helps businesses become more competitive. Because pollution is waste, decreasing it increases productivity and makes industry more profitable."

\*\*Editor's Note:

Samsonite Corp. contact: Kermit Hodge 303/373-7251

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

Ref: 8P2-TX

Speakout or Letters to the Editor  
Rocky Mountain News  
P.O. Box 719  
Denver, CO 80201

An August 22 opinion editorial by Michael Fumento, "The EPA is dead wrong about radon and cancer," misrepresents the scientific soundness of the federal and state radiation control programs. His attacks on EPA's credibility, competence and motivation are without foundation. Our goal is to provide factual information to Colorado property owners. Without using scare tactics, EPA and the state recommend that homeowners test for high radon levels and take action when elevated levels are detected.

Independent researchers and overwhelming scientific evidence do point to increased lung cancer risks from exposure to radon. A number of respected organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control, the American Lung Association and the American Medical Association, agree that radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year. An example is the study conducted in 1994 by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), which used 68,000 test cases, from 11 different studies of miners exposed to radon. Based on its findings, the NCI concluded that in 1993, indoor radon exposures caused an estimated 15,000 lung cancer deaths in the U.S. This figure supports EPA's estimate of 7,000 to 30,000 annual lung cancer deaths.

Fumento touts a recent Finnish study that minimizes the health impact of indoor radon exposure. EPA disagrees with Fumento's assertions and challenges the Finnish researchers' conclusion that exposure to radon gas does not pose health risks. The size of the Finnish study (1,055 lung cancer cases) lacked enough subjects to achieve an accurate statistical analysis. The Agency has criticized other similar sized studies; even some that supported EPA's position.

EPA has no scientific basis for changing its indoor radon policy or the recommended action threshold of 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). In Colorado, about 40 percent of existing homes have had indoor radon levels above 4 pCi/L. However, many radon reduction procedures for new and existing homes are available to successfully maintain indoor radon levels below 4 pCi/L.

EPA and the Surgeon General recommend that everyone test their dwelling's radon level. In homes with smokers, testing is even more critical because exposure to high radon levels increases these individuals' risk of getting lung cancer by 10 times. If high levels are detected, homeowners should take action to remove the dangerous gas to ensure the safety of themselves, their family or their tenants.

R. Quillin, Director  
Radiation Control Division  
Colorado Department of Public Health  
and Environment

M. Lammering, Director  
Toxics Program  
U.S. EPA, Region 8

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

Ref: 8P2-A

Letters Editor  
Rocky Mountain News  
400 W. Colfax  
Denver, CO 80204

Editor:

In an August 21 editorial "Surprise at Mt. Zirkel" the *News* suggests an industry-funded study says Public Service Company's (PSC) Hayden and Craig power plants have not notably fouled the air at the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area. EPA disagrees and maintains the settlement was fair and served the public by protecting health and preserving one of our natural resources.

Although performed over a short time in a complex environment, the study concludes that the Craig and Hayden power plants' real impacts **may have been underestimated**. It also concedes the two facilities:

- **do** impact the area's overall visibility.
- blanket the wilderness area with pollution at least 36 days per year.
- are probably responsible for nearly half of the visible haze on those days when the plume settles in the Wilderness Area.
- emit pollution which frequently sloshes around vast areas of northwest Colorado for days before drifting into the Mt. Zirkel area.

Evidence clearly points to the power plants as polluters. Both plants likely contribute to acid rain levels at Mt. Zirkel which are higher than anywhere else west of the Mississippi River. The Hayden plant has operated with few-to-no pollution controls for years and annually fills the air with thousands of tons of sulfur, nitrogen and fine particles. Although the Craig facility does have some pollution scrubbers, PSC may need to install additional equipment to further cut emissions.

EPA realizes other sources add to the haze in the Wilderness Area and will work to cut these levels as well. However, the Agency contends the \$2 million fine is fair. PSC faced a far larger penalty for allegedly violating the Clean Air Act more than 10,000 times at Hayden. EPA also had already fined

PSC for similar problems at other Front Range plants.

EPA believes the final Hayden agreement will protect a pristine area and improve air quality for residents of and visitors to the Yampa Valley. Additionally, the penalty serves to deter others from violating the nation's clean air laws.

Jack McGraw  
Acting Regional Administrator

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

# Environmental News Advisory

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

July 30, 1996

---

## Metro Area Businesses Cut Pollution

### WHO

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

### WHAT

The Agency will recognize contributions of Boulder and Denver area Green Lights participants, in keeping more than 26 million pounds of pollution out of the air. Green Lights Partners include: Ball Corporation, Boulder Community Hospital, Boulder County, Boulder Valley Public School District, Career Track, E Source, Inc., Etta Industries, Geneva Pharmaceuticals, Storage Technology Corp., National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), Children's World Learning Centers and Mobile Tool International.

### WHEN

Wednesday, July 31, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. (MDT)

### WHERE

The recognition event will be at NCAR's lab in Boulder. To reach the facility, take Foothills Parkway

north to Valmont Road and turn right (east). Take an immediate left (north) on the frontage road. Travel three blocks, then turn right at Mitchell Lane. This street winds until it dead ends at the NCAR lab (3450 Mitchell Lane). Enter through the main entrance (building 2) and signs will guide you to the first floor auditorium.

## **WHY**

By installing energy efficient lighting technology, Green Lights partners have improved their lighting quality, cut pollution and saved money. Since this voluntary program began in 1990, over 2,100 businesses have showed how pollution prevention can protect the environment and increase revenues.

## **NOTE:**

The event is scheduled to last 45 minutes to an hour. (PHOTO-OP) Afterward, NCAR will offer a tour highlighting the facility's completed upgrades, conversions in-progress and will have equipment available for viewing and handling. Officials will be available for interviews after the ceremony.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]





United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

# GREEN LIGHTS/ENERGY STAR PROGRAMS:

## 1996 PARTNERSHIP RECOGNITION

Green Lights is an innovative EPA program that encourages government agencies and major corporations to install energy-efficient lighting systems. Using energy-saving technology, electricity consumption can be dramatically reduced, slowing the need for additional power plants.

Under this voluntary, non-regulatory program, participants will upgrade facilities with energy-efficient lighting wherever it is profitable and maintains or improves lighting quality. Partners help reduce pollution because their electrical needs are lower. This cuts the demands on power plants to generate as much electricity, which means less pollution, including carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, is released into the air.

**? Can private citizens participate in Green Lights, or is it too expensive and only profitable for large companies with expensive energy outlays and many lighting fixtures?**

The Green Lights Program focuses on businesses, utilities, schools, government agencies and large electrical users. EPA is working to explain the benefits, both monetary and environmental, of using energy-efficient lighting. Individuals, however, also can make a difference, by using energy-efficient lighting found at retail outlets throughout the metro area.

**? Does EPA subsidize the Green Lights Program for industry?**

The Program is not federally subsidized; it pays for itself in the savings participants realize in electrical outlays once they have upgraded to the new technology. In EPA's six-state region, participants have saved nearly \$2.6 million in energy costs per year. Moreover, some utilities, such as Public Service Company of Colorado, offer rebates on energy-efficient lighting equipment.

**? If the Program pays for itself and results in pollution and energy consumption reduction, why then, is it not mandatory?**

We are trying to promote a spirit of cooperation rather than adding more regulatory burden. The beauty of a voluntary program is that there is no prescribed lighting technology to use. Partners are able to choose any energy-efficient lighting. This allows participants maximum flexibility not available under a mandatory program. The Program pays for itself with lower energy costs. The savings can then be used to pay for the equipment. Once the equipment is paid for, the savings can be reinvested.

**? What would be the benefits if a majority of lights were converted to Green Lights?**

Lighting constitutes 11 percent of all electricity sold in the U.S. If Green Lights were used across the country, it would save over 65 million kilowatts of electricity annually, shaving \$12 billion off annual electrical expenses. Saving 10,000 kilowatt hours of electricity is the equivalent of planting nearly three acres of trees per year. The **pollution prevented** would cut national utility emissions by 12 percent, which is the equivalent of taking 15 million cars off the road each year.

In Colorado, Green Lights partners have already prevented 109,720,205 pounds of carbon dioxide, 543,896 pounds of sulfur dioxide and 349,986 pounds of nitrogen oxide from entering the air. This is equal to taking 9,393 cars off the road

**? How many participate in the Green Lights Program?**

Green Lights participants number more than 2,100 nationally, of which 81 are federal agencies. Regionally, 70 organizations participate in the Program.

**? Does EPA recognize Green Lights Partners' voluntary efforts to cut pollution?**

In addition to technical support to help companies convert to energy-efficient lighting, EPA provides participants public recognition on a local and national basis. The Agency prepares news stories for major news outlets on the collective behalf of Program participants. Similarly, EPA places Green Lights public service advertisements and special supplements in trade publications, environmental magazines, and business magazines. The Agency also distributes ready-to-use Green Lights materials, that helps participants publicize the Program on their own behalf.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 1996

---

## Air Pollution Prevented in Boulder/Denver

**DENVER**--Boulder and Metro Denver area companies have saved money and kept 13,162 tons of pollution out of the air, according to EPA officials who today recognized businesses participating in the Agency's voluntary Green Lights/Energy Star Program.

The program calls for participants to convert from standard lighting to new energy-efficient lighting systems. According to the EPA, these new lights can lower utility costs, reduce energy use and cut air pollution. Once the changeover is complete, the companies will save hundreds of thousands of dollars per year using the energy efficient-technology.

Besides saving money for participants, businesses using Green Lights reduce their electrical use, meaning less energy demands placed on power plants that generate electricity, and reduced emissions of harmful pollutants. Power plant emissions include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxide (Nox) which are associated with the health-damaging brown cloud, global warming and acid rain.

EPA estimates the current upgrades made by today's honorees have already prevented 26,106,691 pounds (13,053 tons) of CO<sub>2</sub>, 129,506 pounds (65 tons) of SO<sub>2</sub> and 89,077 pounds (44 tons) of Nox from entering the air. These cuts in pollution emissions are akin to removing 2,195 cars from the road.

Jack McGraw, EPA's Acting Regional Administrator, applauded the astute business sense displayed by Green Lights participants. "Over 2,100 public and private businesses across the nation have cut their electrical lighting bills in half by simply converting to energy-efficient lighting," McGraw observed. "Business and government are showing that by working together, they can stop pollution before it

happens, and save money. This makes good sense." **POLLUTION PREVENTION AND PROFIT.....**

Nationally, Green Lights participants average a 40 percent return on their initial lighting investments. Lighting represents 11 percent of the total electricity sold in the United States. If government and industry were to convert to energy- efficient lighting, the nation would cut its annual electrical bill by \$12 billion. This would decrease air pollution emissions by 12 percent, which is comparable to removing 15 million cars from the road each year.

The Green Lights program, which began January 16, 1991, encourages widespread use of energy-efficient lighting technologies. It also shows businesses how to profit while improving the environment. Participants in this unique national partnership include small and large businesses; schools; environmental groups; electric utilities; state, city and local governments.

To join Green Lights, participants sign an agreement with EPA to survey 100 percent of their facilities and to upgrade, where profitable and without diminishing lighting quality, 90 percent of their square footage with new low-energy lighting systems. Partners must complete improvements within five years and report annually to EPA on their progress. The Agency provides technical support, information, and public recognition.

EPA recognized the following Green Lights partners at today's event:

Ball Corporation, Metal Container Operations

Boulder Community Hospital

Boulder County

Boulder Valley Public School District

Boulder Bookstore

CareerTrack

E Source, Inc.

Etta Industries

Geneva Pharmaceuticals

Storage Technology Corporation

National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR)/University Corporation for Atmospheric Research

Children's World Learning Centers

Mobile Tool International, Inc.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 26, 1996

---

**DENVER, CO--**The Environmental Protection Agency today issued its annual report detailing toxic releases into air, water and land throughout the country during 1994. Nationally, the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) reported total chemical releases of 1.9 billion pounds in 1994, compared to 2.1 billion pounds in 1993.

Officials from EPA's Denver office said its six-state regional figures showed mixed results. Colorado and Utah reported net decreases in total amounts of toxic chemicals released into the environment in 1994. However, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming had net increases.

As a region, onsite releases of toxic chemicals dropped by about **nine percent** from 162,115,814 pounds in 1993 to 149,536,733 pounds in 1994. "Many businesses in the region had a part in cutting toxic releases," said EPA's Acting Regional Administrator Jack McGraw.

"Companies have found that voluntary pollution prevention is a good idea and even profitable because waste disposal needs are diminished," added McGraw. "This shows how effective it is to stop pollution before it happens. Those employing pollution prevention technology should be applauded and encouraged to continue."

Regional TRI figures revealed:

- Colorado ranked 44th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it held the same position in the previous report. 189 Colorado companies released 4,175,133 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 4,912,072 pounds in 1993.
- Montana ranked 18th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it ranked 20th in the previous report. 24 Montana companies released 47,227,025 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 45,212,291 pounds in 1993.

- North Dakota ranked 49th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it ranked 50th in the previous report. 34 North Dakota companies released 1,600,214 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 1,539,427 pounds in 1993.
- South Dakota ranked 48th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it held the same position in the previous report. 66 South Dakota companies released 2,060,706 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 2,006,951 pounds in 1993.
- Utah ranked 12th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it ranked ninth in the previous report. 159 Utah companies released 71,697,321 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 91,850,812 pounds in 1993.
- Wyoming ranked 28th nationwide in the amount of toxic chemicals released; it ranked 33rd in the previous report. 27 Wyoming companies released 22,778,831 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment in 1994, compared to 16,594,261 pounds in 1993.

Overall, the country's reported releases of toxic chemicals decreased by 186,307,673 pounds or 8.6 percent between 1993 and 1994. Since 1988, when EPA began requiring companies to report, releases have declined by 44.1 percent.

The TRI is an annual measure of toxic chemical releases into the air, water and land. It serves as a monitor of transfers, pollution prevention and wastes generated by manufacturing facilities in the United States. The report allows EPA, the states and the public to gauge industry's progress toward reducing toxic chemical pollution.

"EPA's TRI list empowers communities with essential information about potential environmental or health problems posed by chemicals released in their neighborhoods," McGraw remarked. "The report is an effective public information tool that gives the population a means to measure and curb pollution and reduce risk."

The TRI is available in several formats. Many public libraries have the data release. Individuals can access it using on-line computer databases, or can purchase it on CD-ROM or on computer diskettes. For data-use assistance, call 202/260-1531 or fax to 202/260-4659. EPA also maintains a national technical hotline (800/535-0202) to help individuals and businesses understand TRI and reporting requirements.

SEE [EPCRA PAGE](#) FOR MORE INFO

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACT SHEET

June 26, 1996

---

# TRI DATA RELEASE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### What is TRI?

The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI), an annual measure of toxic emissions and wastes generated in the U.S., is available for EPA and individuals to analyze industries' progress reducing toxic chemical wastes.

### Why does EPA require companies to report their toxic releases?

A toxic gas escaped from a Union Carbide chemical plant in Bhopal, India, in 1984. More than 2,500 people died. A similar incident also occurred in West Virginia.

As a result of these and other accidents, more than 30 states now have laws that provide workers and residents with access to information about hazardous substances in their workplaces and communities.

Additionally, Congress passed the Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) making previously voluntary programs mandatory. Under EPCRA's Section 313, specific manufacturing facilities must annually report their air, land and water toxic releases.

### Does EPA use the information contained in the TRI to penalize companies for pollution violations?

No. But EPA can use the data to verify if releases comply with a company's permits for air, waste and

water. Also, the Agency uses TRI data to track industries' progress reducing toxic chemical releases and wastes.

### **What happens to companies that do not report toxic releases or fail to report properly?**

EPA may assess civil penalties for EPCRA Section 313 violations. Any company owner or operator who violates the law is liable for up to \$25,000 a day for each violation. In addition, private citizens may file lawsuits to force a company to obey the law.

### **Who must report?**

Facilities meeting all the following criteria must report: Manufacturing facilities within Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes 20-39 -- have 10 full-time employees or more (equivalent to 20,000 hours/year) -- and manufacture or process 25,000 pounds or otherwise use 10,000 pounds of a listed Section 313 toxic chemical per year.

### **Are the releases dangerous to local residents?**

The TRI information is not designed to show if chemical releases pose potential health or environmental hazards. Rather, the reports divulge how many pounds of chemicals companies release, dispose, treat, recycle, etc. EPA toxicologists, however, use TRI, and other data, to assess risks from some chemical releases.

### **How does the pollution prevention aspect of the report work and why does EPA require it?**

As part of the 1990 Pollution Prevention Act (PPA), facilities **must** (previously optional) report pollution reduction and prevention activities. EPA added Section 8 to the standard TRI Form R report. This section requires facilities to report total releases; releases from catastrophic events; toxic materials recycled, sent for energy recovery, or treated. Section 8 also requires facilities to report relevant activities aimed at reducing pollution sources. This information allows businesses and communities to assess progress made at reducing toxic chemical use and production.

### **Why should people care about the TRI?**

People have a right-to-know what substances companies produce and emit. TRI acts as a tool communities can use to discover types and amounts of toxic chemicals released in or near their neighborhoods. It also helps in emergency planning. If citizens object to chemical releases in their area, they can pressure facilities to use pollution prevention and source reduction techniques to decrease releases.

### **Has EPA recently added any chemicals to the required reporting list?**



In December 1994, EPA **added** another 286 chemicals to the Section 313 list. These chemicals are subject to reporting in the 1995 reporting year, due on July 1, 1996. About one-half of these chemicals are pesticides. A new publication list with names and other information about the new chemicals included under Section 313 is scheduled for release in May 1995.

Congress is now considering a moratorium on new Federal rules. This could jeopardize the requirement that companies report whether these chemicals were used or released. If industry is exempt from reporting these chemicals, communities and employees may not realize they face exposure to dangerous substances.

### **Why does the list exclude oil companies, mining industries, and electrical utilities?**

Currently EPCRA Section 313 only requires facilities to report if they meet all three criteria identified earlier. Most oil and mining companies and electrical utilities do not have SIC codes 20-39, and, therefore, are exempt from reporting. EPA is looking into expanding the SIC codes in the future.

SEE [EPCRA PAGE](#) FOR MORE INFO

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 7, 1996

---

**DENVER, Colo.**-Two Utahns will be recognized with EPA excellence awards for informing the public about important environmental issues and for designing a new watershed approach that focuses on local concerns and problems.

In a June 12 ceremony in Denver, EPA will honor:

**Donald Meyers**, an environmental reporter at the Provo Daily Herald, for superior reporting of environmental issues.

Agency officials commented that Meyers consistently provides readers important information about matters concerning Provo's environment in a timely, balanced and accurate manner. "Meyers has a broad understanding of environmental projects and programs affecting Utah, and Provo in particular," said EPA spokesman Vaughn Whatley. "He simplifies complex material so readers can have a complete picture of issues that affect their health and environment."

**Jim Christiansen**, of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, for advancing a statewide watershed approach. This new approach improves delivery of water quality protection programs by involving those affected and devising solutions tailored to local concerns and problems. Furthermore, it integrates separate programs, establishes cooperation among all levels of government and takes an ecosystem view toward water resources.

Utah is the first State in EPA's six-state region to adopt this type of innovative strategy for managing the quality of water resources and their surrounding ecosystems. It also will likely serve as a role model for local organizations that carry out watershed management.

"It is individuals, working alone or within their companies, organizations or agencies, who

make the real environmental change here in the West," said acting EPA chief Jack McGraw in Denver. "EPA is proud to recognize the outstanding contributions of the people we are honoring this year and their communities should be proud of them as well."

The Utahns are among 16 groups and 39 individuals from UT, CO, WY, MT, ND, and SD to receive EPA awards for outstanding achievement. With this year's winners, some 500 businesses, individuals and organizations have earned the Agency's recognition since 1980.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## BACKGROUND

May 22, 1996

---

# HAYDEN POWER PLANT SETTLEMENT

The Hayden Station, a 440 megawatt coal-fired power plant consisting of two electric-generating units, in the Yampa Valley, sits 19 miles upwind of the federally protected Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area (MZWA). Emissions from the Hayden Station include approximately 16,000 tons per year of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and 14,000 tons per year of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>). The SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> levels caused the highest acid levels in snow pack ever recorded west of the Mississippi River. Furthermore, a U.S. Forest Service study certified visibility is impaired in the MZWA primarily due to SO<sub>2</sub> pollution from this plant.

The plant is one of the most profitable in the country, largely because it has no pollution controls for SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> that are now standard for utilities. Additionally, before PSC purchased its interest in the plant in 1992, EPA warned that improved pollution controls were needed because existing devices to contain particulates were inadequate or unreliable. Because of the poor performance of the existing pollution devices, the plant has experienced nearly 30,000 opacity limit violations over the past seven years. By installing modern pollution controls, PSC could have avoided these violations.

In 1993, the Sierra Club sued the utilities over the opacity violations and for failure to follow good air pollution control practices to minimize the effects of Hayden's air emissions in a Class I Wilderness Area. U.S. District Court Judge Babcock ruled in the Sierra Club's favor in 1995. Earlier this year, EPA issued a violation notice to the utilities that included additional violations which occurred after the Sierra Club's lawsuit.

The State had previously settled the same opacity violations for a \$4,000 penalty and declined to take further action, which prompted EPA's involvement. Regional EPA offices not only assist the states with

resources and technical support, but also ensure that all states and major industries abide by national environmental laws enacted by Congress.

Problems similar to those at Hayden previously occurred at PSC's Comanche and Pawnee Stations. The company settled those actions with EPA and the State in 1992 by paying \$600,000 in fines and installing necessary pollution controls. At the time of settlement, EPA warned PSC that it was concerned with similar conditions at the Hayden Station.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 22, 1996

---

# AIR POLLUTION CONTROL PACT TO PROTECT WILDERNESS AREA

**DENVER**--By the end of 1999, scenic views will return as more than 20,000 tons per year of air pollution is eliminated from northwestern Colorado's Yampa Valley and nearby Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today in Denver.

Public Service Company (PSC) and its partners have agreed to spend some \$145 million on air pollution controls, fines and environmental projects to settle claims involving the Hayden power station in the Yampa Valley, west of Steamboat Springs. The agreement, in the form of a "consent decree," was filed today on EPA's behalf by the U.S. Department of Justice in U.S. District Court in Denver. Once approved, the "global" accord will resolve Sierra Club and EPA claims that the plant violated air pollution limits, obscured visibility and increased acid levels in snow at the wilderness area, situated 19 miles downwind.

The citizen lawsuit filed, in 1993, by the Sierra Club under the Clean Air Act (CAA), coupled with EPA's enforcement action, compelled all parties to reach an acceptable accord within six months of face-to-face negotiations. "The Sierra Club deserves a lion's share of the credit," remarked EPA's Acting Regional Administrator Patricia D. Hull. "This local interest group set everything in motion when it took action to halt environmental damage at Mount Zirkel. The successful outcome hinged on their involvement throughout the process."

The settlement requires new air pollution control devices at the plant to reduce particulate, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions. The utilities agreed to install the equipment, estimated to

cost about \$140 million, by the end of 1999. Once installed, the pollution controls will cut Hayden's SO<sub>2</sub> emissions about 85 percent, or 14 thousand tons per year, and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions nearly 50 percent, or 7 thousand tons per year.

The utilities will also pay a \$2 million cash penalty and undertake projects that benefit the local environment. The penalty is the largest CAA civil penalty in the history of EPA's six-state region. It is not tax deductible, nor can it be passed on to consumers through a rate hike. PSC and its partners also agreed to spend \$2,250,000 on beneficial environmental projects in the Yampa Valley.

"This type of agreement makes sense," Hull added. "The parties saved themselves and taxpayers money by negotiating rather than continuing to litigate. All sides compromised and reached a settlement that ensures improved air quality in the Yampa Valley and nearby Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area."

PSC purchased its interest in the Hayden Station from the now-defunct Colorado Ute Electric Association in 1992. Public Service Company is one of three owners of the coal-fired power plant and also manages its operations. The other owners, also named in the consent decree, are Salt River Project of Arizona and Pacificorp of Oregon. EPA has warned all the partners on several occasions that the plant caused serious environmental problems.

Hayden is one of the most profitable power plants in the country, largely because it currently has few pollution controls that are now standard for the industry. The facility has no emissions control equipment to contain SO<sub>2</sub> or NO<sub>x</sub> and ineffective controls for small particulate pollution. Yearly emissions from the plant include about 16 thousand tons of SO<sub>2</sub> and 14 thousand tons of NO<sub>x</sub>.

Excessive SO<sub>2</sub> emissions have diminished visibility in the pristine wilderness area. Meanwhile, high SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions have led to the highest snow-pack acid levels ever recorded in the west. The acid snow can cause severe environmental damage to the fragile Mount Zirkel ecosystem.

"This agreement is great news for the people of Colorado," said Lois J. Schiffer, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "It brings the utilities into compliance and says very clearly that it does not pay to violate environmental laws."

In 1993, the Sierra Club sued the utilities claiming 19,727 opacity violations at the Hayden plant from 1988 to 1993. A U.S. District Court ruled in the Sierra Club's favor on July 21, 1995. Earlier this year, EPA issued a violation notice to the utilities to include an additional 10,234 violations that occurred after the Sierra Club's lawsuit.

Without admitting to the federal allegations, the utilities agreed to pay the penalty and comply with applicable laws in the future. Once the consent decree is lodged, a notice is published in the Federal Register. This begins a 30-day period when the public can comment on the agreement. If that process

does not alter the settlement, it can be accepted by the Court.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]





United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## Letters

### **The Denver Post**

PO Box 1709  
Denver, CO 80201  
(letters@denverpost.com)

Editor:

December 3, 1992, the Summitville Consolidated Mining Company was responsible for the Summitville mine. But they declared bankruptcy and walked away. The next day, the State of Colorado asked EPA emergency people to respond to the site and by Dec. 10, the mine and its 170 million gallons of cyanide- and metals-contaminated water was EPA's responsibility.

We may not have done everything perfectly since then but we've done far better than portrayed by Perspective Editor Al Knight (April 28).

Knight agreed that the heap-leach pad at the mine was within 5 feet of overflowing and that EPA moved quickly and appropriately to head off the threat of a dam failure. We used "Superfund's" emergency authorities because they allow us to move quickly and the *Post* saluted that approach. Knight argues EPA should have abandoned its emergency approach once the initial crisis was headed off, treating Summitville like other Superfund "remedial" projects. The public comment and review periods that Knight suggested for mining interests to second-guess EPA actions are the very things that slow down cleanups and raise their costs (for which Knight usually berates EPA). And we did follow our own rules and procedures for an emergency response.

Curiously, Robert M. Friedland whom Knight interviewed in an accompanying article, cited miscalculations by mining engineers as the "critical factor that turned the (mining) project sour."

Given that and Knight's mention that 400 miles of Colorado rivers have allegedly been damaged by mining, it makes one wonder why EPA should slow its response at the site to wait to hear from mining interests.

Knight faults us for not meeting stream standards in the water that we release from pumping and treatment, which seems a bit like telling firefighters to extinguish your housefire without getting your furniture wet. There is no permanent solution at Summitville yet. We will put out the highest quality water we can but our real mission is to solve a contamination problem not of our making.

States classify streams based on the uses they intend that water to serve. A Class 1 fishery doesn't mean there are large numbers of fish there but rather the water is of high enough quality to support, in this case, trout. The State could lower standards on the Alamosa River this November which could have had some beneficial effect on Summitville. We are not in a position to conclude that stream standards were the only reason for the mining company failure.

Cleanups of the magnitude of Summitville **are** costly. There were 170 to 200 million gallons of contaminated water to treat in a heap leach pile 12 stories and 44 acres in surface area. And Superfund doesn't allow EPA to recover its costs from those responsible for pollution at abandoned waste sites, it **requires it**. Agency spending is closely watched by our own auditors, our inspector general, Congressional committees and our Administrator Carol Browner in Washington who has pledged this Agency to faster, fairer and more effective handling of Superfund across the board. We have abundant incentive to control costs but, again, the solution is the primary mission on these sites.

In an Agency that has been downsizing and operating under temporary budgets with 25 to 34 percent cuts for more than six months, I don't know anyone whose spirits are lifted by the "stronger and more expensive regulation," Knight alluded to.

Let's remember: EPA didn't bring you Summitville; it's only working to correct it.

Jack McGraw,  
Acting Regional Administrator

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 1996

---

**DENVER**--Amoco Oil Company will pay a \$404,000 penalty to settle several alleged environmental violations at its now closed refinery in Casper, WY, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Denver office announced today.

The most serious offense occurred when Amoco allegedly violated the nation's Clean Water Act during its refining operations. EPA charged that between July 1990 and December 1992, the company mixed ground water with wastewater and sent the mixture to Casper's sewage treatment facility. The combination of materials posed a hazard to local water resources and threatened sewage treatment operations.

The agreement also covers additional charges concerning national hazardous waste laws. EPA contends the company failed to: store caustic materials properly, build a backup containment system or suitably inspect its equipment. The agency further maintains Amoco did not appropriately inform EPA about a sulfuric acid spill that took place in 1990.

Without admitting to the allegations, Amoco agreed to pay the fine and comply with all applicable laws in the future.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comments](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 18, 1996

---

**DENVER, CO--**William Yellowtail, EPA's Regional Administrator in Denver since January 1994, today resigned his post to run for Montana's lone Congressional seat being vacated by the retiring Rep. Pat Williams (D-Montana).

Yellowtail, 48, is Crow Indian and a native of Montana. A Democrat, he served in the Montana State Senate from 1984 to 1993.

President Clinton named Yellowtail to the post in October 1993 and he took over the leadership of the Region 8 office in January 1994. Its 549 employees carry out federal environmental programs dealing with air, water and land in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

Yellowtail was recently quoted as saying, "the environment is under serious assault in Washington and, for now, that may be the more important struggle," a reference to EPA's continuing budget woes that have seen the Agency shut down twice since last December. Halfway through the fiscal year, EPA still has no budget and is funded through limited stop-gap measures called continuing resolutions.

Jack W. McGraw, 52, a career civil servant and the Deputy Regional Administrator since September 1988, will serve in an acting capacity until Yellowtail's replacement is appointed.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## **Environmental Fact Sheet**

### **RELEASE AT WILL**

February 29, 1996

---

## **STATUS UPDATE AND Q/As**

### **TRAIN DERAILMENT NEAR RED CLIFF**

Hazardous materials clean up continues at the site where a Southern Pacific freight train derailed early Wednesday, February 21, on Tennessee Pass toward Minturn. When 32 cars of the 82-car train derailed along U.S. 24 north of Leadville, four of the six cars containing sulfuric acid ruptured spilling about 54,000 gallons of sulfuric acid down an embankment and across the two-lane highway. The local water district is monitoring the Eagle River for possible contamination, but so far water tests show no pollution in the river or other water sources.

#### **Who are involved in responding to the accident?**

Emergency response personnel have been dispatched from the following organizations: Southern Pacific Railroad, Colorado State Patrol, Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Vail Fire Department, Eagle and Lake County, National Transportation and Safety Board, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other local emergency teams.

#### **What is EPA's role?**

Southern Pacific Railroad has assumed responsibility for the cleanup. EPA's Denver based regional office has two on-scene coordinators at the site to provide hazardous materials teams with technical assistance for containment, clean up and removal of the toxic chemicals. EPA also will oversee the emergency response and assess environmental impacts that may result

## **How serious was the spill and what amounts of chemicals were released?**

Four cars containing sulfuric acid reportedly were damaged and spilling about 54,000 gallons of the corrosive chemical. Two other cars containing the same material did not spill. Hazardous materials teams have stopped the leaking sulfuric acid and are draining remaining acid in the two other tank cars. Salvage crews have secured the cars to prevent any further substance leaks. A small, but unknown, quantity of diesel fuel spilled, but was contained. Triethylene glycol, an antifreeze, also spilled from the tank cars; however, railcars containing silica tetrachloride, naphtha (coal tar) and silicone chloride did not leak.

## **What are the hazards associated with sulfuric acid?**

It's an extremely corrosive, oily, dense liquid. It is dangerous and can burn the skin and irritate nasal passage lining. It is an acid commonly used by industry in petroleum refinement and to produce textiles, fertilizer, car batteries, pigments, iron, paper, detergents, paint and explosives.

The chemical reacts violently with water and spattering may occur. Exposure to fumes can damage a person's eyes, mouth, throat, lungs and nasal mucus membranes. Symptoms of exposure include burning and watering eyes, runny nose, phlegm, coughing and difficulty breathing. Direct contact with skin can result in severe burning and even death.

## **What was the environmental/wildlife impact of the chemical spill?**

Environmental damage from the wreck may be less than originally feared. The sulfuric acid may have blackened 5 to 6 acres of nearby trees and vegetation. However, the affects on fish and wildlife may be diminished because the acid pooled in beaver ponds and drainage ditches near the highway.

## **How has the air and water quality been effected?**

EPA's preliminary air and water testing show the spill was contained to an area about 1,000 yards from the derailment. The acid cloud near the wreck has long since dissipated and water tests show no evidence of acid in the nearby Eagle River.

## **Were people hurt?**

The accident killed two train crew members and injured another. Several motorists were treated for exposure to the fumes.

## **Do the chemicals pose any current danger?**

The surrounding area is safe and individuals are not at risk of exposure to any of the chemicals; however, authorities are still keeping people away from the accident site until all materials are unloaded from the damaged cars.

## **How much of the area is still evacuated?**

The area is no longer under evacuation. Nearby residents can return to their homes and businesses can now reopen. **Officials reopened the highway (U.S. 24) Sunday, February 24th** and salvage crews have laid new track to remove the rail cars and resume rail traffic. Originally, a 1.5 mile area was secured, which caused the evacuation of some nearby residents and one business.

## **When and how will the cleanup be done?**

Now that the spill is contained, crews are in the process of stabilizing and unloading the railcars, cleaning the area and removing hazardous materials. Crews are using magnesium hydroxide to neutralize the sulfuric acid, "vacuum recovery" devices to remove the neutralized acid and front- end loaders to scrape up contaminated soil and waste. Cleanup crews already have removed contaminated soil from the ditches and the railroad is devising plans to monitor damage and restore the land.

## **Who is responsible and what caused the accident?**

As is the case with all incidents of this type, the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating possible causes and will ultimately determine what or who was responsible for the derailment.

## **How will the chemicals react with the snow pack and what about the spring runoff?**

Melting snow will dilute the acid concentration; however, spring runoff could spread acid that remains in the snow pack. Presently, authorities do not know how far the acid migrated. Clean up crews have contained and neutralized most of the spilled acid, yet some may have collected in the inaccessible surrounding area. Complete clean up may not be possible until the snow pack melts enough to allow access to all the affected terrain.



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency  
Region 8

Office of Communication and  
Public Involvement (OCPI)  
999 18th Street, Ste. 500  
Denver, CO 80202-2466

Colorado, Montana,  
North Dakota, South  
Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 1996

---

**DENVER**--Smoke from Public Service Company's (PSCo) Hayden Station power plant, in the Yampa Valley, violates air pollution limits and may harm air quality in the Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Denver office announced today.

In a "notice of violation" (NOV) EPA charged that the Hayden power plant, near Steamboat Springs, violated Clean Air Act (CAA) opacity rules more than 10,000 times since July 1993. The violations concern pollutants from the plant's smoke stacks that are pumped into the air. Other pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide, in the plant's emissions may be contributing to high acid levels in snow pack and obscuring visibility in the pristine Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area located 19 miles downwind of the plant.

EPA wants acceptable emission controls installed at the Hayden power plant and faulty equipment replaced to remedy the alleged opacity problems. Currently, PSCo, the State of Colorado, the Sierra Club and EPA are attempting to resolve the acid snow and visibility issues in the nearby wilderness area. EPA officials encourage continued efforts aimed at protecting Mount Zirkel's air quality.

State and federal laws prohibit Hayden's emissions from exceeding 20 percent opacity levels. By measuring opacity, visible air pollution emissions from a facility's smokestacks, EPA and the State can verify if air pollution control equipment is working properly.

The Hayden Station, a coal-fired power generator, is one of the most profitable in the country, largely because it has few pollution controls that are now standard for utility operators. Before PSCo purchased the plant in 1992, EPA warned that improved pollution controls were needed because existing devices were inadequate or unreliable.

PSCo decided to purchase and operate the plant without correcting existing pollution problems. While



increasing the company's profit margin, not installing needed pollution controls has given Public Service an unfair economic advantage over competitors that operate utilities according to state and federal emissions standards.

Problems similar to those at Hayden occurred at PSCo's Comanche and Pawnee Stations. The company settled these actions with EPA and the State in 1992 by paying \$600,000 in fines and installing necessary pollution controls. At the time of settlement, EPA warned PSCo that it was concerned with similar conditions at the Hayden Station.

Company officials claim installing necessary pollution equipment would force the plant to either close or dramatically raise utility rates for customers served by the plant. Yet, no EPA Region 8 enforcement action has ever caused a large utility to shut down a power plant. Moreover, the Public Utilities Commission sets utility rates, not Public Service Company.

Hayden was purchased by Public Service from the now-defunct Colorado Ute Electric Association in 1992. PSCo is an owner/operator of the plant. Other owners also named in the NOV are Salt River Project of Arizona and Pacificorp of Oregon.

The CAA provides for fines of up to \$25,000 per violation, per day. Each instance that the Hayden plant exceeded the opacity limit counts as a separate violation. Within 30 days after issuing the NOV, EPA may order compliance and/or seek an administrative or civil penalty. After receipt of the NOV PSCo has 10 days to request a meeting with EPA to provide evidence that disputes the allegations. The company also may show how it has or will comply with opacity rules.

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [News and Info](#) | [Comment](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]



## Region 8 - Mountains & Plains

Serving Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming and 27 Tribal Nations

[Contact Us](#) | [A-Z Index](#) | [Print Version](#) Search:

[EPA Home](#) > Region 8

News Releases  
Browse EPA Topics  
Information  
Resources  
FOIA - Freedom of Information Act  
About EPA Region 8  
Laws & Enforcement  
Community Resources  
Industry & Agriculture  
State, Local & Tribal  
Grants & Funding  
A to Z Index



### Regional Activities and Information

#### EPA announces \$73.1 million in national brownfields grants in 37 states and seven tribal communities

Please see <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/news/pr062003.htm> for more information. A total of \$3 million was awarded to states and tribes within Region 8. Visit the [list of brownfields grants awarded by EPA Region](#).

#### National Consumer Awareness Campaign Launched on Vermiculite Insulation Used in Some Home Attics

The EPA and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) have launched a national consumer awareness campaign to provide homeowners with important information on vermiculite attic insulation, which may contain asbestos. [View the entire article](#).

#### Watershed group to receive \$600,000 to restore and protect land damaged by the Hayman fire

Assistant Regional Administrator Max Dodson presented a plaque to the Coalition for the Upper South Platte Sunday June 8th in Lake George, CO as the first anniversary of the Hayman fire was observed. The group was selected for an [EPA National Watershed Initiative](#)



grant through a competitive national process. The money will be used to rehabilitate fire-damaged areas that are impacting water quality, and to protect and restore streams that are still relatively pristine.

#### Whitman, proud of accomplishments as she prepares to return home to New Jersey, resigns as

#### Key Topics -

[Air](#), [Brownfields](#), [Conservation](#), [Pesticides](#), [Superfund](#), [Toxics](#), [Waste](#), [Water](#)

#### News Releases

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and Colorado toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and North Dakota toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and Utah toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and South Dakota toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and Wyoming toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/30/2003 - EPA issues National and Montana toxic chemical release report for 2001](#)

[06/26/2003 - EPA offers share of \\$5 million grant for clean school bus programs - Application deadline August 1](#)

[06/12/2003 - Great Plains Restoration Council earns 2003 Friend of the EPA Award](#)

## Administrator of EPA, effective June 27, 2003

Washington, D.C. (May 21, 2003) — Yesterday afternoon, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman met with President Bush at the White House and tendered her resignation as Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, effective June 27, 2003. [Read the text of Administrator Whitman's resignation letter](#)

## Notice of request for initial proposals to be funded from the indoor air quality (IAQ) allocation

The EPA is soliciting Initial Proposals for the following IAQ areas: to implement EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools Program, to support environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) education and to implement asthma education and awareness projects. Proposals must be **postmarked by June 27, 2003**. [View the Notice of Request in its entirety](#).

## Air Quality Standards - State Implementation Plans (SIPs)

[EPA-approved SIP regulations for Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming are now available](#). State SIPs assure that the [National Ambient Air Quality Standards \(NAAQS\)](#) are protected. EPA-approved standards for Utah will be available in the future.

[06/11/2003 - Oglala Sioux Tribe environmental director earns EPA 2003 Frank DeCouteau Award](#)

[06/09/2003 - Conservation District director earns EPA Environmental Achievement Award](#)

[06/09/2003 - Littleton Public School District to receive EPA Environmental Achievement Award](#)

[06/05/2003 - EPA cites five Colorado growers for failing to comply with agricultural worker protection regulation](#)

[06/05/2003 - EPA orders Rico mining company to pay for pollution cleanup](#)

[06/04/2003 - EPA's role in Double Cabin water shutdown](#)

[06/03/2003 - EPA applauds companies for voluntary cleanup in Commerce City](#)

[05/29/2003 - EPA applauds 147 companies for voluntary cleanup of abandoned Commerce City facility](#)

[05/29/2003 - EPA holds public meetings on the new proposed cleanup plan for the Vasquez Blvd. and I-70 Superfund site](#)

[- All Releases -](#)

[EPA Home](#) | [Privacy and Security Notice](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Search EPA](#)

Last updated on undefined, undefined NaNth, NaN

Please Wait.....

[Click here](#) if you are not automatically redirected.

# 1997 Region 8 Press Releases

## December

- 12/23/97 [School Saves Money and Cut Pollution](#)
- 12/23/97 [Denver Businesses Cut Electrical Costs](#)
- 12/22/97 [Comment Needed for Pallas Yard Site](#)
- 12/22/97 [Tank Deadline: One Year Away](#)
- 12/12/97 [EPA/BIA Agreement Aim: Fix Underground Tanks](#)

## November

- 11/25/97 [EPA Charges Phillips Petroleum Refinery With Pollution Violations](#)

## October

- 10/31/97 [Bull Oil Cleanup on the 1st Week of November](#)
- 10/27/97 [Lowry Landfill in Colorado](#)
- 10/15/97 [EJ Pollution Prevention 1997 Award Summaries](#)
- 10/15/97 [EJ Small Grants 1997 Award Summaries](#)
- 10/09/97 [Stop Work Order on F.E. Warren Air Force Base](#)
- 10/02/97 [Letter-to-editor on Colorado School of Mines](#)
- 10/01/97 [White House Conference on Climate Change via Satellite at University of Colorado in Boulder](#)
- 10/01/97 [White House Conference on Climate Change via Satellite at University of Utah](#)

## September 1997

- [Environmental Justice: A Community Discussion](#)
- [Fort Lupton Award](#)
- [Plum Creek Manufacturing Pays Penalties](#)
- [EPCRA Training in Denver](#)
- [Colorado EE Grants](#)
- [Montana EE Grants](#)
- [Utah EE Grants](#)
- [Wyoming EE Grants](#)
- [Central Davis County Sewer District Award](#)
- [Freeman Wastewater Treatment Plant Award](#)

## August 1997

- [Metro Wastewater Reclamation District Award](#)
- [Devils Lake Basin Grant](#)

[Bismarck Award](#)

[EPA Grant to Fund Colorado "Recycling Incubator"](#)

[Event to Mark Recycling Grant](#)

[Brownfields Grants Awarded](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -Colorado](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -Montana](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -North Dakota](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -South Dakota](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -Utah](#)

[Region 8 Environmental Awards -Wyoming](#)

[Yellowtail Reappointed Regional Administrator in Denver](#)

[Colorado, U.S. sue Denver's Power Engineering Company](#)

## **July 1997**

[Industrial Chrome Plating Building Removal](#)

[EPA Files RCRA Complaint v. Envirocare over alleged 1995 violations](#)

[Automotive Wastes in Grantsville, Utah](#)

## **June 1997**

[No Evidence of Radioactive Waste From Rocky Flats Was Taken to Lowry Landfill](#)

[Pick Up of Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Wastes Ends Sunday June 15](#)

[Envirocare Inspection Begins Today](#)

## **May 1997**

[Town Meeting in Casper](#)

[Canon City High School Gets Environmental Award](#)

[Public Service Announcement - Fuel Oil Removal and Cleanup](#)

[EPA Will Provide Oil Removal Materials To Flood Victims](#)

[Englewood, CO Receives Brownfields Grants](#)

[Ogden, UT Receives Brownfields Grants](#)

[Toxic Releases for Colorado](#)

[Toxic Releases for Montana](#)

[Toxic Releases for North Dakota](#)

[Toxic Releases for South Dakota](#)

[Toxic Releases for Utah](#)

[Toxic Releases for Wyoming](#)

[Q/As About TRI](#)

[Utah Toxic Chemical Reporting Workshop](#)

[Colorado Toxic Chemical Reporting Workshop](#)

## **April 1997**

[EPA Celebrates Successful Cleanup](#)

[Collection For Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Wastes Opens in Wahpeton](#)

[Public Service Announcement - Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off and Collections Scheduled](#)

[Disposal of Flood-Damaged Household, Retail and Wholesale Hazardous Materials](#)

[Pick Up of Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Wastes Begins Today in Grand Forks](#)

[Public Service Announcement - Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Waste Pick Up Available](#)

[Public Service Announcement - Cleaning Up Flood-Damaged Household Hazardous Waste](#)

[Superfund Innovative Technology Evaluation \(SITE\)](#)

[Remedial Designs For Lowry Landfill](#)

### **March 1997**

[Conoco Faces Hazardous Waste Charges](#)

[EPA Cites Platte Chemical Waste Violations](#)

[Proposed Cleanup Plans for Lowry Landfill Superfund Site](#)

[Creating Partners in Revitalization](#)

[Environmental Institute for Teachers](#)

[EPA Approves State's Plan For Particle Air Pollution](#)

[EPA to Phillips Petroleum: Cut Refinery Air Emissions](#)

### **February 1997**

[EPA Approves State's Air Pollution Plan](#)

### **January 1997**

[Environmental Justice Grant Funds Available](#)

[Public Hearing Set for Proposed New Air Standards](#)

[Companies Save By Self-Auditing](#)

[Public Health Effects of Ozone and Fine Particle Pollution](#)

[Scientific Review Process for Proposed Air Quality Standards](#)

[EPA Proposes New Air Standards For Particulate Matter and Ozone Pollution Emissions](#)

[Enforcement Action Against Denver Radiator Co.](#)

[Top of Page](#)

---

[ [EPA R8 Homepage](#) | [Region 8 News & Information](#) | [1996 Region 8 Press Releases](#) | [EPA Headquarters News & Events](#) | [Comments](#) | [Search EPA](#) ]

---

**URL: <http://www.epa.gov/region08/news/news97.html>**



Last Update: December 1997



- EPA Newsroom
- Browse EPA Topics
- Laws, Regulations & Dockets
- Where You Live
- Information Sources
- Educational Resources
- About EPA
- Programs
- Business Opportunities
- Jobs
- Recursos en Español



## U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

# EPA Newsroom

[Recent Additions](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Print Version](#)    Search:  
[Advanced Search](#)

[EPA Home](#) > [EPA Newsroom](#)

**This page has moved. The EPA Newsroom is now located at:**

**<http://www.epa.gov/newsroom/>**

This page originally created: Monday, February 3, 2003





## Region 8 - Mountains & Plains

Serving Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming and 27 Tribal Nations

[Contact Us](#) | [A-Z Index](#) | [Print Version](#)    Search:

[EPA Home](#) > Region 8

### Contact Us

- Get help finding information
- Report an error
- Submit a comment on how we can improve the web site

#### By Phone:

303-312-6312

800-227-8917 (Region 8 states only)

#### or Use the **FEEDBACK FORM** below:

Your Name:

E-Mail Address:

Organization:

Comments:

Please note that we try to respond to all comments. However, students, please do not ask us to do your homework or rely on a rapid response to a specific question for use in a school project. We cannot guarantee we will respond within a certain amount of time.

- News Releases
- Browse EPA Topics
- Information Resources
- FOIA - Freedom of Information Act
- About EPA Region 8
- Laws & Enforcement
- Community Resources
- Industry & Agriculture
- State, Local & Tribal
- Grants & Funding
- A to Z Index



---

[EPA Home](#) | [Privacy and Security Notice](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Search EPA](#)

Last updated on undefined, undefined NaNth, NaN