

March 27, 2000

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Principles of Scientific Integrity

TO: All EPA Employees

In order for EPA to be an effective and efficient leader, and to uphold its mission of protecting human health and the environment, we must have the American public's trust and confidence that our scientific and technical activities are credible and of the highest quality. The National Partnership Council (NPC), comprised of both management and union officials representing Agency employees, took the lead to address this concern and developed the attached Principles of Scientific Integrity. This document affirms the responsibilities of EPA employees with respect to work production integrity, collegial respect and ethical practices.

Principles of Scientific Integrity is a tool that the EPA community can use to increase the American public's trust and confidence in the integrity of EPA's activities and decision-making processes.

Carol M. Browner

Attachment

November 24, 1999

Principles of Scientific Integrity

It is essential that EPA's scientific and technical activities be of the highest quality and credibility if EPA is to carry out its responsibilities to protect human health and the environment. Honesty and integrity in its activities and decision-making processes are vital if the American public is to have trust and confidence in EPA's decisions. EPA adheres to these Principles of Scientific Integrity.

EPA employees, whatever their grade, job or duties, must:

Ensure that their work is of the highest integrity - this means that the work must be performed objectively and without predetermined outcomes using the most appropriate techniques. Employees are responsible and accountable for the integrity and validity of their own work. Fabrication or falsification of work results are direct assaults on the integrity of EPA and will not be tolerated.

Represent their own work fairly and accurately. When representing the work of others, employees must seek to understand the results and the implications of this work and also represent it fairly and accurately.

Respect and acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others in representing their work to the public or in published writings such as journal articles or technical reports. To do otherwise is plagiarism. Employees should also refrain from taking credit for work with which they were not materially involved.

Avoid financial conflicts of interest and ensure impartiality in the performance of their duties by respecting and adhering to the principles of ethical conduct and implementing standards contained in Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch and in supplemental agency regulations.

Be cognizant of and understand the specific, programmatic statutes that guide the employee's work.

Accept the affirmative responsibility to report any breach of these principles.

Welcome differing views and opinions on scientific and technical matters as a legitimate and necessary part of the process to provide the best possible information to regulatory and policy decision-makers.

Adherence by all EPA employees to these principles will assure the American people that they can have confidence and trust in EPA's work and in its decisions.