

# **U.S. EPA Administrator Jackson Takes New Steps to Improve Water Quality**

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(WASHINGTON – July 6, 2009) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has made available comprehensive reports and data on water enforcement in all 50 states. This is part of Administrator Lisa P. Jackson's larger effort by to enhance transparency, promote the public's right to know about water quality and provide information on EPA's actions to protect water under the Clean Water Act.

In a memorandum issued last Thursday, Administrator Jackson directed EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) to develop an action plan to enhance public transparency regarding clean water enforcement. In the memo, she also calls for stronger enforcement performance at federal and state levels and a transformation of EPA's water quality and compliance information systems.

In keeping with this directive, EPA has posted detailed information on the current state of clean water compliance and enforcement in each state, and copies of the latest clean water enforcement and compliance performance reports for each state to the agency's Web site. EPA also launched new Web-based tools to help the public search, assess, and analyze the data the agency used to help prepare those reports.

These actions are among of several aggressive steps taken by Administrator Jackson to improve the nation's water quality by increasing the transparency and effectiveness of the agency's national Clean Water Act enforcement program.

The administrator's memo directed the agency to take several actions, including:

- Improve and enhance the information available on the EPA website on compliance and enforcement activities in each state, showing connections to local water quality where possible;
- Provide information in a user-friendly format form that is easily understood and useable by the public;
- Raise the bar for clean water enforcement performance and ensure enforcement is taken against serious violations that threaten water quality; and
- Improve EPA's enforcement performance in states where EPA directly implements the clean water program.

Administrator Jackson directed OECA to work with EPA's Office of Water and to consult closely with EPA's 10 regional offices and the states on the action plan. After obtaining input from other stakeholders, the assistant administrator of OECA, Cynthia Giles, will report back to Administrator Jackson in 90 days with recommendations.

More information on the state-by-state reports:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/state/srf/index.html>

More information on EPA and state enforcement data:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/data/results/performance/cwa/index.html>

Copy of the administrator's memorandum:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/data/results/performance/cwa/jackson-ltr-cwa-enf.html>