

Memorandum of Agreement

SUBJECT: Allocation of Roles in Risk Assessment, Risk Communication and Risk Management for the Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Health and Department of Environmental Quality

PURPOSE

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Health (DOH) and Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are responsible for providing the people of Idaho an effective process wherein human health risks are determined and responsibly managed.

DOH and DEQ work for the common interest of the people of Idaho and have separate as well as intertwined responsibilities.

DOH and DEQ need a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities when dealing with risk to human health from environmental contaminants as well as a clear mechanism to notify and engage each other in their respective agency activities.

By working together, DOH and DEQ can combine their expertise in a synergistic manner that improves the services provided to the citizens of Idaho for protection of human health from environmental contaminants.

Therefore, a written interdepartmental agreement defining respective roles and opportunities for collaboration in risk assessment, risk communication and risk management is essential.

SCOPE

This memorandum covers DEQ and DOH activities as they relate to risk to human health from environmental contaminants and potential impact on public health.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Nothing in this MOA limits, expands or in any way affects the authorities and responsibilities of the parties. This MOA is not intended to create any rights or liabilities with respect to any third party not a signatory hereto.

Risk assessment, risk communication and risk management are separate activities. These activities should be coordinated between DEQ and DOH. This is the best way to assure objective and responsible health decision making with respect to the impact of environmental contaminants on public health.

DOH has primary responsibility in determining what constitutes a threat to human health, the potential risk that threat may pose, and for communicating such risk to the public.

DOH and DEQ share the responsibility for risk communication with respect to the impact of environmental contamination on human health.

DEQ has primary responsibility for risk management. DEQ also has primary responsibility to manage activities involving developing, issuing, evaluating and monitoring environmental permits and other regulatory activities as required by law for sources of environmental pollution as well as identifying situations and activities where protective standards are needed or exceeded. DEQ also has varying responsibilities for human health risk evaluation activities based upon regulatory programs.

DEQ and DOH commit in this agreement to collaborate on activities related to risk assessment, risk communication and risk management in a manner that optimizes staff expertise and regulatory responsibilities.

In some cases, such as required by statute, DEQ or DOH may complete activities typically under the other agency's purview and without notification to the other agency.

FUNCTIONAL COMPONENTS

The functional unit within DOH that has responsibility for the assessment and communication of human health risk assessment associated with environmental contaminants is the Bureau of Environmental Health and Safety. The Waste Management and Remediation Division, the Air Quality Division, and Water Quality Division of DEQ all have varying responsibilities for human health risk assessment, risk communication, and risk management for environmental contaminants.

Activities associated with risk may have both shared and overlapping responsibilities between the two agencies. At the earliest opportunity, DOH and DEQ will inform one another of any situation where human health risk from environmental contaminants is of concern and changes in status relating to such situations. DOH and DEQ will maintain regular contact as appropriate for ongoing activities.

DEQ and DOH will meet on an annual basis for the purpose of identifying projects and issues that will require close collaboration. DEQ and DOH will also identify individual activities that may be of interest to the other agency. DEQ and DOH will then identify areas of collaboration and lead and support agency roles based upon resource availability and roles as defined in this agreement.

Risk Assessment

For issues such as environmental monitoring, modeling, permitting, and remediation, DEQ has primary responsibility and authority to design, implement, and oversee such projects. These activities may involve basic quantitative risk assessment. DOH shall be available to provide consultation, review and comment on such projects when they involve health risks to the public.

DOH and DEQ share responsibilities for pathway analysis. DOH has primary responsibility for determining dose to the human receptor including public health assessments, health consultations, exposure investigations, and health studies. DEQ shall provide consultation, review, and comment on these lead DOH responsibilities.

DOH has primary responsibility for issues such as health impact of dose, risk characterization, hazard quotient or cancer risk. DEQ has primary responsibility for source assessment and contaminant migration in the environment.

Results of each agency's activities should, as a courtesy, be shared with the other agency.

Risk Communication

DOH shall have primary responsibility for either communicating issues pertaining to human health risks or shall be available to review DEQ's statements relating to same prior to those statement's release.

DEQ shall have primary responsibility with DOH consultation, for communicating risks from those usual and customary regulatory activities as required by law for sources of environmental pollution.

Risk Management

DOH provides comment and guidance to policies and decisions where issues of human health risk are concerned.

DEQ is the primary agency for risk management and implements policies that pertain to sources and remedial actions.

This Memorandum of Agreement shall be executed by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Health, and the Department of Environmental Quality, and replaces the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated August 5, 1994. The effective date of this MOA is July 1, 2001, and it shall be reviewed at least every five (5) years or as mutually agreeable by the agencies, and it can be negated upon mutual agreement of both parties.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

/S/
Karl B. Kurtz, Director
Department of Health & Welfare

June 25, 2001
Date

/S/
C. Stephen Allred, Director
Department of Environmental Quality

6/29/01
Date