

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: EPA watchdog calls for better management of chemical safety research tools

By Alex Guillén

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EPA needs to better coordinate its efforts to create computer programs that help researchers study the health risks of chemicals, according to a new report from the agency's inspector general.

EPA's Office of Research and Development helps create "research products" for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, which tests both commercial chemicals under the Toxic Substances Control Act and pesticides under another federal law.

These products "support risk analyses, search for chemical testing data across multiple databases, and compare previous research results to current risk assessments," according to the IG. The report specifically praised a recently developed modeling program for endocrine disruptors.

However, investigators concluded OCSPP needs better "management controls" — a process to ensure it works consistently with the R&D office. The chemicals office also should identify its own priorities for developing new programs.

"Without management controls that ensure consistent interoffice collaboration and assess CSS product needs, OCSPP is at risk of not effectively incorporating products in a way that could rapidly improve how the EPA assesses chemical risks to human health and the environment," the report concludes.

The report says EPA agreed with its recommendations and has taken appropriate action.

EPA on Thursday released a suite of regulations that lay out how the agency will carry out future chemical risk evaluations under the reformed TSCA law. Though the IG's report is not directly connected to that, the research products in question will be used by EPA researchers to evaluate chemical risks.

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