

Amnesty Period Announced

Press Release submitted by Pam Bandy, United Horticultural Supply

The State Emergency Response Commission for Hazardous Materials announces the Florida Emergency Response and Community Right-to-Know Act Fee Amnesty period, Oct. 1, 1996 through Dec. 31, 1996. The Florida Emergency Response and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1988 requires non-governmental facilities subject to the requirements of the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

to pay registration fees due each year on March 1. Facilities are required by the SERC to pay fees for each year subject dating back to the enactment of the state law in 1988.

"This amnesty period will benefit first time self-reporting facilities subject to EPCRA and the state imposed fee requirements," explained Gregg Dawkins, planning manager with the Department of Community Affairs' Hazardous Mate-

Question and answers on the amnesty

1. What is the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA)?

The Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act, passed by Congress in 1986, requires facilities with certain hazardous materials present in amounts exceeding established thresholds to provide facility and chemical specific information to the State Emergency Response Commission and their Local Emergency Planning Committee(s).

2. What is the Fee Amnesty period?

The fee amnesty period is for private companies to have an opportunity to report themselves and not be charged any fines.

3. When will this fee amnesty period be in effect? Is there a grace period after the deadline?

October 1, 1996 through December 31, 1996. This will be the only opportunity for amnesty from prior year fees.

4. Who does this fee amnesty period apply to?

First time self-reporters who are subject to EPCRA but have not complied in prior years.

5. What type of facilities are covered?

Examples of common facilities that would report — cold storage facilities, water/waster water treatment plants, agricultural interests, boat manufacturers, resorts (swimming pools)/amusement parks, auto dealers, gas stations, chemical

manufacturers/suppliers, golf courses, LP gas facilities and hospitals.

6. If my facility has reported in the past will this fee amnesty period apply to us?

No, this amnesty period is for FIRST TIME reporting facilities ONLY.

7. Who's responsibility is it to report a facility during the fee amnesty period?

All reporting will be self-reporting. If your facility has been notified by the SERC in the past, you may not qualify for the amnesty period.

8. What are some examples of chemicals that would trigger reporting?

There are over 500,000 chemicals and mixtures that are covered under EPCRA. Common chemicals reported include chlorine, ammonia, gasoline/diesel, methyl bromide, gramoxone, styrene, nemacur, propane and sulfuric acid.

9. What are the advantages of filing during this fee amnesty period?

Facilities that fall within the guidelines will have all prior annual registration fees waived dating back to 1988.

10. What are the disadvantages of NOT filing during this fee amnesty period?

Facilities that fail to take advantage of this fee amnesty period and are later identified and noticed by SERC will have to pay fees for all years they have been subject to reporting dating back to 1988. For some facilities, this could result in thousands of dollars.

11. Are there other reporting requirements related to EPCRA and the Florida Emergency Response and Community Right-to-Know Act?

Yes, there are other reporting

requirements. Facilities covered under EPCRA are required to submit facility and chemical specific information to the SERC, Local Emergency Planning Committee (s), and local fire departments.

12. Does the fee amnesty period cover additional reporting requirements?

No, the fee amnesty period is for state-required annual registration fees only.

13. Who must pay the annual registration fee?

Every March 1, any private facility subject during the previous calendar year to either Section 302 or Section 312 of Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, EPCRA, must pay the annual registration fee.

14. Who is subject to Section 312?

The owner or operator of any facility that has either of the following:

- 1) any of the EHSs that meet or exceed the TPQ, or 500 pounds, whichever is less; or
- 2) any of the hazardous chemicals that meet or exceed 10,000 pounds for which OSHA requires an MSDS to be maintained.

15. Who can my company contact for additional information and a reporting form?

For additional information contact the Department of Community Affairs' Hazardous Materials Planning Section at (800) 635-7179 or (904) 413-9970 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reporting forms, chemical lists, "How to Comply" manuals and other information about EPCRA are available at no charge.

Facilities that fail to take advantage of this amnesty period and are later identified and noticed by the SERC will be required to pay for fees for all years they have been subject to reporting dating back to 1988

rials Planning Section.

"Facilities that fall within these guidelines will be granted a waiver of past due annual registration fees if the owner or operator reports between Oct. 1, 1996 and Dec. 31, 1996. The amnesty only covers annual fee obligations for past years and does not exempt a facility from federal reporting obligations for those years."

Dawkins added that facilities that have reported under EPCRA previously or have been notified by the SERC in the past would not qualify for the fee amnesty period. "The amnesty period only applies to owners or operators of facilities who are first-time self-reporters and who have not complied as of Oct. 1, 1996."

EPCRA was passed by Congress in

1986 and requires facilities with hazardous materials present in amount exceeding established thresholds to provide facility and specific chemical information to the SERC, the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the local fire department.

Some examples of common reporting facilities would be cold storage facilities, water/waste water treatment plants, agricultural interests, boat manufacturers, resorts (swimming pools)/amusement parks, auto dealers, gas stations, chemical manufacturers/suppliers, golf course, LP gas facilities and hospitals.

Over 500,000 chemicals and mixtures are covered under EPCRA. Common types of hazardous substances that may be present at a facility would be chlorine,

ammonia,

gasoline/diesel, methyl, bromide, gramoxone, styrene, nemacur, propane and sulfuric acid.

"Facilities that fail to take advantage of this amnesty period and are later identified and noticed by the SERC will be required to pay for fees for all years they have been subject to reporting dating back to 1988," added Dawkins. For some facilities, this could result in thousands of dollars."

For further information or assistance, please call the Department of Community Affairs' Hazardous Materials Compliance Planning Section at (800) 635-7179 or (904) 413-9970.



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