

# Government News Business

EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) is undergoing major reorganization. The revised ORD will consist of four offices: Office of Monitoring and Technical Support; Office of Energy, Minerals and Industry; Office of Air, Land, and Water Use; and Office of Health and Ecological Effects. Each office will be headed by a Deputy Assistant Administrator. The program will be implemented by the 15 ORD laboratories. ORD previously had 24 field laboratories administered by four National Environmental Research Centers. "This new organizational structure streamlines and simplifies program planning and program implementation," said Dr. Wilson K. Talley, assistant administrator for research and development. "One of the key benefits of this realignment...is the shifting of more detailed program management activities to the field and the resultant freeing of headquarters staff to improve coordination both within EPA and with groups external to the agency." The new organization plans to be in full operation by July 1, 1975.

Agrico Chemical Company plans to construct a new ammonia plant at its Verdigris, Oklahoma, fertilizer complex. Construction of the new 425,000 tons-a-year plant is scheduled to start this year and should be in operation in 1977.

A triple damage patent infringement suit against Garden Pro, Inc., a Brownsville, Texas, garden care equipment manufacturer, has been filed by Weed Eaters, Inc. The suit asks triple monetary damages on profits made by Garden Pro as a result of alleged patent infringement and requests the court to provide injunctive relief by preventing Garden Pro from manufacturing and marketing its "Spin Trim" product.

U. S. Department of Labor will hold public hearing beginning June 23 on a proposed standard that would protect workers against excessive workplace noise exposures. OSHA announced the proposed standard on October 24, 1974, requesting public comments no later than December 9, 1974. To accommodate public requests for additional time, the deadlines were later extended to January 22 and then to March 21. Requests to appear at the hearing, to begin June 23, in the Department Auditorium, Constitutional Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets, NW, Washington, D. C., should be submitted to J. Arnoldus, OSHA Committee Management Office, Room 200-MNWA, 1726 M Street, NW, Washington, D. C. 20210.

President Gerald R. Ford recently issued a statement establishing his Administration's intention toward a metric conversion program in the United States. It reads as follows:

"It is important that the United States develop a national plan to direct the voluntary conversion to the metric system as the standard of measurement. Accordingly, my Administration will soon submit the 'Metric Conversion Act of 1975', which will establish a United States Metric Board to plan and coordinate the predominant but not exclusive substitution of metric measurement units for customary measurement units in education, trade, commerce, and all other sectors of the economy. The legislation is designed to encourage efficiency and minimize overall costs.

"The (American) National Metric Council and other similar groups have done much to smooth the way to metric conversion. Such continued efforts will be very important to its final realization."