

## EPA COMPLETES RELATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR TREATED WASTEWATER IN SOUTH FLORIDA

### TODAY'S ACTIONS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or Agency) is issuing two notices in the May 5, 2003, *Federal Register*. The Notice of Availability 68 FR23673 announces the availability of EPA's *Relative Risk Assessment of Management Options for Treated Wastewater in South Florida*. The Notice of Data Availability (NODA) 68 FR23666 summarizes information from the assessment and solicits public comment on how the deep well injection findings should inform the final determination on the July 7, 2000 proposed rule, *Revision to the Federal Underground Injection Control (UIC) Requirements for Class I Municipal Wells in Florida* (65 FR 42234).

### NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

#### The Relative Risk Assessment

The relative risk assessment responds to a Congressional mandate to conduct a relative risk assessment of deep well injection, ocean disposal, surface discharge, and aquifer recharge of treated effluent in South Florida.

Several factors important for determining risk were considered, including:

- What level of treatment and disinfection is provided?
- What stressors remain (after treatment) that may be a concern, both to human health and to ecological health?
- What exposure pathways are (or may be) of significance, both to human health and ecological health?

Option-specific risk assessments were then compared to determine:

- What is the overall estimate of risk, both to human health and ecological health?
- What are the important data or knowledge gaps?

## **NOTICE OF DATA AVAILABILITY (NODA)**

The NODA lists all of the questions that commenters are asked to address, as well as why the Agency thinks these questions are important. Please refer to the NODA for the complete text of the questions.

### **What comments are being requested?**

Based on the information collected for the Relative Risk Assessment on deep well injection, EPA seeks comment on a number of questions, including:

- Should the Agency adopt Florida's requirements for water treatment and high level disinfection for reclaimed water to provide adequate protection of ground water sources and human health where there has been fluid movement into a USDW?
- Should these facilities be granted the opportunity to conduct hydrogeologic demonstrations?
- Have some wells been misclassified as Class I wells?
- Should any of the criteria identified in the proposed rule for allowing continued municipal wastewater injection in South Florida be promulgated in the final rule as new Class V requirements?

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Interested parties can download both the Notice of Availability and NODA electronically through EPA's web site under the "Federal Register" listings at <http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/> and the document at <http://www.epa.gov/region04/water/uic/proposedrule.htm>. For further information about the notices or the proposed rule, contact Nancy H. Marsh, (404) 562-9450, e-mail: [marsh.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:marsh.nancy@epa.gov) or Howard Beard, (202) 564-3874, e-mail: [beard.howard@epa.gov](mailto:beard.howard@epa.gov).

## **HOW CAN THE PUBLIC PROVIDE COMMENTS ON THE DEEP WELL INJECTION INFORMATION?**

\_\_\_EPA will accept public comment on the applicability of the information found in the relative risk assessment for deep well injection. There will be a sixty day comment period. EPA will accept comments until July 7, 2003. Public comments may be sent to: Nancy H. Marsh, U.S. EPA, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303-8960, or by email to [marsh.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:marsh.nancy@epa.gov).