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Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA): U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Lists Updates to Modernize Waste Regulations to Support Economic Growth

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") listed on October 21st what it described as:

... Updates to Modernize Waste Regulations to Support Economic Growth ("Update").

EPA recognizes in the Update the 50th anniversary of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA").

The Update is stated to constitute an initiative to modernize the U.S. waste management program through:

- Permitting reform.
- Use of emerging technologies and novel solutions.
- Acceleration of cleanups to ensure protection of human health and the environment.

RCRA provides EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from cradle-to-grave. This includes the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste.

Subtitle C focuses on hazardous solid waste. Solid waste includes solids, liquids, and gasses and must be discarded to be considered waste. RCRA first identified the criteria for determining which solid wastes are hazardous. They then established various requirements for the three categories of hazardous waste handlers:

- Generators.
- Transporters.
- Treatment, storage, and disposal facilities.

The Subtitle C RCRA regulations also set standards for the design and safe operation of these facilities.

The October 21st Update identifies activities that EPA has undertaken:

- e-Manifest.
- Proposing a date for shifting to 100% electronic manifests in e-Manifest.
- Scrap Tires.

- Proposal would allow permitted facilities to use abandoned scrap tires as fuel and allow established tire collection programs to manage all scrap tires used as fuel in the same way.
- Petitions.
- Proposed to grant, with conditions, U.S. Ecology Nevada, Inc.'s petition for a variance from the ban on land disposal of elemental mercury addressing the stockpiled mercury waste stored at U.S. Department of Energy designated treatment, storage, and disposal facility.
- Approval of Clean Lone Mountain, LLC "no-migration" variance petition to temporarily store treated hazardous waste in a permitted RCRA Subtitle C landfill.
- Approval of the Clean Harbors Grassy Mountain, LLC, petition.
- Permitting.
- Planning a series of virtual engagement sessions to discuss opportunities for improving and streamlining the RCRA Hazardous Waste Permitting Program and gathering input from key parties.
- Additional Actions.
- Request for information on solid waste-846 method updates.
- Accelerating the Pace of Hazardous Waste and Underground Storage Tank Release Site Cleanups.

A copy of the Update can be found [here](#).