

PRESS RELEASE

EPA Releases Proposed Rules for Geologic Sequestration of CO2

July 15, 2008

Today, on a brief conference call, EPA Office of Water Assistant Administrator, Ben Grumbles announced the release of the proposed rules for Geologic Sequestration of CO2. His brief introductory remarks stressed the importance of sequestration as a promising technology in the nation's efforts to help reduce climate change and the Agency's commitment to assure that long term storage is conducted with adequate environmental safeguards to protect underground sources of drinking water. "Extensive" was the word of the day -- used by Mr. Grumbles to describe various aspects of the new program - from well location, to design and construction, from operations to testing and monitoring.

In the question and answer period, limited to members of the press, a few details of the proposed rules were revealed. First, the rules would establish a new class of injection well -- Class VI -- and technical criteria for geologic site characterization. As expected, the proposed rule would establish minimum safeguards for states in meeting Safe Drinking Water Act requirements to protect underground sources of drinking water. Grumbles also stressed that the proposed rules would provide flexibility to allow states discretion to set permitting criteria that are appropriate to the local geology. It was also mentioned that geologic sequestration wells would be required to be over half a mile deep and constructed in a manner that prevents movement into unintended zones.

In response to a question regarding the potential threats from CO2 to underground sources of drinking water, Grumbles stipulated that CO2 is not toxic or radioactive and that the threats to drinking water stem primarily from potential migration of CO2 that could move or carry other contaminants into sources of drinking water.

As to the Agency's regulatory timeline, Grumbles noted that the Agency seeks comments on the proposed rule for 120 days from publication in the *Federal Register* and expects to issue final rules in late 2010 or early 2011.

To find out more information and/or get a copy of the rules visit the EPA website at http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/uic/wells_sequestration.html#regdevelopment

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