UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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EPA Statement Regarding
Endocrine Disruptor Low-Dose Hypothesis

In response to concerns that the standard toxicological testing paradigm may be inadequate for detecting and characterizing the effects of potential endocrine disruptors in the low-dose range, the EPA asked the National Toxicology Program (NTP) to conduct a scientific peer review of information relevant to the low-dose hypothesis. The peer review was held in October 2000 and the final report, which summarized the deliberations of the meeting and included comments from the public, was released by NTP in August 2001. The peer review Panel concluded that there were credible studies supporting a low-dose effect, but that the effects were " ... dependent on the compounds studied and the endpoint measured." The Panel also identified credible studies that did not support a low-dose effect.

EPA believes that additional research is needed to better understand the low-dose hypothesis. An improved understanding of the mechanisms of action by which hormonally-active agents exert their effects will allow EPA to modify testing protocols as necessary to detect potential effects at low doses. The EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) is already conducting intramural and extramural research in this area. In addition, ORD will take into consideration the research recommendations identified in the final report of the EPA/NTP Workshop and will issue a solicitation for research proposals through its Science to Achieve Results (STAR) extramural program. EPA will be monitoring the outputs of ongoing research for applicability to the Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program.

Until there is an improved scientific understanding of the low-dose hypothesis, EPA believes that it would be premature to require routine testing of substances for low-dose effects in the Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program. EPA recognizes that in the future relevant information may become available on specific chemicals. Such information may support testing for low-dose effects on a case-by-case basis.