

## § 10.5

### § 10.5 Investigation, examination, and determination of claims.

The EPA Claims Officer adjusts, determines, compromises and settles all administrative tort claims filed with EPA. In carrying out these functions, the EPA Claims Officer makes such investigations as are necessary for a determination of the validity of the claim. The decision of the EPA Claims Officer is a final agency decision of purposes of 28 U.S.C. 2675.

[51 FR 25832, July 16, 1986]

### § 10.6 Final denial of claim.

(a) Final denial of an administrative claim shall be in writing and sent to the claimant, his attorney, or legal representative by certified or registered mail. The notification of final denial may include a statement of the reasons for the denial and shall include a statement that, if the claimant is dissatisfied with EPA's action, he may file suit in an appropriate U.S. District Court not later than 6 months after the date of mailing of the notification.

(b) Prior to the commencement of suit and prior to the expiration of the 6-month period after the date of mailing by certified or registered mail of notice of final denial of the claim as provided in 28 U.S.C. 2401(b), a claimant, his duly authorized agent, or legal representative, may file a written request with the EPA for reconsideration of a final denial of a claim under paragraph (a) of this section. Upon the timely filing of a request for reconsideration, EPA shall have 6 months from the date of filing in which to make a final disposition of the claim and the claimant's option under 28 U.S.C. 2675(a) to bring suit shall not accrue until 6 months after the filing of a request for reconsideration. Final action on a request for reconsideration shall be effected in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section.

### § 10.7 Payment of approved claim.

(a) Upon allowance of his claim, claimant or his duly authorized agent shall sign the voucher for payment, Standard Form 1145, before payment is made.

(b) When the claimant is represented by an attorney, the voucher for pay-

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ment (SF 1145) shall designate both the claimant and his attorney as "payees." The check shall be delivered to the attorney whose address shall appear on the voucher.

(c) No attorney shall charge fees in excess of 25 percent of a judgment or settlement after litigation, or in excess of 20 percent of administrative settlements (28 U.S.C. 2678).

### § 10.8 Release.

Acceptance by the claimant, his agent or legal representative of any award, compromise or settlement made hereunder, shall be final and conclusive on the claimant, his agent or legal representative and any other person on whose behalf or for whose benefit the claim has been presented, and shall constitute a complete release of all claims against either the United States or any employee of the Government arising out of the same subject matter.

### § 10.9 Penalties.

A person who files a false claim or makes a false or fraudulent statement in a claim against the United States may be liable to a fine of not more than \$10,000 or to imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both (18 U.S.C. 287,1001), and, in addition, to a forfeiture of \$2,000 and a penalty of double the loss or damage sustained by the United States (31 U.S.C. 3729).

[38 FR 16868, June 27, 1973, as amended at 51 FR 25832, July 16, 1986]

### § 10.10 Limitation on Environmental Protection Agency's authority.

(a) An award, compromise or settlement of a claim hereunder in excess of \$25,000 shall be effected only with the prior written approval of the Attorney General or his designee. For the purposes of this paragraph, a principal claim and any derivative or subrogated claim shall be treated as a single claim.

(b) An administrative claim may be adjusted, determined, compromised or settled hereunder only after consultation with the Department of Justice when, in the opinion of the Environmental Protection Agency:

(1) A new precedent or a new point of law is involved; or