Contact Person: Gordon L. Johnson, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4136, MSC 7802, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–01212, monseesd@drg.nih.gov.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Cell Development and Function Initial Review Group Cell Development and Function 6.

Date: June 28–29, 1999.

Time: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Holiday Inn, Select, 480 King Street, Old Town Alexandria, VA 22314.

Contact Person: Anthony D. Carter, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5142, MSC 7840, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–01212.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 28–29, 1999.

Time: 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Washington Monarch Hotel, 2401 M Sreet, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Contact Person: Mushtaq A. Khan, DVM, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4124, MSC 7818, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1778.khanm@drg.nih.gov.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 28, 1999.

Time: 8:30 AM to 4: PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Embassy Suites, Chevy Chase Pavilion, 4300 Military Rd., Wisconsin at Western Ave., Washington, DC 20015.

Contact Person: Eugene Vigil, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5144, MSC 7840, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1025.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 28, 1999.

Time: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: One Washington Circle Hotel, One Washington Circle, N.W., Washington, DC 20037.

Contact Person: Anita Miller Sosteck, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 3176, MSC 7848, Bethesda MD 20892, (301) 435–0910.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Genetic Sciences Initial Review Group Genome Study Section.

Date: June 28–29, 1999.

Time: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Georgetown Inn, 1310 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20007.

Contact Person: Cheryl M. Corsaro, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institute of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 6172, MSC 7890, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1045.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Surgery, Radiology and Bioengineering Initial Review Group Surgery, Anesthesiology and Trauma Study Section.

Date: June 28–29, 1999.

Time: 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Holiday Inn Georgetown, 2101 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20007.

Contact Person: Gerald L. Becker, MD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5114, MSC 7854, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1170.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 28, 1999.

Time: 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: NIH, Rockledge 2, Bethesda, MD 20892, (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Paul K. Strudler, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4100, MSC 7804, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1716.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 28, 1999.

Time: 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: NIH, Rockledge 2, Bethesda, MD 20892, (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Paul K. Strudler, PHD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4100, MSC 7804, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1716.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, Comparative Medicine, 93.306; 93.333, Clinical Research, 93.333, 93.337, 93.393–93.396, 93.837–93.844, 93.846–93.878, 93.892, 93.893, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: June 15, 1999.

LaVerne Y. Stringfield,

Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 99–15733 Filed 6–18–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); Corrositex®: An In Vitro Test Method for Assessing Dermal Corrosivity Potential of Chemicals, Report Now Available

SUMMARY: The report entitled ''Corrositex®: An *In Vitro* Test Method for Assessing Dermal Corrosivity Potential of Chemicals,'' NIH Publication 99–4495, is now available and may be obtained as described in this notice. The report describes the results of an independent peer review evaluation of the validation status of Corrositex® that was conducted on January 21, 1999 **Federal Register** 63 FR 57303, October 27, 1998). Corrositex® was proposed by In Vitro International, Inc., Irvine, CA, as an alternative toxicological test method for assessing the dermal corrosivity potential of chemicals and chemical mixtures. The review was coordinated by the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative methods (ICCVAM) and the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods (NICEATM). The review was sponsored by NIEHS and the NTP.

Background

Pub. L. 103–43 directed NIEHS to develop and validate alternative methods that can reduce or eliminate the use of animals in acute or chronic toxicity testing, establish criteria for the validation and regulatory acceptance of alternative testing methods, and recommend a process through which scientifically validated alternative

methods can be accepted for regulatory use. Criteria and processes for validation and regulatory acceptance were developed in conjunction with 13 other Federal agencies and programs with broad input from the public. These are described in the document ''Validation and Regulatory Acceptance of Toxicological Test Methods: A Report of the Ad Hoc Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods,'' NIH publication 97–3981, March 1997, which is available on the Internet at http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov/htdocs/ICCVAM/iccvam.html. ICCVAM was subsequently established in a collaborative effort by NIEHS and 13 other Federal regulatory and research agencies and programs. The Committee's functions include the coordination of interagency reviews of toxicological test methods and communication with stakeholders throughout the process of test method development and validation. The following Federal regulatory and research agencies and organizations participate in this effort:

Consumer Product Safety Commission
Department of Defense
Department of Energy
Department of Health and Human Services
  Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
  Food and Drug Administration
  National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health/CDC
  National Institutes of Health
  National Cancer Institute
  National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
  National Library of Medicine
Department of the Interior
Department of Labor
  Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Department of Transportation
  Research and Special Programs Administration
Environmental Protection Agency

ICCVAM determined that there was sufficient information available to merit an independent scientific peer review evaluation of the Corrositex® test method. Peer review is an essential prerequisite for consideration of a method for regulatory acceptance. The peer review panel was charged with developing a scientific consensus on the usefulness and limitations of the test method.

Description of the Method

Corrositex® is an *in vitro* method used to determine the dermal corrosive potential of chemicals and chemical mixtures. Corrositex® is based on the ability of a corrosive chemical or chemical mixture to pass through, by diffusion and/or destruction/erosion, a biobarrier and to elicit a color change in the underlying liquid Chemical Detection System (CDS). The biobarrier is composed of a hydrated collagen matrix in a supporting filter membrane, while the CDS is composed of water and pH indicator dyes. Test chemicals and chemical mixtures, including solids and liquids, are applied directly to the biobarrier. The time it takes for a test chemical or chemical mixture to penetrate the biobarrier and produce a color change in the CDS is compared to a classification chart to determine corrosivity/noncorrosivity and to identify the appropriate U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) packing group. Chemicals are prescreened for compatibility with the assay by directly applying the test chemical or chemical mixture to the CDS; if a color change is not induced, then the test chemical or chemical mixture does not qualify for testing with this assay. The U.S. DOT currently accepts the use of Corrositex® to assign subcategories of corrosivity (packing groups) for specific chemical classes for labeling purposes according to United Nations (UN) Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods guidelines.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The peer review panel concluded that for specific testing circumstances such as that required by the U.S. DOT, Corrositex® is useful as a stand-alone assay for evaluating the corrosivity or noncorrosivity of acids, bases, and acid derivatives. In other testing circumstances, and for other chemical and product classes, the peer review panel concluded that Corrositex® may be used as part of a tiered assessment strategy. In this approach, negative responses must be followed by dermal irritation testing, and positive responses require no further testing unless the investigator is concerned about potential false positive responses. The panel recommended that in either testing strategy, an investigator may conclude that confirmation testing is necessary based on consideration of supplemental information, such as pH, structure-activity relationships, and other chemical and/or testing information. These conclusions are based on the assumption that the method will be performed in accordance with the following peer review panel recommendations:

1. The protocol should incorporate the following:

- It should be explicitly stated that the biobarrier should be allowed to harden on a level surface and to cool overnight before use.
- Guidance should be provided on how to evaluate an aberrant value, even though replicate variability has been shown to be very low.
- The IVI Corrositex® Data Sheets provided with the test kit should contain a provision for recording the performance of the positive and negative controls. This information should be used to determine the suitability of the test results.
- Description of the test protocol would benefit from the addition of a flow diagram illustrating the steps in the procedure.

2. In future studies, compliance with Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) guidelines and inclusion of quality control procedures would improve data quality and credibility.

3. Positive and negative control values should be reported concurrently with each assay to demonstrate that the test is working properly.

4. Laboratories unfamiliar with conducting the test should obtain appropriate training and conduct tests with test reference chemicals before undertaking any testing of unknown chemicals and chemical mixtures.

5. Prior to the use of Corrositex®, pH testing should be conducted, given the ease and cost effectiveness of conducting a pH test. Such information could be used in the future to re-evaluate the agreement between pH and Corrositex® in identifying corrosivity.

The peer review panel also concluded that Corrositex® offers advantages with respect to animal welfare considerations. Corrositex®, when used as a stand-alone assay for some testing applications such as transportation purposes, can replace the use of animals for corrosivity testing of qualified chemicals in some chemical classes. When used as part of a tiered testing strategy for corrrosivity, there is a reduction in the number of animals required because positive results usually eliminate the need for animal testing, and when further testing in animals is determined to be necessary, only one animal is required to confirm a corrosive chemical. Corrositex® also provides for refinement in that most of the chemicals that are identified as negative by Corrositex® or nonqualifying in the detection system are unlikely to be corrosive when tested in the in vivo test for irritation potential.

The peer review panel's report was accepted by ICCVAM and has been forwarded to Federal agencies for their determination of the regulatory

acceptability and applicability of the test method according to their statutory mandates.

Obtaining the Report

The full report contains 238 pages and includes the results of the independent peer review evaluation and supporting documentation, including the original test method submission and supporting data evaluations conducted by NICEATM.

To receive a copy of the report, please contact NICEATM at PO Box 12233, MD EC–17, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (mail), 919–541–3398 (phone), 919–541–0947 (fax), or iccvam@niehs.nih.gov (email). The report will also be available on the ICCVAM/NICEATM website at http://iccvam.niehs.hih.gov.

Dated: June 15, 1999.

Samuel H. Wilson,

Deputy Director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

[FR Doc. 99–15725 Filed 6–18–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR–4420–N–03]

RIN 2577–AB89

Public Housing Agency Plan and Section 8 Certificate and Voucher Merger Announcement of Public Forum

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, HUD.

ACTION: Public forums announcement.

SUMMARY: This document announces the (1) exact location of the public forum to be held in Syracuse, New York, on HUD's Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan interim rule that was published on February 18, 1999, and on HUD's Section 8 certificate and voucher merger interim rule (Section 8 merger) that was published on May 14, 1999, and (2) an additional public forum to be held on both rules in Washington, DC. The statute authorizing these two rules requires that before HUD issues final rules on these subjects, HUD will convene at least two public forums for each rule, and specifically seek recommendations from certain organizations and individuals, as specified in the statute.

DATES: June 28, 1999, and July 28, 1999. The exact times for discussion of each rule at these two forums is provided in the Supplementary Information section of this document.

ADDRESSES: The June 28, 1999 public forum will be held at Grant Auditorium, E.I. White Hall, College of Law, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. The July 28, 1999 public forum will be held at HUD Headquarters, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: This information will be posted on the QHWRA page of HUD's website (www.hud.gov/pih/legis/titlev.html). Information also may be obtained by contacting your local HUD office, or by contacting the Office of Policy, Program and Legislative Initiatives, in the Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Room 4116, Washington, DC 20410; telephone (202) 708–0713 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access that number via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at (800) 877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

PHA Plan Interim Rule

Section 511 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (Pub.L. 105–276, 112 Stat. 2461, approved October 21, 1998) (the 1998 Act) added a new section 5A to the United States Housing Act of 1937 (USHA) (42 U.S.C. 1437 *et seq.*). This new section provides for public housing agencies (PHAs) to develop and submit to HUD two plans—a five-year plan and an annual plan on their goals and objectives and current PHA operations. Section 511 also required HUD to publish, within 120 days of enactment of the statute, an interim rule implementing the requirements of the PHA plans and the submission process. HUD published its interim rule on February 18, 1999 (64 FR 8170) (the PHA Plan rule). The PHA Plan rule provided a 60-day public comment period which closed on April 19, 1999.

Section 511 also requires that before HUD issues its final PHA Plan rule, HUD will seek recommendations on implementation of the PHA plans from organizations representing:

(1) State or local public housing agencies;
(2) Residents, including resident management corporations;
(3) Other appropriate parties.

Section 511 also requires HUD to convene not less than two public forums at which the person or organization making recommendations may express their views concerning the proposed disposition of their recommendations.

Through its February 18, 1999 interim rule, HUD specifically sought recommendations from these categories of organizations (see 64 FR 8170, middle column), and again seeks their recommendations through this document.

Section 8 Certificate and Voucher Merger Rule

Section 545 of the 1998 Act amended section 8(o) of the USHA to provide for the merger of the Section 8 certificate and voucher programs. HUD's interim rule implementing the merger of these two programs was published on May 14, 1999 (64 FR 26632) (Merger rule). The Merger rule provides for a 60-day public comment period which closes on July 13, 1999. In accordance with section 559 of the 1998 Act, HUD will also hold a minimum of two public forums on this rule.

Section 559 provides that the Secretary of HUD shall issue interim regulations as may be necessary to implement the amendments made by the 1998 Act as these amendments relate to section 8(o) of the USHA. Section 559 also provides that before the publication of final regulations, in addition to public comment invited in connection with the publication of the interim rule, the Secretary shall seek recommendations on the implementation of sections 8(o)(6(B), 8(o)(7)(B) and 8(o)(10)(D) of the USHA and on the implementation of the renewals of expiring tenant-based assistance from organizations representing:

(1) State or local public housing agencies;
(2) Owners and managers of tenant-based housing assisted under section 8 of the USHA;
(3) Families receiving tenant-based assistance under section 8 of the USHA; and
(4) Legal services organizations.

Section 559 also requires HUD to hold not less than two public forums at which the individuals and organizations described above may express views concerning the proposed disposition of the recommendations.

Through its May 14, 1999 interim rule, HUD specifically sought rulemaking recommendations from these categories of organizations (see 64 FR 26635, middle column), and again seeks their recommendations through this document.

Public Forum Dates and Locations

June 28, 1999 Public Forum. The June 28, 1999 public forum in Syracuse, New York, will be HUD's third public forum on the PHA Plan rule, and its second