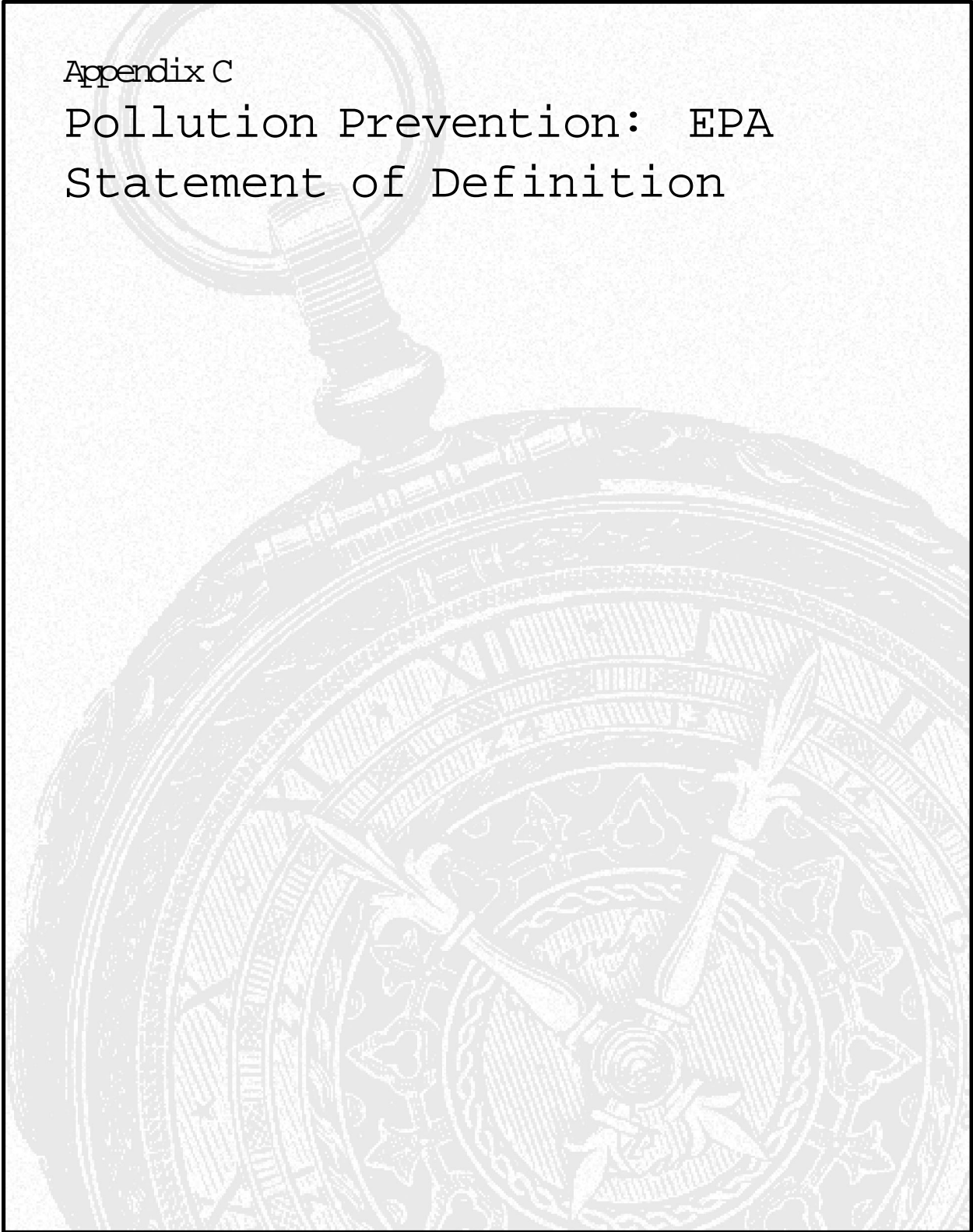


Appendix C

Pollution Prevention: EPA Statement of Definition



Pollution Prevention: EPA Statement of Definition

(pursuant to the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 and the Pollution Prevention Strategy)

Under Section 6602(b) of the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990, Congress established a national policy that:

- pollution should be prevented or reduced at the source whenever feasible;
- pollution that cannot be prevented should be recycled in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible;
- pollution that cannot be prevented or recycled should be treated in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible; and
- disposal or other release into the environment should be employed only as a last resort and should be conducted in an environmentally safe manner.

Pollution prevention means “source reduction,” as defined under the Pollution Prevention Act, and other practices that reduce or eliminate the creation of pollutants through:

- increased efficiency in the use of raw materials, energy, water, or other resources, or
- protection of natural resources by conservation.

The Pollution Prevention Act defines “source reduction” to mean any practice which:

- reduces the amount of any hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant entering any waste stream or otherwise released into the environment (including fugitive emissions) prior to recycling, treatment, or disposal; and
- reduces the hazards to public health and the environment associated with the release of such substances, pollutants, or contaminants.

The term includes: equipment or technology modifications, process or procedure modifications, reformulation or redesign of products, substitution of raw materials, and improvements in housekeeping, maintenance, training, or inventory control.

Under the Pollution Prevention Act, recycling, energy recovery, treatment, and disposal are not included within the definition of pollution prevention. Some practices commonly described as “in-process recycling” may qualify as pollution prevention. Recycling that is conducted in an environmentally sound manner shares many of the advantages of prevention — it can reduce the need for treatment or disposal, and conserve energy and resources.

Pollution prevention approaches can be applied to all pollution-generating activity, including those found in the energy, agriculture, federal, consumer, as well as industrial sectors. The impairment of wetlands, ground water sources, and other critical resources constitutes pollution, and prevention practices may be essential for preserving these resources. These practices may include conservation techniques and changes in management practices to prevent harm to sensitive ecosystems. Pollution prevention does not include practices that create new risks or concerns.

In the agricultural sector, pollution prevention approaches include:

- reducing the use of water and chemical inputs;
- adoption of less environmentally harmful pesticides or cultivation of crop strains with natural resistance to pests; and
- protection of sensitive areas.

In the energy sector, pollution prevention can reduce environmental damages from extraction, processing, transport, and combustion of fuels. Pollution prevention approaches include:

- increasing efficiency in energy use;
- substituting environmentally benign fuel sources; and
- design changes that reduce the demand for energy.