REMARKS BY MARIANNE LAMONT HORINKO
ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE STATES
APRIL 8, 2003
WASHINGTON, D.C.
(<u>AS PREPARED</u>)

This morning I mentioned both the One Cleanup Program and the Resource Conservation
Challenge as two top priorities in terms of state partnership
- I'd like to provide a little more detail now
- They're quite different ideas
    - One is an "inside-the-beltway" good management initiative related to
      contaminated sites
    - The other is an "outside-the-beltway" good practices initiative related to
      waste reduction
- But they both demand new ways of thinking about old problems, and new ways of
  interacting with old partners

First, the One Cleanup Program
- Historically, the cleanup programs run by EPA and the states have been driven by
  specific legislation
    - For many years, Superfund was the only cleanup game in town, because it
      was the first major law mandating cleanups
- Since 1980, many other cleanup programs have sprung up at federal, state, and
  local levels
- Understandable evolution: different programs to clean up sites that didn't make
  the Superfund list – USTs, brownfields, etc.
    - Superfund a blunt instrument that operated slowly
    - Need to get on with cleaning up thousands of other sites
- But this evolution, both in Washington and in the states, led to some duplication,
  inconsistency, even bureaucratic conflict
- Programs stayed independent/separate, and sites were seen as "belonging" to one
  program or another

Communities with contaminated sites have a different view
- They see sites as health/environmental problems with serious economic
  consequences
- They want them <u>cleaned up</u>
- Less important to them which cleanup program/level of government is responsible
- They just want the problem solved
- For them, fulfilling the legal requirements of Superfund or RCRA or any other
  law is not an end in itself, but the means to an end
    - And the end is cleanup of contaminated sites in the community

The One Cleanup Program is applying this kind of cross-program, cross government agency thinking to the universe of contaminated sites

- All of us in the site cleanup business are on the same team, and we all have the same goal
- So we need to pool our ideas, our experiences, our innovations, so every cleanup project in every community benefits
- In this sense, One Cleanup is simply a more holistic way of thinking
    - It will not require new legislation, or office restructuring, or budget shifts
- It <u>will</u> require that different cleanup programs at different levels of government cooperate with each other, and coordinate with each other, more than they ever have before
- And improved cooperation and coordination will lead to major improvements in cleanup programs across the board

First, better teamwork will lead to more consistent, faster, and more effective cleanups

- If all of us in the cleanup business have instant access to lessons learned, technologies developed, and alternatives tested in other programs, then everyone benefits
- If we can develop consistent policy and guidance, then everyone benefits
- To this end, EPA will work with regions, states, tribes, local governments, and other partners to conduct a series of area-wide cleanup projects at complex sites where multiple authorities apply
    - Projects will be used to test cross-program coordination and consistency, and identify ways to streamline management and cut costs
- For example, right here in EPA Region 3 we're working with a number of partners to clean up the Anacostia River Watershed
    - Back in 1999, EPA convened the Anacostia Watershed Toxics Alliance
    - A coalition of over 25 different community groups, government agencies, and institutions addressing complex environmental issues in the Anacostia watershed
    - This alliance is proving that studies and cleanups can be performed more effectively through broad-based cooperative efforts
    - By pooling fiscal and technical resources, AWTA has been able to undertake a watershed-wide effort to solve the problems associated with contaminated sediment in the Anacostia River

Second, better teamwork will lead to clearer and more useful information for communities

- Because of current fragmented approach, very difficult to find comprehensive information related to all contaminated sites – federal and state – in specific community
    - Difficult for families worried about local health risks
    - Difficult for businesses interested in investment opportunities
    - Next month I'm giving a speech in Chicago

- Asking regional office to put together map showing all contaminated sites in greater Chicago area
- Very difficult, even for professionals with first-hand knowledge of and access to site information
- But without such information, how can government agencies prioritize their cleanup actions?
- One Cleanup initiative will help states/tribes/communities develop integrated information networks
    - E.g., compatible, linkable computer systems containing information about site locations, cleanup requirements, agencies involved, status, etc.
    - Also linkable systems for tracking institutional controls
    - Also, comprehensive aggregate information on science, technology, and policy issues

Third, better teamwork will allow us to measure our cleanup performance/results in a more understandable, comprehensive way
- Performance measures very important to political leadership: the President, Congress
- Also of great interest to communities with sites to be cleaned up, and taxpayers/businesses who bear the cost of cleanups
- Question: in the aggregate, what are our billions of annual cleanup dollars buying?
    - Today, no one can answer that question with any confidence
    - Nor can we answer the question: "Is it worth it?"
- Over the next year EPA will collaborate with our partners to develop cross-program measures of cleanup performance
    - Number of people protected <u>through all programs</u>
    - Environmental quality improvements <u>through all programs</u>
    - Decontaminated land made available for redevelopment <u>though all programs</u>
    - Economic impacts (jobs generated, tax base expanded, land values appreciated) <u>through all programs</u>

Here's one example of OCP principles: scientific and technical cooperation
- Obvious value: if someone comes up with an improved method of sampling or cleaning up groundwater, that needs to be shared as quickly as possible across all programs
    - Making the chain of cleanup programs as strong as the strongest link
- Some of this is already being done
    - State-led workgroups, such as the Interstate Technology Regulatory Council (ITRC) have helped teams of experts develop and disseminate technical innovations
    - ITRC is a great example of One Cleanup at work
    - I encourage EPA and state officials to work with and support the IRTC

- And I personally want to thank ECOS for supporting the vision of IRTC, and supporting the individuals in state government who participate in the IRTC

Second topic this afternoon is the Resource Conservation Challenge
- Again, a look back at history helps illuminate where we are today
  - "Resource conservation and recovery" have been a part of EPA's mission since RCRA – the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act – was enacted in 1976
  - But for much of the past 25 years it's been a back-burner issue
  - Most of our time/energy/funding spent on environmentally acceptable ways of disposing of wastes
  - Pollution prevention captured the nation's imagination in the 1980s, but that program was handed off to a part of EPA not responsible for waste disposal
  - OSWER, the office I manage, was still largely seen as a waste disposal office
- With the RCC I'm putting resource conversation, recovery, and reuse on OSWER's front burner
  - I'm shifting our focus from "end-of-life" issues like environmentally acceptable waste disposal to "beginning of life" issues like product design, energy and materials use, and recyclable content
- OSWER is still worried about what comes out the end of the pipe
  - But with the RCC we're paying a lot more attention to reducing how much comes out the end of the pipe
- In a word, we're trying to put ourselves out of business
  - We'd like to do such a good job recycling and reusing wastes that there's no more need for traditional waste disposal

As I mentioned this morning, the RCC is a collection of dozens of projects that target different industries and different waste streams
- But in all case we work with partners in the public and private sectors – very often state governments – to find ways to reduce those waste streams by recycling and reusing the waste
- Just a few examples
- Last year signed an agreement with carpet and fibers manufacturers
  - Establishes 10-year schedule to increase the amount of recycling and reuse of post-consumer carpet (from today's 5 percent to 20 percent)
  - Reduces amount of waste carpet to landfills (up to 40 percent)
  - EPA working to develop guidelines for government purchases of carpet with recovered content
- On January 17 announced new Coal Combustion Products Partnership
  - Working with partners, including state governments, to increase the

diversion of coal ash from landfills to beneficial uses like concrete production
- Working with the electronics industry, retailers, recyclers, and state/local governments to reduce amount of electronic waste
  - Build better environment performance into product design
  - Create national educational campaign to encourage e-cycling (announced in January)
  - Test different systems for collecting/transporting/recycling used electronics (to be announced later this spring)
- Created National Waste Minimization Partnership Program to reduce generation of 30 specific chemicals by 50 percent by 2005
  - Dozens of companies signed up, and actively recruiting more

This is not a complete list, but should give you an idea of what RCC means
- It means VOLUNTARY ACTION
- It means BETTER PRODUCT DESIGN, MORE RECYCLING AND REUSE, BETTER MATERIALS AND ENERGY RECOVERY
- But most of all it means PARTNERSHIP, particularly with the states

Thank you