

number of analytical records differed by contaminant. EPA evaluated 27,648 to 93,062 analytical records for the individual inorganic chemicals, 32,606 to 121,327 records for the synthetic organic chemicals, and 123,229 to 201,235 records for the volatile organic chemicals. Most importantly, the Stage 2 occurrence model also quantifies the uncertainty of the estimates in the different categories of system size and source water type. Hence, the statistical significance of differences in occurrence between the categories can be easily assessed. However, the Agency believes it is more appropriate to consider the universe of potentially affected systems within the 16-State cross-section, rather than individual system categories, when making its revise/not revise decisions as part of the Six-Year Review process.

7. Consideration of Available Economic Information

Some commenters stated that, while the Agency's review of NPDWRs was generally consistent with NDWAC recommendations to EPA (NDWAC, 2000), it is not clear how the Agency took economic factors into account.

EPA Response: An EPA memorandum, dated March 18, 2002, describes the Agency's qualitative evaluation of economic factors (USEPA, 2002c). This memorandum was cited in the April 17, 2002, **Federal Register** and is available in the docket for the Six-Year Review (Docket No. OW-2002-0012). It notes that detailed economic analyses were not deemed by the Agency to be necessary to support its decisions of whether or not to revise a particular NPDWR. Rather, a qualitative assessment, based on the extent of occurrence of a contaminant at the MCL, as well as at alternative levels, was undertaken to inform the Agency's judgment about whether possible changes to an MCL offered a meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction and/or cost-savings to public water systems and their customers. EPA has conducted this assessment for 15 of the chemical NPDWRs for which the Agency had determined that a potential health or technological basis may exist for considering a revision to the MCLG/MCL.² EPA compared the estimated occurrence and exposure values at the current MCL and at potentially revised regulatory level(s). For 14 of these chemical NPDWRs, the Agency's

assessment showed that the differences were small. In EPA's judgment, these differences are unlikely to provide a meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction or cost-savings to public water systems and their customers. After consideration of these factors, EPA decided that any revision would be a low priority activity for the Agency, and, thus, not appropriate to revise at this time because of: Competing workload priorities; the administrative costs associated with rule making; and the burden on States and the regulated community to implement any regulatory change that resulted. In the case of dichloromethane, the Agency did not have sufficient data to recalculate the PQL to support any potential regulatory revision and thus placed it in the data gaps category.³

B. What Comments or New Information Did EPA Receive on Chemical Contaminant-Specific Issues?

1. Alachlor

One commenter stated that the Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) found that the chloroacetanilide pesticides (acetochlor, alachlor, and butachlor) should be considered as a group of chemicals having a common mechanism of toxicity due to their ability to cause nasal turbinate tumors. The commenter believes EPA therefore should adopt a strong total chloroacetanilide pesticide standard that would strengthen the current standards.

EPA Response: Butachlor and acetochlor do not presently have an NPDWR and thus, are not included in the Six-Year Review. However, acetochlor is included on the Contaminant Candidate List (CCL) and may in the future be considered as a candidate for regulation. Alachlor is a regulated drinking water contaminant and is included in the Six-Year Review. It is currently undergoing a risk assessment and, therefore, the Agency believes that revision of the NPDWR is not appropriate at this time.

If the Agency decides to regulate either acetochlor or butachlor in the future, EPA may consider regulating them as a group, including alachlor, following a cumulative risk assessment process for pesticides that have a

common mechanism of toxicity. It would be premature to propose a total chloroacetanilide pesticide standard until a cumulative risk assessment is completed because this analysis could impact the Agency's evaluation of specific members of this group, or the group as a whole.

2. Antimony

a. Health Effects. A number of commenters have suggested that the current MCLG and MCL of 0.006 milligrams per liter (mg/L) for antimony need to be revised. Some of the reasons given were:

- The study used to derive the current MCLG (Schroeder *et al.*, 1970) is not consistent with current good laboratory practice guidelines and there are several newer studies of antimony toxicity that should be considered in deriving a new reference dose (RfD).

- Animals used in the Schroeder *et al.*, 1970 study had a viral infection. To compensate for this infection, adjustments were made to the size of the animal groups in an attempt to salvage the data.

- The antimony compound used in the Schroeder *et al.*, 1970 study was potassium antimony tartrate, the most water soluble and toxic form of antimony. Antimony found in drinking water is likely to be in the form of less toxic trivalent and pentavalent antimony species. Therefore, basing the MCLG on the most toxic species of antimony (potassium antimony tartrate) is likely to overestimate the risk posed by antimony in drinking water.

EPA Response: EPA agrees that the MCLG and MCL for antimony may need to be re-evaluated. EPA is in the process of developing a new health risk assessment for antimony, taking into consideration new studies that have become available on the toxicity of antimony. EPA expects to complete the health risk assessment for antimony in the 2003–2004 time frame (68 FR 5870, February 5, 2003 (USEPA, 2003h)). As a result of the ongoing health risk assessment, a revision to the antimony standard is not appropriate at this time, and antimony will be re-evaluated as part of the next Six-Year Review process.

b. Treatment and Implementation Issues. Several commenters questioned the appropriateness of the antimony MCL, and the effectiveness of using the EPA-designated best available technologies (BATs) to meet the antimony MCL. A few small systems in Utah have levels of antimony in water at or above the MCL value of 0.006 mg/L. These systems were granted

² These 15 chemical NPDWRs are: Benzene; beryllium; chlordane; 1,2-dibromo-3-chloropropane dichloromethane; 1,1-dichloroethylene; 1,2-dichloropropane; heptachlor; heptachlor, epoxide; hexachlorobenzene; lindane; oxamyl; picloram; toxaphene; and 1,1,2-trichloroethane.

³ The other three NPDWRs in the data gaps category, chromium, fluoridated, and lead, were placed there for reasons other than occurrence and economic considerations. Chromium is in the data gaps category because of the studies being conducted by the National Toxicology Program studies. Fluoride is in the data gaps category pending a National Academy of Sciences update of the health risk assessment and review of the RSC assumptions. Lead is in the data gaps category based on consideration of public comments (see section IV.B.13 of today's action).