

exemptions contingent upon testing and installation of treatment by March 2004.

These systems are investigating treatment options for the removal of antimony from their source water. Commenters submitted supporting data documenting the results of their testing and cost analyses. According to commenters, on-site testing indicated that the designated BATs (*i.e.*, reverse osmosis and coagulation/filtration) and most of the other tested treatments were ineffective and/or prohibitively expensive due to: raw water quality concerns; water conservation needs; current costs for water production; and other concerns, such as waste water management. However, commenters did identify treatment options that may be feasible, but these may require further investigation prior to full scale use.

EPA Response: As discussed in the April 17, 2002, **Federal Register** and as noted in the previous response in section IV.B.2.a, EPA does not believe it is appropriate to consider revisions to the NPDWR for antimony at this time because of the ongoing health risk assessment (67 FR 19030 at 19051 (USEPA, 2002g)).

When EPA initially promulgated the antimony NPDWR in 1992, the Agency estimated that 200 public water systems would be affected (USEPA, 1992). EPA recognizes that implementation of this standard may present challenges for a few localities. Although the use of the designated BATs for antimony may not be appropriate in some cases, as long as systems comply with the MCL, they are not limited to these technologies.

EPA believes that the treatment data generated by the commenters may be valuable and may provide insight into potential alternative treatment technologies. The Agency has revised the document, "Water Treatment Technology Feasibility Support Document for Chemical Contaminants; In support of EPA Six-Year Review of National Primary Drinking Water Regulations" (Treatment Feasibility Document) (USEPA, 2003g) to refer to these preliminary test data as they may be applicable to the development of potential new treatment technologies for the removal of antimony and other contaminants.

3. Atrazine

a. Health Effects. Several commenters addressed the EPA decision not to consider revision of the MCL for atrazine at this time. Some of these commenters stated that EPA should use the risk assessment, released by OPP in May 2002, as a basis for reconsidering the atrazine NPDWR. One of the commenters noted that the 2002 risk

assessment is based on reproductive and developmental endpoints which represents a change from the toxicity endpoint that formed the basis of the current MCLG. Two commenters stated that the MCL for atrazine should be revised upward because of the results of the 2002 OPP risk assessment in which the RfD increased and the cancer classification changed from "possible human carcinogen" to "not likely to be a human carcinogen." The commenters stated that the change in the cancer assessment implies elimination of the additional 10-fold risk management factor used in 1991 to derive the MCLG/MCL for atrazine. Another commenter stated that atrazine should be regulated using a non-linear approach which recognizes that there is a level at which no known health effects occur and that these findings must be part of the new MCL.

Conversely, another commenter stated that there is substantial new evidence from epidemiological and occupational studies that atrazine poses a serious cancer risk, and that it is an endocrine disruptor at low levels. The commenter believes EPA should adopt a revised atrazine and total triazine standard lower than (*i.e.*, more stringent than) the current 0.003 mg/L standard for atrazine.

A commenter also urged the Agency to:

- Provide a definitive timetable for review of the standard;
- Outline a preliminary scope for its review of the standard; and
- State the underlying premise for the scope of the review.

Other commenters stated that the existing NPDWR only regulates the parent compound atrazine, and that a revised NPDWR should include the chloro-metabolite degradants (*i.e.*, diaminochlorotriazine (DACT), desethyl atrazine (DEA), and desisopropyl atrazine (DIA)). These commenters believe that inclusion of the chloro-metabolites would strengthen compliance monitoring programs for public water systems under SDWA and thereby strengthen public health protection. They stated that a regulation for atrazine and the chloro-metabolites should be developed and promulgated within the next 12 to 18 months.

Another commenter stated that since the Agency has found that atrazine, simazine, propazine, and the degradants DACT, DEA, and DIA have a common mechanism of toxicity, these should be regulated in a total triazine regulation.

EPA Response: EPA does not believe it is appropriate to consider revisions to the NPDWR for atrazine at this time because the revised risk assessment has

not been finalized. For purposes of the Six-Year Review protocol, EPA considers a risk assessment final when an Interim Reregistration Eligibility Decision (IRED), Reregistration Eligibility Decision (RED), and/or IRIS assessments are complete.⁴ Even though an IRED for atrazine was signed on January 31, 2003, an amended IRED is scheduled to be released in October 2003 which will include a Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) peer review of new data related to health effects. Based upon the outcome of the SAP review, the October 2003 IRED may include additional information that could impact a revise/not revise decision. Therefore, EPA does not believe it is appropriate to consider possible revisions to the NPDWR at this time.

In reviewing the atrazine regulation, EPA will apply an approach consistent with the protocol used for the current review. The Agency will consider the same key elements (*i.e.*, health effects review, technology review, other regulatory revisions review, and, if appropriate, occurrence/exposure analyses and consideration of available economic information) and apply the same basic decision tree for making a revise/not revise decision.

To address the issue of regulating the triazines as a group, the Agency is evaluating the unregulated triazines as part of the CCL process. When the risk assessment is completed for atrazine, the Agency will consider whether or not there are compelling reasons for considering a revision to the atrazine regulation or to wait until the risk assessment for the triazines, which considers issues of cumulative risk, is finalized. EPA will use the CCL regulatory determination process in deciding whether the triazines should be regulated as a group.

b. Costs of Treatment. Commenters stated that the costs associated with not revising the MCL are great. These commenters are concerned that State agencies will be required to develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) based on 303(d)⁵ listings resulting from

⁴ The IRED is an intermediate decision for an individual pesticide that does not take into account cumulative risk issues for pesticides with a common mode of action. The RED does include cumulative risk. If an IRIS assessment is also in process when the IRED or RED is signed, EPA will make a case-by-case decision on whether to wait for the IRIS assessment before considering possible revisions to the NPDWR.

⁵ Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and the implementing regulations (40 CFR 130.7) require States to develop TMDLs for waters where required point and nonpoint source pollution controls are not stringent enough to attain or maintain compliance with State water quality standards after the application of technology-based and other