

CSREES/USDA

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PSEP QUARTERLY

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Produced by Monte Johnson and Wanda G. Best

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After 17 Years, the Cicadas Are Coming

After a 17-year wait, billions of large, noisy, winged, red-eyed insects known as periodical cicadas (*Magicicada spp.*) will soon emerge from the ground, occupying large swaths of the eastern United States. They'll overrun many yards, pelt windows, fly into people, clog storm drains and basically wreak buggo havoc.

But entomologist Michael Schauff of the Agricultural Research Service's ARS Systematic Entomology Laboratory, has a message: Remain calm. Although cicadas may give many people the creeps, the bugs won't sting or bite, and they rarely damage plants.

According to Schauff, the cicada explosion will start in early-to-mid May in parts of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, western North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana and southern Michigan. Other states may see them as well. This activity will peak between mid-May and mid-June, and the insects will die off about 4 weeks after first emerging.

Schauff has good agricultural news as well: The cicadas pose little threat to crops, although small or newly planted hardwood or fruit trees and grape vines may need protection. That's because cicadas make small incisions near the tips of tree branches, where they lay eggs. The branch beyond the incisions often dies.

The 17-year cicada is known as Brood X (10), or the Big Brood. Other broods have different cycles, and are not as intensely populated.

According to Schauff, the first sign of the cicada emergence will be little mounds or mud turrets that look like miniature volcanoes around the bases of trees. The insects emerge soon after.



Six to 10 weeks after eggs have been laid, nymphs will emerge, fall to the ground, crawl into the soil and stay out of sight as they slowly develop in cells attached to plant roots, subsisting on tree sap over the next 17 years.

ARS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific research agency.

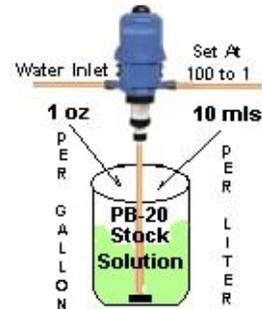
By Luis Pons

Using Chlorine in Poultry Drinking Water

People have been using chlorine to treat poultry drinking water for years.... Some products are registered and others are not.... The problem is that "If a registered chlorine product can be used for poultry drinking water, why can't I use a nonregistered version of the same chemical?" The bottom line is that if the product being used to treat the water is not registered for that specific use, then it is illegal and needs to be registered under FIFRA Section 3.

Michael Hardy

Ombudsman and Enforcement Team Leader



EPA to Notify Pesticide Retailers and State Agencies of Endangered Species Court Order Notification Requirements in Washington Toxics v. EPA

On March 24, 2004, EPA published in the Federal Register a notice to state agencies in California, Oregon, and Washington, and pesticide retailers in those states who sell certain pesticides in urban areas through which "salmon-supporting waters" pass. The notice informs these pesticide retailers and state agencies of notification requirements imposed by the January 22, 2004, ruling of the Court for the Western District of Washington in the case of Washington Toxics Coalition, et al. (WTC) v. EPA. Retailers are made aware that they are required to make available a point-of-sale notification developed by EPA pursuant to the Court Order whenever pesticide products containing any of seven active ingredients are sold. The notifications will be distributed to retailers on or before April 5, 2004, by defendant-intervenors in the case (numerous groups representing pesticide registrants, growers, and other pesticide users). The notice also informs states that EPA has been directed to produce and provide on or before April 5, 2004, copies of the point-of-sale notifications to state pesticide agencies, state fish agencies, and land grant university extension coordinators in the urban areas and to request that they, in turn, provide this information to Certified Applicators whose certification would permit them to apply pesticides in urban

areas.

The District Court's January 22, 2004, order also imposes no-use buffer zones around salmon-supporting waters (as defined by the Court) in Washington, Oregon, and California for certain pesticides. The court's order will remain in effect until EPA determines that these pesticides have no effect on listed Pacific salmon and steelhead, makes a determination that these pesticides are not likely to adversely affect these species, or completes consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) about the potential effects of the pesticides on Pacific salmon and steelhead.

Under the Endangered Species Act, EPA must ensure that its registration of a pesticide is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of species listed as endangered and threatened or adversely modify habitat critical to those species' survival. In addition to the obligation to ensure that its actions are not likely to jeopardize listed species, the Agency must consult, as

appropriate, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) or NMFS if a pesticide's use may affect listed species or designated critical habitat of the species: <http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/index.htm>.

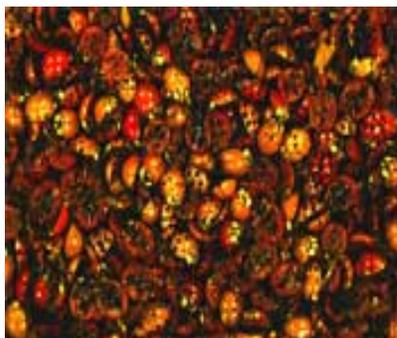
More information on EPA's Endangered Species Protection Program is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/espp/>.



The Beetles are Coming, Again

College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

University of Illinois



Unlike the 1964 invasion orchestrated by John, Paul, George, and Ringo, the newest beetle invasion was brought to us from the Orient, not Europe. The multicolored Asian lady beetle, a small orange/red insect with dark spots, is thriving this year in record numbers thanks to the abundance of one of its favorite foods, the soybean aphid.

"A relatively cool summer allowed the populations of soybean aphids to explode in soybean fields. Multicolored Asian lady beetles responded by producing the largest populations seen in Illinois in years. We have seen lady beetle numbers in some soybean fields increase 200 fold during the past month," said Joseph Spencer of the Illinois Natural History Survey a division of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Spencer says that like the exhortation in the nursery rhyme for lady bug to fly away home, lady beetles are expected to do exactly this -- fly away to YOUR home.

Once cold weather starts to set in, soybean fields mature and the soybean aphids will move to their overwintering host, buckthorn, and lady beetles are going to look for new food and shelter, too.

Multicolored Asian lady beetles evolved in the Orient where they naturally overwinter in cliff faces. In our area of the world, they will begin to aggregate at spots that appear cliff-like to them -- the sides of light-colored houses and buildings.

"Many will end up around doors and windows, but they will use any crack, nook, or cranny to gain entrance into your home. The good news is that lady beetles won't eat your food and they won't harm the structure of your house," said Spencer.

The beetles may become active on warm, sunny winter days and begin flying around a bit. They can also let off an annoying smell when there are large numbers present. For people who are bothered by lady beetles in their homes, the recommended solution is simply to seal cracks and vacuum them up if they get in.

While the lady beetle can be a bit of a nuisance in your home and it can displace native lady beetles in the outdoors, its presence is considered more beneficial than harmful.

"It is our best natural defense against the soybean aphid, and thus is economically important to agriculture," said Spencer.

This beetle was introduced into the U.S. numerous times since 1916 to control tree-feeding aphids and scale insects in the southern and eastern states. By 1994 it had thoroughly colonized the U.S. from Canada to Florida and coast to coast.

"The relationship among soybeans, soybean aphids, and multi-colored Asian lady beetles is really an example of an imported food chain, a kind of mini-ecosystem with a plant -- the soybean, a herbivore -- the soybean aphid, and a predator -- the lady beetle," said Spencer.

Spencer can't predict if there will be a lot of soybean aphids next year. However, if the soybean aphid returns in large numbers, there will be an ample supply of lady beetles ready to keep the aphids in check.

"We are fortunate to have these lady beetles to feed on this soybean pest," said Spencer.

Sunflowers and the Birds They Attract Help Control Insect Pests on Crops and Reduce Pesticide Use

University of Florida Extension

When it comes to controlling insect pests on crops, some farmers are saying hello to birds. "We have found an environmentally friendly way that may help control insects that feed on crops, and it's literally for the birds," said Kathryn Sieving, an associate professor with the University of Florida's (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. "By planting sunflowers near valuable crops, we can attract birds that feed on insects."

While many growers believe that birds themselves could be a source of major crop damage, that's not always the case, Sieving said.

"In fact, most of the birds we've observed on north central Florida farms feed on insects," she said. "More than 200 species of nongame birds are found on farmlands in the United States, and only about 10 of them cause major crop damage, which leaves 190 species that are potentially very helpful."

Moreover, concerns that the sunflowers themselves would attract damaging insects are unfounded, Sieving said.

Most of the insects associated with sunflowers are beneficial, ranging from those that pollinate crops to predators such as bees, wasps and assassin bugs that may help control insect pests.

Greg Jones, a graduate student working with Sieving in UF's wildlife ecology and conservation department, said sunflowers can also be a cash crop for farmers.

"The sunflower species in our research are the types that can be sold as cut flowers in retail outlets and farmers' markets," Jones said. "In addition to harvesting the flower stalks, growers can harvest the seed for bird food or market the seed to others who want to grow sunflowers."

Another plus is the seasonal nature of the sunflowers, Jones said. Sunflowers grow quickly, and they create a hedgerow that can be taken down or replanted easily. The habitat they provide is used by migratory birds and year-round bird populations.

Sunflowers may make it easier for migrating birds to find shelter, especially when they have a critical need for a safe place to rest and feed before going on," Jones said.



"The potential value of birds on farms was first documented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1885, and many of these early findings are still useful on modern farms, he said. Federal ornithologists found that the majority of birds on farms benefit growers by eating insects and weed seeds.

"Our data suggest that encouraging the presence of insect-eating birds should help rather than hinder farm production," Jones said. "While we have not yet demonstrated scientifically that the sunflower-bird connection can reduce insect damage to crops, we hope we will find this to be the case in the future. Then bird-friendly farms may not need to rely so heavily on pesticide applications.

"Of course, sunflowers won't rid a farm of injurious insects, but they might enable a farmer to use less pesticide, becoming an important part of an overall integrated pest management plan," he said.

By Patti Bartlett

Invasive Marine Animals Get Bigger

University of California

For a wide group of marine pests, invasion is coupled with a marked increase in body size, a new study has found.

Edwin (Ted) Grosholz, UC Cooperative Extension specialist at UC Davis, and Gregory M. Ruiz of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Md., compared the body sizes of 19 species of nonnative marine and estuarine invaders. These included crabs, shellfish and starfish, in their native habitats and other parts of the world where they have become invasive pests.

Twelve of the 19 showed increases in maximum size of up to 40%. European green crabs and Chinese mitten crabs, both prominent nuisance species in U.S. waters, were about 20% bigger than in their native habitats. Only one, the gem clam, showed any sign of a decrease.

The increases in body size were not clearly linked to differences in latitude between the native range and invaded areas or to the length of time since invasion. The changes could be because the animals are no longer held back by predators or parasites, Grosholz says. "Animals and plants that are innocuous in their home environment can become rampaging pests when they invade a new area."

The results could have implications for understanding both how modern-day nuisance species become successful, and for interpreting fossil evidence of changes in populations of marine animals over millions of years.

The findings, published in the August 2003 Ecology Letters, appear to be unique to marine animals, as research in other taxa shows invading species both increasing and decreasing in size. "For example, the data for European plants invading California suggests that nearly 30% of invading species got smaller in the introduced range," Grosholz and Ruiz wrote.

Listening for Weevils in Nursery Crops

A new, lightweight device that can magnify the noises of tiny, black vine weevils will be an asset to nursery growers.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists working with Acoustic Emission Consulting (AEC) of Fair Oaks, Calif., have made improvements to AEC's machines that can detect insects by the sounds they make. The new device is lighter and more durable and won't pick up distracting noises. The biggest advantage may be that this system, unlike other models, does not need a professional technician to operate it.

The nursery industry is big business in the US, especially in Oregon where it's worth more than \$600 million annually. But the black vine weevil continues to threaten many nursery crops. More than \$3 million is spent each year to control these pests because of strict quarantine regulations that require plant inspectors to reject shipments of nursery crops from other states if just one weevil is found. The new device will allow inspectors to search 15-25 plant pots an hour, compared to 5 to 8 pots without it.

The instrument was refined and tested by entomologist James R. Fisher of the ARS Horticultural Crops Research Laboratory in Corvallis, Ore., and Richard W. Mankin, an ARS entomologist at the agency's Center for Medical, Agricultural and Veterinary Entomology in Gainesville, Fla.

To use the device, the listener wears headphones and sticks a wandlike device on a very large nail that has been placed in the rootball of the plant in the soil. The listener holds a small, computerlike device that amplifies and measures the sound. The weevil makes a distinctive noise while traveling through the soil.

More information about this research is in the April 2004 issue of *Agricultural Research* magazine. ARS is USDA's chief scientific research agency.

New Compendia Covering Plant Protection, Animal Health, and Forestry Now Online

The CAB international's compendia, an encyclopedia of animal and plant diseases and pests, is now available online at www.ipmcenters.org/cabi and on CD-ROM. The Compendia synthesize a wide range of scientific information that is useful for scientists and extension educators, particularly when called upon to provide fast and accurate information regarding newly emerging animal diseases and plant pests. The regularly updated Compendia are comprised of peer reviewed and edited information from thousands of specialists throughout the world.

The Regional Integrated Pest Management Centers and the National Plant Diagnostic Centers are making the three compendia available to land grant university faculty and staff members, free of charge, with funding provided by CSREES. All others may subscribe to the publication for a fee after logging on to www.cabi.org/compendia.

Announcements and Activities

500-Day Strategic Plan

My goal is to increase the velocity of environmental progress by implementing "a better way." In my introductory remarks in December, I referenced my practice of using a 500-day plan. Since then, I have repeatedly articulated many of the elements of that plan. I have posted my 500-day plan here because I feel it is important that everyone understand how those pieces fit into the larger plan, and how that plan aligns with the operating and strategic plans of the Agency.

FY 2005 Budget Empowers Agency

President Bush's 2005 budget provides \$7.76 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a \$133 million increase over the 2004 budget request. "With the President's budget, we can accelerate environmental protection -- protecting our land, cleaning our air and cleansing our water -- efficiently, effectively and without impairing the economy," said EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt.

Cleaner Vehicles + Cleaner Gasoline = Cleaner Air With a new generation of cleaner cars, SUVs and light trucks entering auto showrooms, and new low-sulfur fuel arriving at gas stations, there is new promise for cleaner air in our future.

EPA to Power Companies: "It's Time to Start Cleaning the Air"

EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt, addressing a Board of Directors meeting of the Edison Electric Institute, told the nation's power company officials their industry must begin investing now to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and mercury from power plants.

Inaugural speech: Seek collaboration at the "productive middle"

In his first speech after being sworn in as EPA Administrator, Mike Leavitt outlined to EPA employees his guiding principles and conveyed his plans and aspirations for the Agency, pledging to replace conflict with common sense and collaboration. "Real environmental problem-solving takes place in the productive center, not at the emotional extremes," he said. "The productive center is the place where the best ideas compete and a fair process for decisionmaking exists."

EPA Interim Guidance In Effect on Circumstances Under Which NPDES Permit not Required to Apply Pesticide to Water

EPA's interim guidance addressing when permits are not needed to apply pesticides to waters of the United States is in effect. The interim guidance, articulated in a July 11, 2003 memorandum, addresses two sets of circumstances for which EPA believes that the application of a pesticide to waters of the United States is consistent with relevant requirements of FIFRA and does not constitute the discharge of a pollutant that requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit under the Clean Water Act. Those circumstances are: (1) the application of pesticides directly to waters of the United States in order to control pests (for example mosquito

larvae or aquatic weeds that are present in the water); and (2) the application of pesticides to control pests that are present over waters of the United States that results in a portion of the pesticides being deposited to water (for example when insecticides are aerially applied to a forest canopy where water may be present below the canopy or when insecticides are applied for control of adult mosquitoes). The memorandum was issued, in part, in response to a statement by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit in *Altman v. Town of Amherst* that EPA needs to articulate a clear interpretation of whether NPDES permits are required for applications of pesticides that comply with FIFRA.

The memorandum, available on the Internet at www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/pesticide.interim.guidance.pdr is operational and remains in effect until the Agency determines a final position. The Agency has been reviewing public comments received in response to an August 13, 2003, Federal Register Notice seeking public comment on the July 11 interim statement.

New Resignations and

Appointments Announced at EPA

There have been several high profile resignations and new appointments at the (EPA) in recent days. All of the personnel changes are of interest to the farm and agriculture community.

This week, Jean-Mari Peltier, counselor for agriculture policy for the administrator, announced her resignation effective February 1, 2004. Peltier is leaving the agency to become president and chief executive officer of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC), a Washington, D.C.-based trade association representing the

interests of U.S. agricultural cooperatives. Prior to her appointment with EPA, Peltier held a number of executive level positions in the California agricultural industry and state government, including president of the California Citrus Quality Council and executive director of the California Pear Advisory Board. In addition, she served as chief deputy director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation for the California EPA. Peltier is leaving the agency to become president and chief executive. On January 7, the White House nominated

Stephen L. Johnson as deputy administrator of EPA. Beginning in 1997, Johnson administered the nation's federal pesticide regulatory program as deputy director of EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs. He also was the acting assistant administrator of the Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances (OPPTS). Johnson was named acting deputy administrator in July 2003 after Linda J. Fisher resigned from the position. (Continued on Page 10)



Stephen L. Johnson Acting EPA Deputy

Administrator

Weed Specialist Weeds Out What to do About Wicked Weeds"

University of Wyoming Extension Service

Stephen Enloe is a weed specialist with a sense of humor.

Take the title of a University of Wyoming seminar he presented on the annoying plants — "The Wicked Weeds of the West: Why Dorothy Needs More Than a Wizard to Deal with these Pests."

Take his spoof on the debate between weed scientists and ecologists about how the troublemakers should be approached — From the Weed Science Camp: "It's a weed! How do we kill it?" to the Ecology Camp: "It's an invasive plant! We need to study it!" to Enloe's suggestion: "Can't we just work together?"

A Cooperative Extension Service specialist with the College of Agriculture's Department of Plant Sciences, Enloe explained to listeners at a "Research Across Disciplines" seminar that invasion ecology is a relatively young field that focuses on understanding "plants out of place" and what can be done about them.

It's big business in Wyoming. An estimated 1.33 million acres in the state are infested with 24 noxious weeds ranging from houndstongue to musk thistle to field bindweed to purple loosestrife to Dalmatian toadflax. That doesn't even include a large number of weedy species that are not legally classified as noxious. Each county in Wyoming is a weed and pest control district, and a combined \$16.5 million is spent each year by those districts, private land owners and government agencies on invasive plant management. In a state with some 47 percent federal, 9 percent state, 42 percent private, and 2 percent tribal land, that's really not enough money, Enloe says.

"Eighty-six percent of the spending is on private land," he noted, while federal agencies stretch the other 8.4 percent of the total spending over 47 percent of the remaining land. That's about five cents per acre for weed management on federal lands.

Meanwhile, weeds continue to make their presence known. Musk thistle, Enloe said, is a rangeland and roadside invader. Scotch thistle produces impenetrable stands on rangeland that cattle refuse to cross, black henbane contains hallucinogens and leafy spurge surrounds Devils Tower.

"Some plants were brought into the region for useful purposes such as soil stabilization or as ornamentals. However, several of them have escaped and now cause serious problems," he explained. "Despite federal and state weed laws, the seeds of many noxious weed species can still be obtained via the World Wide Web, and that is really tough to regulate."

To develop effective weed management strategies, Enloe said, the answers to key questions about each invasive plant need to be determined: Where is it from? How does it behave in its native range? How and where does it spread in its new environment? What are its impacts? How can it be controlled, and what are the impacts of controlling it? Once the right questions are asked, experiments can be designed to try to answer them," he added. Included in his talk were challenges to graduate student researchers interested in studying the West's "wicked weeds" and what can be done about them.

"Many rangeland plant communities in Wyoming typically do not have dense cover. However, much research has suggested that maintaining a high grass cover is a way of suppressing invasive plants," he noted. "A serious challenge is to be able to come up with management strategies for invasive plants in areas of low native plant cover."

Enloe also described riparian areas as some of the most heavily invaded plant communities in Wyoming. Weeds like saltcedar have changed the structure and function of many of these riparian locations, he said. "With the importance of water in the western U.S., invasive plants will continue to be a major issue due to their water use. The challenge there is the difficulty in developing effective management strategies in sensitive riparian communities throughout the state."

As the urgency of tackling problems associated with noxious weeds grows, Enloe reported that groups are coming together that historically have not talked. "Invasive plants don't stop with borders or fences," he said. "A change in mentality is developing as weed management areas crossing numerous property lines are created around the states." Meanwhile, Enloe enjoys comparing the frustrations of weed scientists and ecologists in the weed world to Dorothy's dilemma as she searched for a wizard with magic solutions for her troubles. Maybe it just takes the teamwork of modern versions of Dorothy, a scarecrow, a tin man, a cowardly lion, and a sorcerer to find answers to the problem of invasive plants.

Research at Colorado State University Leads to Launching of Nationwide Service to Help Prevent Termite Damage

Colorado State University

FORT COLLINS - A new environmentally friendly termite attractant discovered by a Colorado State University research team has launched a new Fort Collins company, which recently unveiled the product nationwide. Interval33, a bait that emits carbon dioxide to lure termites to small sources of insecticide, was introduced by Brotica Inc., after Louis Bjostad and Elisa Bernklau, entomologists at Colorado State, discovered that carbon dioxide is a strong attractant of termites, which resulted in the development of the new method of termite control.

The Colorado State University Research Foundation, a private, nonprofit foundation that aids the university in technology transfer, helped Bjostad apply for a patent and helped Brotica Inc. market the carbon dioxide technology. Technology transfer takes university research and converts it into tangible products that improve people's day-to-day lives by working with private sector partners.

Researchers are always looking to benefit people, but before universities began promoting technology transfer, ordinary people really didn't see the benefits of new research," said Bjostad, professor of bioagricultural sciences and pest management. "CSURF makes it easier for companies to take university research and introduce it into the market place."

Interval33 emits carbon dioxide through the soil to attract termites from a distance and lures them to the source of insecticide. Carbon dioxide accelerates the termites' discovery of insecticide bait stations, making them easier for termites to locate and leading to faster pest control. Other insecticide bait stations that only use pesticides do not attract termites to their bases, and it can take months for the insects to come in contact with the pesticide. Interval33 has been engineered to generate a carbon dioxide concentration of one percent, which is the optimum carbon dioxide concentration for termite attraction. Low levels of carbon dioxide are also found in rotting wood and other termite foods

The pesticide chlordane, which was commonly used to control termites without a baiting approach, was banned by EPA in 1985 because of risks to the environment and to the human central and peripheral nervous system. Now that chlordane is illegal, interest in termite ecology has increased because of the need for a safe alternative to the chemical. The carbon dioxide attractant discovered at Colorado State helps bring efficient termite control back to the public.

Termites are wood-destroying pests most commonly found in the South. New developments and centrally heated homes all over the United States have brought these pests from the South to every region in the nation. According to Bjostad, termites cause \$22 billion in structural damage annually around the world. This includes \$11 billion in annual damage in the United States, including damage in Colorado, where many residents are unaware of termite infestation. New research shows that termites cause more damage to homes than fires.

To deal with termite infestation, people can choose to apply a pesticide to the entire structure, use a baiting approach or use a combination of both. Baits usually contain paper, cardboard or other termite food combined with a slow-acting insecticide that kills them. The bait sits in a monitoring station in the ground near a contaminated home. The idea is for worker termites to feed on the bait and bring it back to the nest. However, without carbon dioxide as an attractant, it can take termites weeks or months to find the bait.

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New Resignations and Appointments

Announcements

(Continued from page 7)

Ben Grumbles has been named the acting assistant administrator for water. He served as the deputy assistant administrator under Assistant Administrator G. Tracy Mehan III, who resigned at the end of December. Grumbles recently served as the acting associate administrator for congressional and intergovernmental relations.

John Peter Suarez, the assistant administrator for the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, has also offered his resignation effective January 30. Suarez developed and promoted the "Smart Enforcement" initiative, an outcome driven approach to environmental enforcement aimed at connecting environmental and public health benefits with the results of enforcement cases. (Contact: Charlie Ingram)

PSEP Coordinators ALERT

[http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/
apes.html](http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/apes.html)