CHAPTER VI—CHEMICAL SAFETY AND 
HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

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PART 1600 [RESERVED]

PART 1601—PROCEDURES FOR DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

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Subpart A—Purpose, Scope, and Applicability

§ 1601.1 Purpose and scope.

This part contains the regulations of the United States Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board ("CSB" or "Board" or "agency") implementing the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"). These regulations provide procedures by which members of the public may obtain access to records compiled, created, and maintained by the CSB, along with procedures it must follow in response to such requests for records.

§ 1601.2 Applicability.

(a) General. The FOIA and the regulations in this part apply to all CSB documents and information. However, if another law sets specific procedures for disclosure, the CSB will process a request in accordance with the procedures that apply to those specific documents. If a request is received for disclosure of a document to the public which is not required to be released under those provisions, the CSB will consider the request under the FOIA and the regulations in this part.

(b) Records available through routine distribution procedures. When the record requested includes material published and offered for sale, e.g., by the Superintendent of Documents of the Government Printing Office, or by an authorized private distributor, the CSB will first refer the requester to those sources. Nevertheless, if the requester is not satisfied with the alternative sources, the CSB will process the request under the FOIA.

§ 1601.3 Definitions.

Appeals Officer means the person designated by the Chairperson to process appeals of denials of requests for CSB records under the FOIA.

Business submitter means any person or entity which provides confidential business information, directly or indirectly, to the CSB and who has a proprietary interest in the information.

Chairperson means the Chairperson of the CSB (including, in the absence of a Chairperson, the Board Member supervising personnel matters) or his or her designee.

Commercial-use requester means requesters seeking information for a use or purpose that furthers the commercial, trade, or profit interests of the requester or the person on whose behalf the request is made. In determining whether a requester properly belongs in this category, the CSB shall determine, whenever reasonably possible, the use to which a requester will put the documents sought, or where that use is not clear from the request itself, the CSB
shall seek additional clarification before assigning the request to a specific category.

Confidential business information means records provided to the government by a submitter that arguably contain material exempt from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the FOIA, because disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause substantial competitive harm.

Direct costs means those expenditures by the CSB actually incurred in searching for and duplicating records to respond to a FOIA request. Direct costs include the salary of the employee or employees performing the work (the basic rate of pay for the employee plus a percentage of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating duplicating machinery. Direct costs do not include overhead expenses, such as the cost of space and heating or lighting of the facility in which the records are stored.

Duplication refers to the process of making a copy of a document necessary to fulfill a FOIA request. Such copies can take the form of, among other things, paper copy, microform, audio-visual materials, or machine-readable documentation. The copies provided shall be in a form that is reasonably usable by requesters.

Educational institution refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or high school, an institution of undergraduate higher education, an institution of graduate higher education, an institution of professional education, and an institution of vocational education, which operates a program of scholarly research.

FOIA Officer means the person designated to process requests for CSB documents under the FOIA.

Non-commercial scientific institution refers to an institution that is not operated on a commercial basis as that term is used above in defining commercial-use requester, and which is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

Record includes any writing, drawing, map, recording, tape, film, photo, or other documentary material by which information is preserved.

Representative of the news media refers to any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term news means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. For freelance journalists to be regarded as working for a news organization, they must demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through that organization. A publication contract would be the clearest proof, but components shall also look to the past publication record of a requester in making this determination.

Requester means any person, including an individual, Indian tribe, partnership, corporation, association, or public or private organization other than a Federal agency, that requests access to records in the possession of the CSB.

Review refers to the process of examining a record, in response to a FOIA request, to determine whether any portion of that record may be withheld under one or more of the FOIA exemptions. It also includes the processing of any record for disclosure; for example, redacting information that is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. Review does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the use of FOIA exemptions.

Search refers to the time spent looking for material that is responsive to a request, including page-by-page or line-by-line identification of material within a document. The CSB shall ensure that searches are conducted in the most efficient and least expensive manner reasonably possible.

Submitter means any person or entity who provides information directly or indirectly to the CSB. The term includes, but is not limited to, corporations, Indian tribal governments, state governments, and foreign governments.

Working day means a Federal workday that does not include Saturdays, Sundays, or Federal holidays.

§ 1601.10 Protection of records.

(a) Except as authorized by this part or as otherwise necessary in performing official duties, no employee shall in any manner disclose or permit
§ 1601.20 Requests for records.

(a) Addressing requests. Requests for records in the possession of the CSB shall be made in writing. The envelope and the request both should be clearly marked FOIA Request and addressed to: FOIA Officer, United States Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 2175 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037–1809. A request improperly addressed will be deemed not to have been received for the purposes of §1601.24(a) until it is received, or would have been received with the exercise of due diligence, by the FOIA Officer. Records requested in conformance with this section and which are not withholdable records may be obtained in person or by mail as specified in the request. Records to be obtained in person will be available for inspection or copying during business hours on a regular business day in the office of the CSB.

(b) Description of records. Each request must reasonably describe the desired records in sufficient detail to enable CSB personnel to locate the records with a reasonable amount of effort. A request for a specific category of records will be regarded as fulfilling this requirement if it enables responsive records to be identified by a technique or process that is not unreasonably burdensome or disruptive of CSB operations.

(1) Whenever possible, a request should include specific information about each record sought, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, and subject matter of the record.
§ 1601.21 Responses to requests.

(a) Response to initial request. The FOIA Officer is authorized to grant or deny any request for a record and to determine appropriate fees.

(b) Referral to another agency. When a requester seeks records that originated in another Federal government agency, the CSB will refer the request to the other agency for response. If the CSB refers the request to another agency, it will notify the requester of the referral. A request for any records classified by some other agency will be referred to that agency for response.

(c) Creating records. If a person seeks information from the CSB in a format that does not currently exist, the CSB will make reasonable efforts to provide the information in the format requested. The CSB will not create a new record of information to satisfy a request.

(d) No responsive record. If no records are responsive to the request, the FOIA Officer will so notify the requester in writing.

§ 1601.22 Form and content of responses.

(a) Form of notice granting a request. After the FOIA Officer has granted a request in whole or in part, the requester will be notified in writing. The notice shall describe the manner in which the record will be disclosed, whether by providing a copy of the record with the response or at a later date, or by making a copy of the record available to the requester for inspection at a reasonable time and place. The procedure for such an inspection may not unreasonably disrupt the operation of the CSB. The response letter will also inform the requester of any fees to be charged in accordance with the provisions of §§ 1601.30 through 1601.33.

(b) Form of notice denying a request. When the FOIA Officer denies a request in whole or in part, he or she will so notify the requester in writing. The response will be signed by the FOIA Officer and will include:

1. The name and title or position of the person making the denial;

2. A brief statement of the reason or reasons for the denial, including the FOIA exemption or exemptions which the FOIA Officer has relied upon in denying the request; and

3. A statement that the denial may be appealed under §1601.23 and a description of the requirements of that section.

§ 1601.23 Appeals of denials.

(a) Right of appeal. If a request has been denied in whole or in part, the requester may appeal the denial to: FOIA Appeals Officer, United States Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 2175 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037–1809.

(b) Letter of appeal. The appeal must be in writing and must be sent within 30 days of receipt of the denial letter. An appeal should include a copy of the
§ 1601.24 Timing of responses to requests.

(a) In general. The CSB ordinarily shall respond to requests according to their order of receipt.

(b) Multitrack processing. (1) The CSB may use two processing tracks by distinguishing between simple and more complex requests based on the amount of work and/or time needed to process the request, including according to limits based on the number of pages involved. If the agency does so, it shall advise requesters assigned to its slower track of the eligibility limits for its faster track.

(2) The agency may provide requesters in its slower track with an opportunity to limit the scope of their requests in order to qualify for faster processing within the specified limits of the agency’s faster track. If it does so, the agency will contact the requester either by telephone or by letter, whichever is most efficient in each case.

(c) Unusual circumstances. (1) Where the time limits for processing a request cannot be met because of unusual circumstances and the CSB determines to extend the time limits on that basis, the agency shall as soon as practicable notify the requester in writing of the unusual circumstances and of the date by which processing of the request can be expected to be completed. Where the extension is for more than ten working days, the CSB shall provide the requester with an opportunity either to modify the request so that it may be processed within the time limits or to arrange an alternative time period for processing the request or a modified request.

(2) Where the CSB reasonably believes that multiple requests submitted by a requester, or by a group of requesters acting in concert, constitute a single request that would otherwise involve unusual circumstances, and the requests involve clearly related matters, they may be aggregated. Multiple requests involving unrelated matters will not be aggregated.

(d) Expedited processing. (1) Requests and appeals will be taken out of order and given expedited treatment whenever it is determined that they involve:

(i) Circumstances in which the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual;

(ii) An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal government activity, if made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information;

(iii) The loss of substantial due process rights; or

(iv) A matter of widespread and exceptional media interest in which there exists possible questions about the government’s integrity which affect public confidence.

(2) A request for expedited processing may be made at the time of the initial request for records or at any later time.

(3) A requester who seeks expedited processing must submit a statement, certified to be true and correct to the
§ 1601.25 Disclosure of requested records.

(a) The FOIA Officer shall make requested records available to the public to the greatest extent possible in keeping with the FOIA, except that the following records are exempt from the disclosure requirements:

(1) Records specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and which are, in fact, properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order;

(2) Records related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the CSB;

(3) Records specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 U.S.C. 552(b)) provided that such statute requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue or that the statute establishes particular criteria for withholding information or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(4) Records containing trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(5) Interagency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the CSB;

(6) Personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(7) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information:

(b) If a request for expedited processing is made, the CSB shall decide within ten calendar days of receipt whether to grant it and shall notify the requester of the decision. If a request for expedited treatment is granted, the request shall be given priority and shall be processed as soon as practicable. If a request for expedited processing is denied, any appeal of that decision shall be acted on expeditiously.

(e) Appeals. A written determination on an appeal submitted in accordance with §1601.23 will be issued within 20 working days after receipt of the appeal. This time limit may be extended in unusual circumstances up to a total of 10 working days after written notice to the requester setting forth the reasons for the extension and the date on which a determination is expected to be made. As used in this paragraph, unusual circumstances means that there is a need to:

(1) Search for and collect the requested records from facilities that are separate from the office processing the request;

(2) Search for, collect, and appropriately examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records which are demanded in a single request; or

(3) Consult with another agency having a substantial interest in the determination of the request, or consult with various offices within the CSB that have a substantial interest in the records requested.

(f) When a determination cannot be mailed within the applicable time limit, the appeal will nevertheless be processed. In such case, upon the expiration of the time limit, the requester will be informed of the reason for the delay, of the date on which a determination may be expected to be mailed, and of that person’s right to seek judicial review. The requester may be asked to forego judicial review until determination of the appeal.
(i) Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings;
(ii) Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication;
(iii) Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
(iv) Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and in the case of a record or information compiled by criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;
(v) Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or
(vi) Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

(b) If a requested record contains exempted material along with non-exempted material, all reasonably segregable nonexempt material shall be disclosed.

(c) Even if an exemption described in paragraph (a) of this section may be reasonably applicable to a requested record, or portion thereof, the CSB may elect under the circumstances of any particular request not to apply the exemption to such requested record, or portion thereof, subject to the provisions in §1601.26 for confidential business information. The fact that the exemption is not applied by the CSB to any requested record, or portion thereof, has no precedential significance as to the application or non-application of the exemption to any other requested record, or portion thereof, no matter when the request is received.

§1601.26 Special procedures for confidential business information.

(a) In general. Confidential business information provided to the CSB by a business submitter shall not be disclosed pursuant to a FOIA request except in accordance with this section.

(b) Designation of business information. Business submitters should use good-faith efforts to designate, by appropriate markings, either at the time of submission or at a reasonable time thereafter, those portions of their submissions which they deem to be protected under Exemption 4 of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4). Any such designation will expire 10 years after the records were submitted to the government, unless the submitter requests, and provides reasonable justification for, a designation period of longer duration.

(c) Predisclosure notification. (1) Except as is provided for in paragraph (b) of this section, the FOIA Officer shall, to the extent permitted by law, provide a submitter with prompt written notice of a FOIA request or administrative appeal encompassing its confidential business information whenever required under paragraph (d) of this section. Such notice shall either describe the exact nature of the business information requested or provide copies of the records or portions thereof containing the business information.

(2) Whenever the FOIA Officer provides a business submitter with the notice set forth in this paragraph, the FOIA Officer shall notify the requester that the request includes information that may arguably be exempt from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the FOIA and that the person or entity who submitted the information to the CSB has been given the opportunity to comment on the proposed disclosure of information.

(d) When notice is required. The CSB shall provide a business submitter with notice of a request whenever:

(1) The business submitter has in good faith designated the information
§ 1601.30 Fees to be charged—general.

(a) Policy. Generally, the fees charged for requests for records pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552 shall cover the full allowable direct costs of searching for, reproducing, and reviewing records that are responsive to a request for information. Fees shall be assessed according to the schedule contained in paragraph (b) of this section and the category of requesters described in §1601.31 for services rendered by the CSB staff in responding to, and processing requests for, records under this part. Fees assessed will be paid by check or money order payable to the United States Treasury.

(b) Types of charges. The types of charges that may be assessed in connection with the production of records in response to a FOIA request are as follows:

(1) Searches.
   (i) Manual searches for records. For each quarter hour spent in searching for and/or reviewing a requested record, the fees will be: $4.00 for clerical personnel; $8.00 for professional personnel; and $11.00 for managerial personnel.
   (ii) Computer searches for records. Requesters will be charged at the actual direct costs of conducting a search
Chem. Safety and Hazard Invest. Board

§ 1601.31 Fees to be charged—categories of requesters.

(a) Fees for various requester categories. Paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section state, for each category of requester, the types of fees generally charged by the CSB. However, for each of these categories, the fees may be limited, waived or reduced in accordance with the provisions set forth in §1601.32(c). If the CSB has reasonable cause to doubt the purpose specified in the request for which a requester will use the records sought, or where the purpose is not clear from the request itself, the CSB will seek clarification before assigning the request a specific category.

(b) Commercial use requester. The CSB shall charge fees for records requested by persons or entities making a commercial use request in an amount that equals the full direct costs for searching for, reviewing for release, and reproducing the records sought. Commercial use requesters are not entitled to 2 hours of free search time nor 100 free pages of reproduction of records. In accordance with §1601.30, commercial use requesters may be charged the costs of searching for and reviewing records even if there is ultimately no disclosure of records.

(c) Educational and noncommercial scientific institutions. The CSB shall charge fees for records requested by, or on behalf of, educational institutions and noncommercial scientific institutions in an amount which equals the cost of reproducing the records responsive to the request, excluding the cost of reproducing the first 100 pages. No search fee shall be charged with respect to requests by educational and noncommercial scientific institutions. For a request to be included in this category, requesters must show that the request being made is authorized by and under the auspices of a qualifying institution, and that the records are not sought for commercial use but are tractive discretion, to comply with a request for a special service or materials, such as certifying that records are true copies or sending records by special methods, the actual direct costs of providing the service or materials will be charged.

§ 1601.31 Fees to be charged—categories of requesters.

(iii) Unproductive searches. The CSB will charge search fees even if no records are found which are responsive to the request or if the records found are exempt from disclosure.

(2) Duplication. Records will be reproduced at a rate of $0.25 per page. For copies prepared by computer, such as tapes or printouts, the requester shall be charged the actual cost, including operator time, of production of the tape or printout. For other methods of reproduction, the actual direct costs of reproducing the record(s) shall be charged.

(3) Review. Only commercial-use requesters may be charged for time spent reviewing records to determine whether they are exempt from mandatory disclosure. Charges may be assessed only for initial review, i.e., the review undertaken the first time the CSB analyzes the applicability of a specific exemption to a particular record or portion of a record. Records or portions of records withheld in full under an exemption that is subsequently determined not to apply may be reviewed again to determine the applicability of other exemptions not previously considered. The costs for such a subsequent review are properly assessable.

(4) Other services and materials. Where the CSB elects, as a matter of adminis-
§ 1601.32 Limitations on charging fees.

(a) In general. Except for requesters seeking records for a commercial use as described in §1601.31(b), the CSB will provide, without charge, the first 100 pages of duplication and the first 2 hours of search time, or their cost equivalent.

(b) No fee charged. The CSB will not charge fees to any requester, including commercial use requesters, if the cost of collecting a fee would be equal to or greater than the fee itself. The elements to be considered in determining the cost of collecting a fee are the administrative costs of receiving and recording a requester’s remittance and of processing the fee.

(c) Waiver or reduction of fees. The CSB may grant a waiver or reduction of fees if the CSB determines that the disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the Federal government, and the disclosure of the information is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. Requests for a waiver or reduction of fees will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The following factors will be considered by the CSB in determining whether a waiver or reduction of fees is in the public interest:

(1) The subject of the request. Whether the subject of the requested records concerns the operations or activities of the government. The subject matter of the requested records, in the context of the request, must specifically concern identifiable operations or activities of the Federal government with a connection that is direct and clear, not remote or attenuated. Furthermore, the records must be sought for their informative value with respect to those government operations or activities; a request for access to records for their intrinsic informational content alone...
will not satisfy this threshold consideration.

(ii) The informative value of the information to be disclosed. Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute to an understanding of government operations or activities. The disclosable portions of the requested records must be meaningfully informative on specific government operations or activities in order to hold potential for contributing to increased public understanding of those operations and activities. The disclosure of information that is already in the public domain, in either a duplicative or substantially identical form, would not be likely to contribute to such understanding, as nothing new would be added to the public record.

(iii) The contribution to an understanding of the subject by the general public. Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to the public understanding. The disclosure must contribute to the understanding of the public at large, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requester or a narrow segment of interested persons. A requester’s identity and qualifications, e.g., expertise in the subject area and ability and intention to convey information to the general public, will be considered.

(iv) The significance of the contribution in public understanding. Whether the disclosure is likely to significantly enhance the public understanding of government operations or activities. The public’s understanding of the subject matter in question, as compared to the level of public understanding existing prior to the disclosure, must be likely to be enhanced by the disclosure to a significant extent. The FOIA Officer shall not make a separate value judgment as to whether information, even though it in fact would contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government, is “important” enough to be made public.

(2) In order to determine whether the second fee waiver requirement is met, i.e., that disclosure of the requested information is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester, the CSB shall consider the following two factors in sequence:

(i) The existence and magnitude of a commercial interest. Whether the requester, or any person on whose behalf the requester may be acting, has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. In assessing the magnitude of identified commercial interests, consideration will be given to the effect that the information disclosed would have on those commercial interests, as well as to the extent to which FOIA disclosures serve those interests overall. Requesters shall be given a reasonable opportunity in the administrative process to provide information bearing upon this consideration.

(ii) The primary interest in disclosure. Whether the magnitude of the identified commercial interest of the requester is sufficiently large in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. A fee waiver or reduction is warranted only where, once the public interest standard set out in paragraph (c)(1) of this section is satisfied, that public interest can fairly be regarded as greater in magnitude than that of the requester’s commercial interest in disclosure. The CSB will ordinarily presume that, where a news media requester has satisfied the public interest standard, the public interest will be served primarily by disclosure to that requester. Disclosure to requesters who compile and market Federal government information for direct economic gain will not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

(3) Where only a portion of the requested record satisfies the requirements for a waiver or reduction of fees under this paragraph, a waiver or reduction shall be granted only as to that portion.

(4) A request for a waiver or reduction of fees must accompany the request for disclosure of records and should include:

(i) A clear statement of the requester’s interest in the records;

(ii) The proposed use of the records and whether the requester will derive income or other benefit from such use;

(iii) A statement of how the public will benefit from release of the requested records; and
§ 1601.33  Miscellaneous fee provisions.

(a) Notice of anticipated fees in excess of $25. Where the CSB determines or estimates that the fees chargeable will amount to more than $25, the CSB shall promptly notify the requester of the actual or estimated amount of fees or such portion thereof that can be readily estimated, unless the requester has indicated his or her willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. Where a requester has been notified that the actual or estimated fees may exceed $25, the request will be deemed not to have been received until the requester has agreed to pay the anticipated total fee. A notice to the requester pursuant to this paragraph will include the opportunity to confer with CSB personnel in order to reformulate the request to meet the requester’s needs at a lower cost.

(b) Aggregating requests. A requester may not file multiple requests at the same time, each seeking portions of a record or records, solely in order to avoid the payment of fees. When the CSB reasonably believes that a requester, or a group of requesters acting in concert, is attempting to break a request into a series of requests for the purpose of evading the assessment of fees, the CSB may aggregate such requests and charge accordingly. One element to be considered in determining whether a belief would be reasonable is the time period over which the requests have occurred. The CSB will presume that multiple requests of this type made within a 30-day period have been made in order to evade fees. Where requests are separated by a longer period, the CSB shall aggregate them only where there exists a solid basis for determining that such aggregation is warranted, e.g., where the requests involve clearly related matters. Multiple requests regarding unrelated matters will not be aggregated.

(c) Advance payment of fees. (1) The CSB does not require an advance payment before work is commenced or continued, unless:

(i) The CSB estimates or determines that the fees are likely to exceed $250. If it appears that the fees will exceed $250, the CSB will notify the requester of the likely cost and obtain satisfactory assurance of full payment where the requester has a history of prompt payment of FOIA fees. In the case of requesters with no history of payment, the CSB may require an advance payment of fees in an amount up to the full estimated charge that will be incurred; or

(ii) The requester has previously failed to pay a fee in a timely fashion, i.e., within 30 days of the date of a billing. In such cases, the CSB may require the requester to pay the full amount owed plus any applicable interest, as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, or demonstrate that the fee owed has been paid, prior to processing any further record request. Under these circumstances, the CSB may require the requester to make an advance payment of the full amount of the fees anticipated before processing a new request or finishing processing of a pending request from that requester.

(2) A request for an advance deposit shall ordinarily include an offer to the requester to confer with identified CSB personnel to attempt to reformulate the request in a manner which will meet the needs of the requester at a lower cost.

(3) When the CSB requests an advance payment of fees, the administrative time limits described in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6) begin only after the CSB has received the advance payment.

(d) Interest. The CSB may assess interest charges on an unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the day on which the bill was sent. Once a fee payment has been received by the CSB, even if not processed, the accrual of interest shall be stayed. Interest charges shall be assessed at the rate prescribed in 31 U.S.C. 3717 and shall accrue from the date of the billing.

(e) Whenever a total fee calculated under paragraph (d) of this section is $14.00 or less for any request, no fee will be charged.
§ 1602.2 Requests for access to records.

(a) How made and addressed. You may make a request for access to a CSB record about yourself by appearing in person or by writing to the CSB. Your request should be sent or delivered to the CSB's General Counsel, at 2175 K Street, NW., 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20037. For the quickest possible handling, you should mark both your request letter and the envelope "Privacy Act Request."  

(b) Description of records sought. You must describe the records that you want in enough detail to enable CSB personnel to locate the system of records containing them with a reasonable amount of effort. Whenever possible, your request should describe the records sought, the time periods in which you believe they were compiled, and the name or identifying number of each system of records in which you believe they are kept. The CSB publishes notices in the Federal Register that describe its systems of records. A description of the CSB's systems of records also may be found as part of the "Privacy Act Compilation" published by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of the Federal Register. This compilation is available in most large reference and university libraries. This compilation also can be accessed electronically at the Government Printing Office's World Wide Web site (which can be found at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs).  

(c) Agreement to pay fees. If you make a Privacy Act request for access to records, it shall be considered an agreement by you to pay all applicable fees charged under § 1602.9 up to $25.00. The CSB ordinarily will confirm this agreement in an acknowledgment letter. When making a request, you may
§ 1602.3 Responsibility for responding to requests for access to records.

(a) In general. In determining which records are responsive to a request, the CSB ordinarily will include only those records in its possession as of the date the CSB begins its search for them. If any other date is used, the CSB will inform the requester of that date.

(b) Authority to grant or deny requests. The CSB’s General Counsel, or his/her designee, is authorized to grant or deny any request for access to a record of the CSB.

(c) Consultations and referrals. When the CSB receives a request for access to a record in its possession, it will determine whether another agency of the Federal Government is better able to determine whether the record is exempt from access under the Privacy Act. If the CSB determines that it is best able to process the record in response to the request, then it will do so. If the CSB determines that it is not best able to process the record, then it will either:

1. Respond to the request regarding that record, after consulting with the agency best able to determine whether the record is exempt from access and with any other agency that has a substantial interest in it; or

2. Refer the responsibility for responding to the request regarding that record to another agency that originated the record (but only if that agency is subject to the Privacy Act). Ordinarily, the agency that originated a record will be presumed to be best able to determine whether it is exempt from access.

(d) Notice of referral. Whenever the CSB refers all or any part of the responsibility for responding to your request to another agency, it ordinarily will notify you of the referral and inform you of the name of each agency to which the request has been referred and of the part of the request that has been referred.

(e) Timing of responses to consultations and referrals. All consultations and referrals shall be handled according to the date the Privacy Act access request was initially received by the CSB, not any later date.

§ 1602.4 Responses to requests for access to records.

(a) Acknowledgments of requests. On receipt of your request, the CSB ordinarily will send an acknowledgment letter, which shall confirm your agreement to pay fees under § 1602.2(c) and may provide an assigned request number for further reference.

(b) Grants of requests for access. Once the CSB makes a determination to grant your request for access in whole or in part, it will notify you in writing. The CSB will inform you in the notice of any fee charged under § 1602.9 and will disclose records to you promptly on payment of any applicable fee. If your request is made in person, the
CSB may disclose records to you directly, in a manner not unreasonably disruptive of its operations, on payment of any applicable fee and with a written record made of the grant of the request. If you are accompanied by another person when you make a request in person, you shall be required to authorize in writing any discussion of the records in the presence of the other person.

(c) Adverse determinations of requests for access. If the CSB makes an adverse determination denying your request for access in any respect, it will notify you of that determination in writing. Adverse determinations, or denials of requests, consist of: a determination to withhold any requested record in whole or in part; a determination that a requested record does not exist or cannot be located; a determination that what has been requested is not a record subject to the Privacy Act; a determination on any disputed fee matter; and a denial of a request for expedited treatment. The notification letter shall be signed by the General Counsel, or his/her designee, and shall include:

(1) The name and title or position of the person responsible for the denial;
(2) A brief statement of the reason(s) for the denial, including any Privacy Act exemption(s) applied by the CSB in denying the request; and
(3) A statement that the denial may be appealed under §1602.5(a) and a description of the requirements of §1602.5(a).

§ 1602.5 Appeals from denials of requests for access to records.

(a) Appeals. If you are dissatisfied with the CSB’s response to your request for access to records, you may appeal an adverse determination denying your request in any respect to the Privacy Act Appeals Officer of the CSB, 2175 K Street, NW., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037. You must make your appeal in writing, and it must be received within 60 days of the date of the letter denying your request. Your appeal letter may include as much or as little related information as you wish, as long as it clearly identifies the determination (including the assigned request number, if any) that you are appealing. For the quickest possible handling, you should mark both your appeal letter and the envelope “Privacy Act Appeal.”

(b) Responses to appeals. The decision on your appeal will be made in writing. A decision affirming an adverse determination in whole or in part will include a brief statement of the reason(s) for the affirmance, including any Privacy Act exemption applied, and will inform you of the Privacy Act provisions for court review of the decision. If the adverse determination is reversed or modified on appeal in whole or in part, you will be notified in a written decision and your request will be reprocessed in accordance with that appeal decision.

(c) When appeal is required. If you wish to seek review by a court of any adverse determination or denial of a request, you must first appeal it under this section.

§ 1602.6 Requests for amendment or correction of records.

(a) How made and addressed. You may make a request for amendment or correction of a CSB record about yourself by following the procedures in §1602.2. Your request should identify each particular record in question, state the amendment or correction that you want, and state why you believe that the record is not accurate, relevant, timely, or complete. You may submit any documentation that you think would be helpful.

(b) CSB responses. Within ten working days of receiving your request for amendment or correction of records, the CSB will send you a written acknowledgment of its receipt of your request, and it will promptly notify you whether your request is granted or denied. If the CSB grants your request in whole or in part, it will describe the amendment or correction made and advise you of your right to obtain a copy of the corrected or amended record. If the CSB denies your request in whole or in part, it will send you a letter stating:

(1) The reason(s) for the denial; and
(2) The procedure for appeal of the denial under paragraph (c) of this section, including the name and business address of the official who will act on your appeal.
§ 1602.7

(c) Appeals. You may appeal a denial of a request for amendment or correction in the same manner as a denial of a request for access to records (see § 1602.5), and the same procedures will be followed. If your appeal is denied, you will be advised of your right to file a Statement of Disagreement as described in paragraph (d) of this section and of your right under the Privacy Act for court review of the decision.

(d) Statements of Disagreement. If your appeal under this section is denied in whole or in part, you have the right to file a Statement of Disagreement that states your reason(s) for disagreeing with the CSB’s denial of your request for amendment or correction. Statements of Disagreement must be concise, must clearly identify each part of any record that is disputed, and should be no longer than one typed page for each fact disputed. Your Statement of Disagreement must be sent to the CSB, which will place it in the system of records in which the disputed record is maintained and will mark the disputed record to indicate that a Statement of Disagreement has been filed and where in the system of records it may be found.

(e) Notification of amendment/correction or disagreement. Within 30 working days of the amendment or correction of a record, the CSB shall notify all persons, organizations, or agencies to which it previously disclosed the record, if an accounting of that disclosure was made, that the record has been amended or corrected. If an individual has filed a Statement of Disagreement, the CSB will attach a copy of it to the disputed record whenever the record is disclosed and may also attach a concise statement of its reason(s) for denying the request to amend or correct the record.

§ 1602.8 Preservation of records.

The CSB will preserve all correspondence pertaining to the requests that it receives under this part, as well as copies of all requested records, until disposition or destruction is authorized by Title 44 of the United States Code or the National Archives and Records Administration’s General Records Schedule 14. Records will not be disposed of while they are the subject of a pending request, appeal, or lawsuit under the Privacy Act.

§ 1602.9 Fees.

The CSB will charge fees for duplication of records under the Privacy Act in the same way in which it charges duplication fees under the FOIA (see part 1601, subpart D of this chapter). No search or review fee will be charged for any record.

§ 1602.10 Notice of court-ordered and emergency disclosures.

(a) Court-ordered disclosures. When a record pertaining to an individual is required to be disclosed by a court order, the CSB will make reasonable efforts to provide notice of this to the individual. Notice will be given within a reasonable time after the CSB’s receipt of the order—except that in a case in which the order is not a matter of public record, the notice will be given only
after the order becomes public. This notice will be mailed to the individual’s last known address and will contain a copy of the order and a description of the information disclosed.

(b) Emergency disclosures. Upon disclosing a record pertaining to an individual made under compelling circumstances affecting health or safety, the CSB will notify that individual of the disclosure. This notice will be mailed to the individual’s last known address and will contain a copy of the information disclosed; the person, organization, or agency to which it was disclosed; the date of disclosure; and the compelling circumstances justifying the disclosure.

PART 1603—RULES IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT

§ 1603.1 Applicability.
(a) This part implements the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act, 5 U.S.C. 552b. These procedures apply to meetings, as defined herein, of the Members of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (“CSB” or “Board”).

(b) This part does not affect the procedures by which CSB records are made available to the public, which continue to be governed by part 1601 of this chapter pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, except that the exemptions set forth in §1603.7 shall govern in the case of any requests made for the transcripts, recordings, and minutes described in §1603.11.

§ 1603.2 Policy.
It is the policy of the CSB to provide the public with the fullest practicable information regarding the decision-making processes of the Board, while protecting the rights of individuals and the ability of the Board to discharge its statutory functions and responsibilities. The public is invited to attend but not to participate in open meetings. For any open meeting, the Board, by majority vote, may decide to allow for a public comment period immediately following the close of that meeting.

§ 1603.3 Definitions.
As used in this part:
(a) Days means calendar days, except where noted otherwise.

(b) General Counsel means the Board’s principal legal officer, or a CSB attorney serving as Acting General Counsel.

(c) Meeting means the deliberations of at least a quorum of Members where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of official CSB business, and includes conference telephone calls or other exchanges otherwise coming within the definition. A meeting does not include:

(1) Notation voting or similar consideration of business, whether by circulation of material to the Members individually in writing or by a polling of the Members individually by telephone.

(2) Action by at least a quorum of Members to:

(i) Open or to close a meeting or to release or to withhold information pursuant to §1603.7;

(ii) Set an agenda for a proposed meeting(s);

(iii) Call a meeting on less than seven days’ notice as permitted by §1603.9(b); or

(iv) Change the subject matter or the determination to open or to close a publicly announced meeting under §1603.10(b).
§ 1603.4 Open meetings requirement.

Any meetings of the Board, as defined in §1603.3, shall be conducted in accordance with this part. Except as provided in §1603.7, the Board's meetings, or portions thereof, shall be open to public observation.

§ 1603.5 Assurance of compliance.

(a) The General Counsel or another attorney designated by the General Counsel will attend and monitor all briefings described in §1603.3(c)(3) and (c)(4) and all informal preliminary discussions described in §1603.3(c)(5), to assure that those gatherings do not proceed to the point of becoming deliberations and meetings for Sunshine Act purposes.

(b) The General Counsel or the designated attorney will inform the Board Members if developing discussions at a briefing or gathering should be deferred until a notice of an open or closed meeting can be published in the Federal Register, and a meeting conducted pursuant to the Sunshine Act and this part.

(c) For each briefing described in §1603.3(c)(3) or (c)(4) and each informal preliminary discussion described in §1603.3(c)(5), the General Counsel is hereby authorized to designate a CSB employee, other than the attorney referred to in paragraph (a) of this section, to serve as a reporter. An employee may be designated as reporter for a single briefing or informal discussion or for a series of briefings or discussions. The reporter shall attend and prepare a written summary of each briefing or informal discussion that is the subject of the summary for review and approval as a fair and accurate summary of that briefing or discussion. The written summaries of briefings and informal discussions shall be maintained in the Office of General Counsel.

§ 1603.6 Business requiring a meeting.

The Board may, by majority vote of its Members, determine that particular items or classes of Board business cannot be accomplished by notation voting, but must instead be decided by a recorded vote at a meeting, as defined in §1603.3(c).
§ 1603.7 Grounds on which meetings may be closed or information may be withheld.

Except in a case where the Board finds that the public interest requires otherwise, a meeting may be closed and information pertinent to such meeting otherwise required by §§1603.8, 1603.9, and 1603.10 to be disclosed to the public may be withheld if the Board properly determines that such meeting or portion thereof or the disclosure of such information is likely to:

(a) Disclose matters that are:
   (1) Specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or foreign policy; and
   (2) In fact, properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order. In making the determination that this exemption applies, the Board shall rely upon the classification assigned to a document by the Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or other originating agency;

(b) Relate solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the CSB;

(c) Disclose matters specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 U.S.C. 552), provided that such statute:
   (1) Requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue; or
   (2) Establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(d) Disclose trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(e) Involve accusing any person of a crime, or formally censuring any person;

(f) Disclose information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(g) Disclose investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, or information which if written would be contained in such records, but only to the extent that the production of such records or information would:
   (1) Interfere with enforcement proceedings;

(2) Deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication;

(3) Constitue an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(4) Disclose the identity of a confidential source and, in the case of a record compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, confidential information furnished only by the confidential source;

(5) Disclose investigative techniques and procedures; or

(6) Endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement personnel;

(h) Disclose information the premature disclosure of which would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed action of the CSB, except that this paragraph shall not apply in any instance where the Board has already disclosed to the public the content or nature of its proposed action or is required by law to make such disclosure on its own initiative prior to taking final action on such proposal;

(i) Specifically concern the Board’s issuance of a subpoena, or the CSB’s participation in a civil action or proceeding, an action in a foreign court or international tribunal, or an arbitration, or the initiation, conduct, or disposition by the CSB of a particular case of formal agency adjudication pursuant to the procedures in 5 U.S.C. 554 or otherwise involving a determination on the record after opportunity for a hearing; or

(j) Disclose other information for which the Government in the Sunshine Act provides an exemption to the open meeting requirements of that Act.

§ 1603.8 Procedures for closing meetings, or withholding information, and requests by affected persons to close a meeting.

(a) A meeting shall not be closed, or information pertaining thereto withheld, unless a majority of all Members votes to take such action. A majority of the Board may act by taking a single vote with respect to a series of meetings, a portion or portions of which are...
§ 1603.9 Procedures for public announcement of meetings.

(a) For each meeting, the CSB shall make public announcement, at least one week before the meeting, of:
   (1) The time of the meeting;
   (2) The place of the meeting;
   (3) The subject matter of the meeting;
   (4) Whether the meeting is to be open or closed; and
   (5) The name and business telephone number of the official designated by the CSB to respond to requests for information about the meeting.

(b) The one week advance notice required by paragraph (a) of this section may be reduced only if:
   (1) A majority of all Members determines by recorded vote that CSB business requires that such meeting be scheduled in less than seven days; and
   (2) The public announcement required by paragraph (a) of this section is made at the earliest practicable time.

(c) Immediately following each public announcement required by this section, or by §1603.10, the CSB shall submit a notice of public announcement for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

§ 1603.10 Changes following public announcement.

(a) The time or place of a meeting may be changed following the public announcement only if the CSB publicly announces such change at the earliest practicable time. Members need not approve such change.

(b) A meeting may be cancelled, or the subject matter of a meeting or the determination of the Board to open or to close a meeting, or a portion thereof, to the public may be changed following public announcement only if:
   (1) A majority of all Members determines by recorded vote that CSB business so requires and that no earlier announcement of the cancellation or change was possible; and
   (2) The CSB publicly announces such cancellation or change and the vote of each Member thereon at the earliest practicable time.

(c) The deletion of any subject matter announced for a meeting is not a change requiring the approval of the
§ 1603.11 Transcripts, recordings, or minutes of closed meetings.

(a) Along with the General Counsel’s certification referred to in §1603.8(d), the CSB shall maintain a complete transcript or electronic recording adequate to record fully the proceedings of each meeting, or a portion thereof, closed to the public. The CSB may maintain a set of minutes in lieu of such transcript or recording for meetings closed pursuant to §1603.7(l). Such minutes shall fully and clearly describe all matters discussed and shall provide a full and accurate summary of any actions taken, and the reasons therefor, including a description of each of the views expressed on any item and the record of any rollcall vote. All documents considered in connection with any actions shall be identified in such minutes.

(b) The CSB shall maintain a complete verbatim copy of the transcript, a complete copy of the minutes, or a complete electronic recording of each meeting, or a portion thereof, closed to the public for at least two years after such meeting, or until one year after the conclusion of any CSB proceeding with respect to which the meeting, or a portion thereof, was held, whichever occurs later.

§ 1603.12 Availability of transcripts, recordings, and minutes, and applicable fees.

The CSB shall make promptly available to the public the transcript, electronic recording, or minutes of the discussion of any item on the agenda or of any testimony received at a meeting, except for such item, or items, of discussion or testimony as determined by the CSB to contain matters which may be withheld under the exemptive provisions of §1603.7. Copies of the non-exempt portions of the transcript or minutes, or transcription of such recordings disclosing the identity of each speaker, shall be furnished to any person at the actual cost of transcription or duplication. Requests for transcripts, recordings, or minutes shall be made in writing to the General Counsel of the CSB, 2175 K Street, NW., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037.

§ 1603.13 Report to Congress.

The CSB General Counsel shall annually report to the Congress regarding the Board’s compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act, including a tabulation of the total number of open meetings, the total number of closed meetings, the reasons for closing such meetings and a description of any litigation brought against the Board pursuant to the Government in the Sunshine Act, including any costs assessed against the Board in such litigation (whether or not paid by the Board).

§ 1603.14 Severability.

If any provision of this part or the application of such provision to any person or circumstances, is held invalid, the remainder of this part or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby.

PART 1610—ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS

§ 1610.1 Representation of witnesses in investigations.

(a) Witnesses who are compelled to appear. Witnesses who are compelled to appear for a deposition (i.e., by subpoena) are entitled to be accompanied, represented, and advised by an attorney as follows:

(1) Counsel for a witness may advise the witness with respect to any question asked where it is claimed that the testimony or other evidence sought from a witness is outside the scope of the investigation, or that the witness
§ 1610.2 Repeated attorney misconduct, sanctions, hearings.

(a) If an attorney who has been sanctioned by the Board for disorderly, dilatory, obstructionist, or contumacious conduct, or contemptuous language in the course of a deposition under §1610.1(a)(5) is sanctioned again by the Board in a subsequent deposition or investigation, the Board, after offering the attorney an opportunity to be heard, may reprimand, censure the attorney, or suspend the attorney from further practice before the Board for such period of time as the Board deems advisable.

(b) A reprimand or a censure shall be ordered with grounds stated on the record. A suspension shall be in writing, shall state the grounds on which it is based, and shall advise the person suspended of the right to appeal.

(c) An attorney suspended pursuant to this section may within ten (10) days after issuance of the order file an appeal with the Board. The appeal shall be in writing and state concisely, with supporting argument, why the appellant believes the order was erroneous, either as a matter of fact or law. If necessary for a full and fair consideration of the facts, the Board, as a whole may conduct further evidentiary hearings.
or may refer the matter to another presiding officer for development of a record. Such presiding officer may be an attorney who is a Member of the Board or is employed in the Office of General Counsel, or an administrative law judge detailed from another agency pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3344. If the Board refers the matter to a presiding officer, unless the Board provides specific directions to the presiding officer, that officer shall determine the procedure to be followed and who shall present evidence, subject to applicable provisions of law. Such hearing shall commence as soon as possible. If no appeal is taken of a suspension, or, if the suspension is upheld at the conclusion of the appeal, the presiding officer, or the Board, as appropriate, shall notify the state bar(s) to which the attorney is admitted. Such notification shall include copies of the order of suspension, and, if an appeal was taken, briefs of the parties, and the decision of the Board.

[66 FR 17363, Mar. 30, 2001]

§ 1610.3 Sequestration of witnesses and exclusion of Counsel.

(a) All witnesses compelled by subpoena to submit to CSB depositions shall be sequestered unless the official conducting the depositions permits otherwise.

(b) Any witness compelled by subpoena to appear at a deposition during a CSB investigation may be accompanied, represented, and advised by an attorney in good standing of his or her choice, pursuant to §1610.1. However, when the CSB official conducting the investigation determines, after consultation with the Office of General Counsel, that the CSB has concrete evidence that the presence of an attorney representing multiple interests would obstruct and impede the investigation or inspection, the CSB official may prohibit that counsel from being present during the deposition.

(c) The deposing official is to provide a witness whose counsel has been excluded under paragraph (b) of this section, and the witness’ counsel, a written statement of the reasons supporting the decision to exclude. This statement, which must be provided no later than five working days after exclusion, must explain the basis for the counsel’s exclusion. This statement must also advise the witness of the witness’ right to appeal the exclusion decision and obtain an automatic stay of the effectiveness of the subpoena by filing a motion to quash the subpoena with the Board within five days of receipt of this written statement.

(d) Within five days after receipt of the written notification required in paragraph (c) of this section, a witness whose counsel has been excluded may appeal the exclusion decision by filing a motion to quash the subpoena with the Board. The filing of the motion to quash will stay the effectiveness of the subpoena pending the Board’s decision on the motion.

(e) If a witness’ counsel is excluded under paragraph (b) of this section, the deposition may, at the witness’ request, either proceed without counsel or be delayed for a reasonable period of time to permit the retention of new counsel. The deposition may also be rescheduled to a subsequent date established by the CSB, although the deposition shall not be rescheduled by the CSB to a date that precedes the expiration of the time provided in paragraph (d) of this section for appeal of the exclusion of counsel, unless the witness consents to an earlier date.

[66 FR 17363, Mar. 30, 2001]

PART 1611—TESTIMONY BY EMPLOYEES IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Sec. 1611.1 General.
1611.2 Definitions.
1611.3 Scope of permissible testimony.
1611.4 Manner in which testimony is given in civil litigation.
1611.5 Request for testimony in civil litigation.
1611.6 Testimony by former CSB employees.
1611.7 Testimony by current CSB employees regarding prior activity.
1611.8 Procedure in the event of a subpoena in civil litigation.
1611.9 Testimony in Federal, State, or local criminal investigations and other proceedings.
1611.10 Obtaining CSB investigation reports and supporting information.

§ 1611.1 General.

(a) This part prescribes policies and procedures regarding the testimony of employees of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) in suits or actions for damages and criminal proceedings arising out of chemical incidents when such testimony is in an official capacity and arises out of or is related to an incident investigation. The purpose of this part is to ensure that the time of CSB employees is used only for official purposes, to avoid embroiling the CSB in controversial issues that are not related to its duties, to avoid spending public funds for non-CSB purposes, to preserve the impartiality of the CSB, and to prohibit the discovery of opinion testimony.

(b) This part does not apply to:

(1) Congressional requests or subpoenas for testimony or records;

(2) Federal court civil proceedings in which the United States is a party;

(3) Federal administrative proceedings in which the United States is a party;

(4) Employees who voluntarily testify, while on their own time or in approved leave status, as private citizens as to facts or events that are not related to the official business of the CSB. The employee must state for the record that the testimony represents the employee’s own views and is not necessarily the official position of the CSB.

(c) This part only provides guidance for the internal operations of the CSB, and neither creates nor is intended to create any enforceable right or benefit against the United States.

§ 1611.2 Definitions.

CSB incident report means the report containing the CSB’s determinations, including the probable cause of an incident, issued either as a narrative report or in a computer format. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 7412(r)(6)(G), no part of the conclusions, findings or recommendations of the CSB relating to an accidental release or the investigation thereof, may be admitted as evidence or used in any suit or action for damages growing out of any matter mentioned in such report.

Employee, for the purpose of this part and part 1612 of this chapter, refers to current or former CSB Board Members or employees, including student interns, and contractors, contract employees, or consultants (and their employees). This definition does not include persons who are no longer employed by or under contract to the CSB, and who are retained or hired as expert witnesses or agree to testify about matters that do not involve their work for the CSB.

§ 1611.3 Scope of permissible testimony.

(a) The statute creating the CSB, 42 U.S.C. 7412(r)(6)(G), precludes the use or admission into evidence of CSB investigative reports in any suit or action for damages arising from such incidents. This provision would be undermined if expert opinion testimony of CSB employees, which may be reflected in the views of the CSB expressed in its reports, were admitted in evidence or used in litigation arising out of an incident. The CSB relies heavily upon its investigators’ opinions in its deliberations. Furthermore, the use of CSB employees as experts to give opinion testimony would impose a significant administrative burden on the CSB’s investigative staff.

(b) For the reasons stated in paragraph (a) of this section and §1611.1, CSB employees may only testify as to the factual information they obtained during the course of an investigation. However, they shall decline to testify regarding matters beyond the scope of their investigation, and they shall not give any expert or opinion testimony.

(c) CSB employees may testify about the firsthand information they obtained during an investigation that is not reasonably available elsewhere, including their own factual observations. Consistent with the principles cited in §1611.1 and this section, current CSB employees are not authorized to testify regarding other employee’s observations or reports, or other types of CSB documents, including but not limited to safety recommendations, safety studies, safety proposals, safety accomplishments, reports labeled studies, and...
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§ 1611.6 Testimony of former CSB employees.

(a) It is not necessary to request CSB approval for testimony of a former CSB employee, nor is such testimony limited to depositions. However, the scope of permissible testimony continues to be constrained by all the limitations set forth in §1611.3 and §1611.4.

(b) Any former employee who is served with a subpoena to appear and testify in connection with civil litigation that relates to his or her work with the CSB, shall immediately notify the CSB General Counsel and provide all information requested by the General Counsel.

§ 1611.7 Testimony by current CSB employees regarding prior activity.

Any testimony regarding any incident within the CSB’s jurisdiction, or any expert testimony arising from employment prior to CSB service is prohibited absent approval by the General Counsel. Approval shall only be given if testimony will not violate §1611.1 and §1611.3, and is subject to whatever conditions the General Counsel finds necessary to promote the purposes of this part as set forth in §1611.1 and §1611.3.

§ 1611.8 Procedure in the event of a subpoena in civil litigation.

(a) If the CSB employee has received a subpoena to appear and testify in connection with civil litigation, a request for his deposition shall not be approved until the subpoena has been withdrawn.

(b) Upon receipt of a subpoena, the employee shall immediately notify the General Counsel and provide all information requested by the General Counsel.

(c) The General Counsel shall determine the course of action to be taken and will so advise the employee.

§ 1611.9 Testimony in Federal, State, or local criminal investigations and other proceedings.

(a) As with civil litigation, the CSB prefers that testimony be taken by deposition if court rules permit, and that testimony await the issuance of the investigation report. The CSB recognizes, however, that in the case of coroner’s inquests and grand jury proceedings this may not be possible. The CSB encourages those seeking testimony of CSB employees to contact the General Counsel as soon as such testimony is being considered. Whenever the intent to seek such testimony is communicated to the employee, he shall immediately notify the General Counsel.

(b) In any case, CSB employees are prohibited from testifying in any civil, criminal, or other matter, either in person or by deposition or interrogatories, absent advance approval of the General Counsel.

(c) If permission to testify by deposition or in person is granted, testimony shall be limited as set forth in §1611.3.

Only factual testimony is authorized; no expert or opinion testimony shall be given.

§ 1611.10 Obtaining CSB investigation reports and supporting information.

It is the responsibility of the individual requesting testimony to obtain desired documents. There are a number of ways to obtain CSB investigation reports, and accompanying investigation dockets. The rules at part 1612 of this chapter explain CSB procedures for production of records in legal proceedings, and the CSB’s Freedom of Information Act rules at part 1601 of this chapter explain CSB procedures for producing documents more generally. See also the information available on the CSB web site, at www.csb.gov. You may also call the CSB Office of General Counsel, at (202) 261–7600. Documents will not be supplied by witnesses at depositions, nor will copying services be provided by deponents.

PART 1612—PRODUCTION OF RECORDS IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Sec.

1612.1 Purpose and scope.

1612.2 Applicability.

1612.3 Published reports and material contained in the public incident investigation dockets.

1612.4 Requests for authentication or certification of records.

1612.5 Other material.


SOURCE: 66 FR 17366, Mar. 30, 2001, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1612.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part sets forth procedures to be followed when requesting material for use in legal proceedings (including administrative proceedings) in which the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) is not a party, and procedures to be followed by the employee upon receipt of a subpoena, order, or other demand (collectively referred to here as a demand) for such material by a court or other competent authority or by a private litigant. Material, as used in this part, means any
§ 1612.2 Applicability.

This part applies to requests to produce material concerning information acquired in the course of performing official duties or because of the employee’s official status. Specifically, this part applies to requests for: material contained in CSB files; and any information or material acquired by an employee of the CSB in the performance of official duties or as a result of the employee’s status. Two sets of procedures are here established, dependent on the type of material sought. Rules governing requests for employee testimony, as opposed to material production, can be found at part 1611 of this chapter. Document production shall not accompany employee testimony, absent compliance with this part and General Counsel approval.

§ 1612.3 Published reports and material contained in the public incident investigation dockets.

(a) Demands for published investigation reports should be directed to the Office of Congressional and Public Affairs, U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 2175 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037. Demands for material contained in the CSB’s official public docket files of its incident investigations shall be submitted, in writing, to CSB Records Officer, U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 2175 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037. For information regarding the types of documents routinely issued by the CSB, see part 1601 of this chapter.

(b) No subpoena shall be issued to obtain materials subject to this section, and any subpoena issued shall be required to be withdrawn prior to release of the requested information. Payment of reproduction fees may be required in advance.

§ 1612.4 Requests for authentication or certification of records.

The CSB may authenticate or certify records to facilitate their use as evidence. Requests for certified copies should be made to the General Counsel at least 30 days before the date they will be needed. The CSB may charge a certification fee of $5.00 per document.

§ 1612.5 Other material.

(a) Production prohibited unless approved. Except in the case of the material referenced in §1612.3, no employee or former employee of the CSB shall, in response to a demand of a private litigant, court, or other authority, produce any material contained in the files of the CSB (whether or not agency records under 5 U.S.C. 552) or produce any material acquired as part of the performance of the person’s official duties or because of the person’s official status, without the prior written approval of the General Counsel.

(b) Procedures to be followed for the production of material under this section.

(1) All demands for material shall be submitted to the General Counsel at CSB headquarters, 2175 K Street, NW., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037. If an employee receives a demand, he shall forward it immediately to the General Counsel.

(2) Each demand must contain an affidavit by the party seeking the material or his attorney setting forth the material sought and its relevance to the proceeding, and containing a certification, with support, that the information is not available from other sources, including CSB materials described in §1612.3 and part 1601 of this chapter.

(3) In the absence of General Counsel approval of a demand, the employee is not authorized to comply with the demand.
§ 1612.5

(4) The General Counsel shall advise the requester of approval or denial of the demand, and may attach whatever conditions to approval considered appropriate or necessary to promote the purposes of this part. The General Counsel may also permit exceptions to any requirement in this part when necessary to prevent a miscarriage of justice, or when the exception is in the best interests of the CSB and/or the United States.

PARTS 1613–1699 [RESERVED]
CHAPTER VII—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE; UNIFORM NATIONAL DISCHARGE STANDARDS FOR VESSELS OF THE ARMED FORCES

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