



Draft Agency File Codes

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Most people know a good file plan is one of the essential elements to a successful records management program. A file plan (also known as a file guide, file structure, or file index) can make it easier to access and find information, and help you meet statutory and regulatory requirements.

Records managers are often asked to help Agency offices create file plans. The Information Management staff in the Office of **Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER)** recently devised a new system of "file designations" or "file codes" as part of their file plan. A file code is an number or symbol, or some other type of designation, used to abbreviate lengthy file titles. One of the goals of this system is to help programs identify records series and to provide for linkage and integration of records across programs.

OSWER Uses An Alpha-Numeric Code

The file code system devised in OSWER is alpha-numeric. The first four characters are a mnemonic representation of the activity covered by the record series and the last three digits are the EPA series number from the Agency's revised records disposition schedules. For example, **COMM** could represent committees. There are five schedule items for committees:

- EPA 181A - Scientific Advisory Committee Records
- EPA 182A - Meeting Arrangement Records

- EPA 186A - Inter-Agency Committee Records
- EPA 187A - Intra-Agency Committee Records
- EPA 188A - EPA Steering Committee Meeting File

Using this coding system, the file designations for committee files would look like this:

COMM - Committees

- COMM 181 Scientific Advisory Committee Records
- COMM 182 Meeting Arrangement Records
- COMM 186 Inter-Agency Committee Records
- COMM 187 Intra-Agency Committee Records
- COMM 188 EPA Steering Committee Meeting File

A file label for Scientific Advisory Committee Records would read:

**COMM 181 -
Scientific Advisory Committee Records.**

One of the advantages, as you can see, is that the file designations tie directly to the disposition schedules. Once you know the file code, it's a simple matter of finding the retention for those records in the disposition schedule with that same number.

Sample File Designations

Here is a sampling of some of the file designations used in this system. The National Records Management Program (NRMP) welcomes your comments and suggestions. The NRMP will be circulating a draft comprehensive list of file codes using this alpha-numeric format in early March. The list will be expanded as more records schedules are added.

ADMI - Administrative and Management Programs

- 105 Management Study Records
- 106 Organizational Plans
- 109 EPA Forms
- 110 Office Administrative Files
- 111 Schedules of Daily Activities.

AIRP - Air Program Records

- 101 Imported Nonconforming Motor Vehicle Files
- 217 State Implementation Plans (SIPs)

CCOR - Controlled Correspondence

- 127 Regional Administrator's Correspondence File
- 141 Controlled and Major Correspondence of EPA Administrators ...
- 146 Controlled and Major Correspondence of EPA Division Directors ...

CONG - Congressional Affairs

- 027 Site-Specific Congressional Correspondence
- 132 Congressional Inquiries File
- 155 Reports to Congress and/or the President

DOCK - Dockets

- 009 National Contingency Plan/National Priorities List
- 012 Federal Agency Hazardous Waste Compliance Docket
- 150 Rulemaking Dockets

FOIA - Freedom of Information Act

- 030 Freedom of Information Act Request Files - Access Granted
- 031 Freedom of Information Act Request Files - Requests Denied but Response Not Appealed
- 032 Freedom of Information Act Request Files - Responses Appealed

OPPR - Office of Pesticides Program Records

- 118 OPP Bibliographic and Reference Systems
- 129 OPP Information Tracking Systems
- 151 Chemical Disposal Files

PERS - Personnel Records

- 121 Travel Expense Files
- 122 Personnel Reference Files
- 123 Employee Training Files