

Date Signed: March 23, 1999

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Safeguarding Latitude/Longitude Data in SDWIS/FED Database

FROM: Janet L. Auerbach, Chief  
Information Management Branch

TO: Regional Branch Chiefs,  
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water  
EPA Regions I - X

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you with information about recent Agency safeguards concerning access and/or receipt of latitude/longitude data maintained in information management systems. Utilities have raised concerns to OGWDW about national security implications of making information in SDWIS/FED on the exact location of source water intakes readily available on the Internet. The Agency's critical infrastructure plan also identifies this area as one of concern. OGWDW has responded to these concerns by implementing the policy discussed below.

To ensure that SDWIS/FED latitude/longitude data is kept safeguarded, we have taken the following measures:

Access to Latitude/longitude Table in SDWIS/FED

1. Before your staff authorizes access, they should request and receive justification for why access is needed (See attached "OGWDW Latitude/Longitude Application Form" currently being used by OGWDW). When you send the requestor the application form, please also send the attached paragraph explaining the sensitivity of the information. The application form may be modified for your regional ADP Coordinator's use and record keeping. Please be aware that my staff will grant access for only 30 days.

Any justification which the requestor submits will be accepted. The procedure is intended to educate the user to the sensitivity of the information and limit impromptu access rather than establish a subjective approval process.

NOTE: This procedure does not apply to Federal, State and OGWDW Contractor Support Personnel. These persons have automatically been given unlimited access.

Dissemination of Latitude/longitude Data in SDWIS/FED

1. Requests for latitude/longitude data under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), need to follow the same procedures. Please send an interim response asking requesters to provide justification for why data is needed.

2. EPA will not put latitude/longitude data on Envirofacts or any other web site.

As part of the process, we are asking the regions to follow the same security procedures listed above. Therefore, please pass this memorandum to the ADP Coordinators, the SDWIS/FED Coordinators within your region and other persons handling FOIA requests.

With much effort on the parts of both the program, regional and The National Computer Center, I believe we have taken positive steps to prevent data vulnerabilities. I ask for your full support in implementing these actions that are necessary to safeguard drinking water intakes around the country.

If you have any questions regarding these initiatives, I may be reached on (202) 260-5274 or contact Towana Dorsey on (202) 260-2805.

Attachments

## Attachment 1

**CAUTION**

This is a United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) computer system, and the information contained in it may be accessed and used for official Government business or by use of authorized persons. You have been given specific authorization to receive latitude/longitude information contained in this database. Unauthorized access or use of latitude/longitude information may subject violators to criminal, civil and/or administrative action. You may not share these data with users who have not received their own authorization to use it.

Latitude/longitude data are sensitive and must be used with extreme care. Please aggregate or generalize data wherever possible. Please avoid making public specific locational information.

Your password is good for 30 days beginning (insert today's date). You will need to re-apply at least 2 weeks prior to the lapse date if you wish access after 30 days from (today's date). You will not receive notice that your password is about to lapse.

**Latitude/Longitude Application Form**

This form is a request to the ADP Coordinator, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water for Obtaining Drinking Water Facility Latitude/Longitude Information from the Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS/FED).

**DATE:**

**NAME:**

**ORGANIZATION:**

**PHONE NUMBER:**

**FAX NUMBER:**

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

Please provide justification for why you need access to water facility latitude/longitude data maintained in the SDWIS/FED Database.

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Please submit form to:

Attention: Towana J. Dorsey  
ADP Coordinator, OGWDW  
MC: 4606  
Telephone: (202) 260-2805  
Fax: (202) 401-3041  
Internet: dorsey.towana@epamail.epa.gov

Access Granted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Towana J. Dorsey, ADP Coordinator, OGWDW

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Access will be granted for 30 days from the effective date. Users should notify EPA of their need to continue using the information before the date of expiration.

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

User I.D. \_\_\_\_\_ Password: \_\_\_\_\_