



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency leases a warehouse in Landover, Maryland, to store inventory for its headquarters locations. The inventory ranges from sensitive items such as personally identifiable information, including passports, to computers and other electronic equipment to basic personal property such as paper and office furniture. We are conducting an audit to determine the extent to which the EPA's personal property stored in select warehouse spaces is effectively utilized, accounted for and disposed of by the EPA. As a result of our warehouse visits, we are issuing this early warning report on our concerns at the Landover warehouse because they require immediate attention.

This report addresses the following EPA Goals or Cross-Cutting Strategies:

- *Strengthening EPA's workforce and capabilities.*

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at (202) 566-2391.

The full report is at:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2013/20130531-13-P-0272.pdf

Early Warning Report: Main EPA Headquarters Warehouse in Landover, Maryland, Requires Immediate EPA Attention

What We Found

Our initial research at the EPA's Landover warehouse raised significant concerns with the lack of agency oversight of personal property and warehouse space at the facility. In particular:

- The warehouse recordkeeping system was incomplete and inaccurate.
- The warehouse was filled with considerable valuable amounts of unusable, inoperable and obsolete furniture and other items.
- The warehouse contained multiple unauthorized and hidden personal spaces that included such items as televisions and exercise equipment.
- Numerous potential security and safety hazards existed at the warehouse, including unsecured personally identifiable information (such as passports).
- Deplorable conditions existed at the warehouse; corrosion, vermin feces, mold and other problems were pervasive.

As a result of the conditions noted, EPA property at the warehouse was vulnerable to theft and abuse (including personally identifiable information), EPA property was not properly maintained, the EPA may not have received sufficient value for the funds it paid for the warehouse's operation, and warehouse workers were subjected to unsafe conditions for which the EPA could be held liable.

Agency Corrective Actions

Subsequent to our briefing to the agency on the conditions noted at the warehouse, the agency issued a stop work order to the contractor, ensuring there will be no further access to the site by contractor personnel and that no further costs will be incurred under the contract. Further, the agency has taken the following additional actions:

- Completed an inventory of the warehouse and is seeking an appraisal of inventoried items.
- Identified and segregated all surplus furniture.
- Reviewed background investigations on warehouse employees.
- Removed flammable materials from the warehouse.
- Performed a health and safety review.
- Reviewed security footage.

The agency also agreed to initiate action addressing personally identifiable information, completing standard operating procedures for the warehouse, developing security plans, and conducting an agencywide review of all warehouse and storage facility operations.