

Jackson: Ramp up water pollution enforcement

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WASHINGTON — In many parts of the United States, non-compliance with the Clean Water Act is too great and enforcement levels are too low, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lisa Jackson has told top managers in the agency.

Jackson has asked several of her assistant administrators to report back to her in 90 days with a plan to remedy the situation, says a July 2 memorandum from Jackson to those administrators. The presence of the memo was reported July 7 by the *Environmental Ezine*, an online publication.

Jackson writes in the memo that she wants to see progress in these areas:

- Improved transparency for the public about water quality and enforcement actions. Among the actions to be taken would be improving and enhancing information available on the EPA Web site, showing the level of enforcement activity in each state and its connections to local water quality.
- Improved clean water enforcement by EPA. "Because EPA and the states face significant and competing demands for resources, we need to place a high priority on the problems that have the biggest impact on water quality, such as wet weather pollution ...," Jackson wrote.
- Movement of EPA's information technology "into the 21st century," as Jackson put it. The goal, she wrote, is to provide readily available and transparent data on wastewater discharges and compliance.

Jackson is urging EPA managers to prepare their plan in close consultation with EPA regional offices, states and regions, pollution control administrators and outside stakeholders.

The Clean Water Act is the federal law that regulates discharges of pollutants into US waters and seeks to improve water quality in the nation's surface waters.