

pated this November, according to Grubbs. That rule will lower the maximum admissible level of TTHM, which is regulated as a chronic toxin, to 80 micrograms per liter, he said. It will also extend the requirement to all drinking water providers, not just

those supplying more than 10,000 people.

Olson of the NRDC says that, in light of current studies, his organization may press EPA to reconsider TTHM's status as a chronic toxin. "We probably need to reopen the debate as to

whether we need to regulate TTHMs as acute or short-term exposure risks," he said, pointing out that TTHM levels tend to increase by 1.5–2 times in the summer. "We may be totally overlooking the risk of short-term exposure." —KELLYN S. BETTS

EPA's 1999 budget request highlights climate change, water quality programs

EPA administrator Carol Browner requested Congress to grant EPA a 6%, or \$400 million, budget boost, which would provide the agency with \$7.8 billion in 1999. The budget reflects several new policy directions for EPA, including \$230.6 million for climate change, which doubles the amount Congress approved in 1998, and an additional \$8 million, or \$33 million total, to implement its children's health agenda. Browner said the largest increase is sought for climate change activities. "This budget reflects [President Clinton's] determination that America shall lead the world in meeting the challenge of global warming," she said.

This year the agency fundamentally changed the way it prepares a budget, in keeping with the provisions of the Government Performance and Results Act. This budget is organized around 10 goals, including clean air, safe food, pollution prevention and risk reduction, and better waste management and restoration of contaminated sites. Funding for individual programs is divided among several goals.

The budget request for science and technology activities remains relatively stagnant at \$633 million—less than a 1% increase from the \$631 million Congress approved for 1998. Browner is requesting \$21 million for global change science and technology work, although Congress provided only \$14 million for those activities last year. Another \$1.5 million is sought for the *Pfiesteria* research program, which will provide grants for universities around the country. The new science and research center under construction at Research Triangle

Park, N.C., would benefit from the \$35 million Browner requested.

The Office of Research and Development's funding drops slightly under Browner's budget; it would be \$485 million, down from the \$533 million that Congress approved last year.

Browner requested \$2.1 billion for the Superfund program, including \$91 million for contaminated urban brownfields development, and an additional \$650 million, which EPA predicts will speed the cleanup of 900 superfund sites by 2001. Last year, Congress agreed to spend the \$650 million only if the program was significantly overhauled, which has not happened.

An additional \$116 million is requested for global climate activ-

ities, bringing the total EPA expenditure up to \$230 million. Air programs would see a \$17 million increase under Browner's budget: she is asking for \$507 million total, including \$75 million to implement the new ozone and particulate matter standards and \$65.7 million to develop a national particulate matter monitoring network.

The water quality programs would see one of the few drops in this request. Although Browner asked for \$145 million in new funds for her clean water action plan (see story on p. 166A), the total budget request is \$2.8 billion, down from the \$3.1 billion Congress approved in 1998. Drinking water programs would see a \$21 million increase, up to \$1 billion total.

Congressional hearings on the budget request were scheduled for early spring. —CATHERINE M. COONEY

WASTE MANAGEMENT

EU Parliament strengthens draft landfill law

The European Parliament voted on Feb. 19 to significantly strengthen a draft European Union (EU) directive on landfilling of waste. Members backed tough targets to cut the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfills, setting the Parliament on a collision course with EU environment ministers who favor less stringent targets.

The draft directive requires a gradual reduction in the total proportion of biodegradable waste going to landfills. Parliament voted to limit the amount of landfilled biodegradable waste to 75% of 1993 levels by 2002, 50% by 2005, and 25% by 2010.

Environment ministers have endorsed weaker targets. Last December, they informally agreed that countries should cut biodegradable waste being landfilled to 75% of 1995 levels by 2006, 50% by 2009, and 35% by 2016.

The landfill directive is expected to have the largest impact on waste management practices in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the southern EU countries, which have not already put in place measures to pretreat wastes or to reduce the quantity of biodegradable waste going to landfills. Industry observers predict that the directive would also encourage greater use of incineration. If the directive is approved by ministers, it will go into effect in June 2000. —Reprinted with permission from ENDS Environment Daily, Environmental Data Services, Ltd., London (<http://www.ends.co.uk>, e-mail envdaily@ends.co.uk)