



The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

(CSB) Freedom of Information Act Reference Guide provides guidance for making Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to the CSB. The FOIA, which can be found in section 552 of Title 5 of the United States Code, was enacted in 1966 and generally provides that any person has the right to request access to Federal agency records. This Reference Guide has been prepared, and is being made available to the public, in accordance with the FOIA. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(g).

The official name of the agency is the "Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board." It is also known as the "U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board." It is most commonly referred to as the "Chemical Safety Board" or "CSB."

The CSB is an independent Federal agency whose mission is to drive chemical safety change through independent investigation to protect people and the environment.

The CSB accomplishes this mission by investigating chemical incidents and hazards at fixed facilities, determining root causes, and issuing safety recommendations to government agencies, as well as companies, labor unions, trade associations, and other organizations. The CSB is not a part of any other Federal agency, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The CSB was created by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and became operational in January of 1998.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

II. Access to Certain Records without a FOIA Request

III. Where to Make a FOIA Request

IV. How to Make a FOIA Request

IV.A. Privacy Act Requests

V. Initial Determinations on Requests

VI. Response Times

VII. Expedited Processing

VIII. Fees

IX. Fee Waivers

X. Administrative Appeals

XI. Answers to Questions and Dispute Resolution

XII. Other Reference Materials

Attachments

I. Introduction

This Reference Guide is designed to help the public understand how the FOIA process works so that the public can be better informed about the operations and activities of the Federal Government.

The FOIA generally provides that any person has the right to obtain access to Federal agency records, except to the extent that those records are protected from disclosure by the FOIA. Agencies increasingly provide a great deal of information on their websites. We therefore encourage you to review the materials already posted on agency websites before making a FOIA request. There you may find the information you are seeking.

The FOIA applies to records of the Executive Branch of the Federal government. The FOIA does not provide access to records held by Congress, the Federal courts, advisory offices of the President, state or local government agencies, or by private businesses or individuals. All states have their own statutes governing public access to state and local government records; state agencies should be consulted for further information about obtaining access to their records.

This Reference Guide is designed to familiarize you with the specific procedures for making a FOIA request to the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB). Following the guidance below will make it more likely that you will receive the information that you are seeking in the shortest amount of time possible. If you do not follow these procedures, the CSB may not be required, or able, to process your request. This Reference Guide also includes descriptions of the types of records maintained by the CSB. The CSB's FOIA information, which includes this Reference Guide, is available at <https://www.csb.gov> on the CSB's "Legal Affairs/FOIA" page, www.csb.gov/disclaimers/legal-affairs-foia/.

Initially, it is important to understand that there is no central office in the government that processes FOIA requests for all Federal departments and agencies. Each Federal department and agency responds to requests for its own records. Therefore, before sending a request to the CSB, you should determine whether the CSB is likely to have the records you are seeking. Each

Federal department and agency is required to provide reference material to assist those who wish to request records from them. Accordingly, you should view the websites of any Federal agency which might have records you seek. By doing so, you will learn what records are already available on the agency's website and you will also be able to determine which agency is likely to maintain the records you are seeking. Contact information for other Federal departments and agencies is available at www.foia.gov. Additionally, you can make a FOIA request to the CSB at www.foia.gov. See section III. below for more details.

The formal rules for making FOIA requests to the CSB are set forth in the CSB's regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 1601. These regulations are available at the CSB's website, on the "Legal Affairs/FOIA" page, <http://www.csb.gov/disclaimers/legal-affairs-foia/>. They may also be found at: www.ecfr.gov. This Reference Guide provides you with basic information for submitting requests. The processing of FOIA requests is governed by the FOIA and the CSB's FOIA rule. Nothing in this guide supersedes the FOIA or the CSB's FOIA rule. In the event that any provision of this guide appears inconsistent with the FOIA or the CSB's FOIA rule, the FOIA and the CSB's FOIA rule takes precedence over the guide.

II. Access to Certain Records without a FOIA Request—Information that is already public

Depending on what kind of information you are looking for, you may not need to make a formal FOIA request because the CSB may have already published the information on its website, located at www.csb.gov. The CSB website should be the starting point for anyone interested in seeking information from the CSB. The website contains detailed information about all the activities of the CSB. For example, the website provides information about all of the CSB's ongoing and completed investigations, including news releases, transcripts and presentations from public meetings, and complete electronic versions of investigation reports and other safety publications. Detailed information about the CSB's safety recommendations are also available on the website. Other resources on the website include background information about the history and mission of the agency and a video archive. Information is also available about careers with the CSB, and the CSB's budget and performance, as well as strategic plans. The CSB encourages you to begin your search for information about the agency at the CSB website.

If you are interested in information regarding FOIA reporting requirements, the CSB's website contains the CSB's Annual FOIA Reports and Chief FOIA Officer Reports at www.csb.gov/disclaimers/legal-affairs-foia/. That page is also home to the CSB's proactive disclosures. (If you are interested in the FOIA itself, see section XII of this Reference Guide.)

Members of the media may also contact the CSB's Public Affairs Communication Manager at public@csb.gov.

In sum, you may find that the information you are seeking is already posted on the CSB's webpage. Many potential FOIA requesters can save time by carefully reviewing what is already posted on CSB's website before making a FOIA request.

Attachment C of this Reference Guide contains descriptions of CSB's major information systems, which are the file systems and databases used by the CSB to maintain records. These descriptions include explanations of the types of records maintained within each information system. These descriptions can be accessed from CSB's Legal/FOIA webpage under "CSB FOIA Reference Guide."

III. Where to Make a FOIA Request

Electronic FOIA requests may be submitted through <https://foiaonline.gov>. On the homepage, select "Create Request." Then select "Begin." Next, select the agency from a drop-down list: "Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB)." You will then be prompted to submit your contact information, details of your request, information about the fees you are willing to pay (if any), and whether you request expedited processing.

For hard copy FOIA requests: The envelope and the request both should be clearly marked "FOIA Request" and addressed to:

FOIA Officer—FOIA Request
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board
1750 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20006.

It is very important to properly address and mark your request. If you do not, the request may be misdirected and its processing may be delayed.

Please note that the CSB can only process FOIA requests for its own records. If you are seeking records from another agency of the Federal government, you must make a FOIA request directly to that agency. Note that the FOIA does not apply to state or local government agencies;

those agencies may have their own “open records” laws. If you are looking for state or local government records, you should contact the appropriate agency.

If you have any questions regarding how to submit a FOIA request or about the processing of your FOIA request, you may contact the CSB’s FOIA Contact or the CSB’s FOIA Public Liaison Officer. See Section XI and Attachment B of this reference guide for more details.

IV. How to Make a FOIA Request

A FOIA request can be made for any agency record. You can also specify the format in which you wish to receive the records. Before submitting your request, you may contact the CSB’s FOIA Contact, or the CSB’s FOIA Public Liaison, to discuss the records you are seeking and to receive assistance in describing the records. See Attachment B for contact information. There are statutory exemptions that authorize the withholding of information of a sensitive nature. The FOIA’s exemptions protect, for example, national security, personal privacy, privileged records, and law enforcement interests. When the CSB withholds information from you, it ordinarily must specify which exemption of the FOIA permits the withholding.

It is important to understand that a FOIA request is only for records that currently exist. The FOIA does not require the CSB to do research for you, to analyze data, to answer written questions, or to create records in response to a request.

The CSB does not require you to submit a special form when making a FOIA request. Your request must be in writing, however, and should clearly indicate that it is being made under the FOIA. You should include a phone number and/or email in your request so that CSB personnel can contact you if they have any questions about your request.

Description of the Records Sought

Requesters must describe the records sought in sufficient detail to enable the CSB’s personnel to locate them with a reasonable amount of effort. Therefore, in making your request, try to be as specific as possible in describing the records you are seeking. It is not necessary for you to provide the name or title of a requested record, but the more specific you are about the records or types of records that you seek, the more likely it will be that the CSB will be able to locate those records.

If possible, make your request for specific records, rather than for broad classes or categories of files. More focused requests can generally be processed more promptly, and at lower cost to you.

Before submitting your request, you may contact the CSB's FOIA Contact or the CSB's FOIA Public Liaison to discuss the records you are seeking and to receive assistance in describing the records. See Section XI and Attachment B for contact information.

IV.A. Privacy Act Requests

Under the FOIA, generally anyone can request access to any Federal agency record. Requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974 (a separate federal statute) are more limited and can be made only by: (a) U.S. citizens or aliens lawfully admitted for permanent U.S. residence (b) who are seeking information about themselves, (c) which is maintained in a system of records and accessed using their names or other personal identifiers. Even if a request does not mention the Privacy Act, the CSB automatically treats applicable requests as being made under both the FOIA and the Privacy Act. In this way, requesters receive the maximum amount of information available to them under the law.

If you intend to make a request to the CSB under the Privacy Act, please comply with the CSB's regulation found at 40 C.F.R. Part 1602, "Protection of Privacy and Access to Individual Records under the Privacy Act of 1974."

V. Initial Determinations on Requests

Within 20 working days of receipt of your FOIA request, the CSB will send you a letter or email acknowledging the request and assigning it a tracking number. If the CSB requires additional information from you so that it can begin processing your request, it will contact you. Additionally, you should be aware that the CSB ordinarily will use the date upon which it begins a record search as the "cut-off" date for identifying the records that are responsive to a FOIA

request. Of course, you can specify a different date-range for the records you seek, and the CSB would then search for records created during the time period you specify.

The CSB's letter to you will also contain an initial determination of the scope of documents the CSB will release in response to your request, as well as any applicable FOIA exemptions. In the vast majority of cases, the CSB will include all documents that can be disclosed along with the determination letter, though in some cases the documents themselves may be sent to you separately, within a reasonable time after the determination letter has been sent to you. As mentioned previously, the FOIA provides access to all Federal agency records, or portions of those records, except to the extent those records are protected by any of the FOIA's nine exemptions or three law enforcement exclusions. The determination letter will advise you of whether any information is being withheld pursuant to one or more of the exemptions. When a page of a record is being withheld in its entirety, the CSB ordinarily will specify the number of pages being withheld or make a reasonable effort to estimate the volume of the withheld information. Where a page of a record is being withheld in part, the withheld portions of the page will ordinarily be specifically marked with the applicable exemptions.

The FOIA authorizes agencies to withhold information when they reasonably foresee that disclosure would harm an interest protected by one of nine exemptions covering:

1. Records specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order (E.O.) to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and which are, in fact, properly classified pursuant to such E.O.;
2. Records related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the CSB;
3. Records specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)), provided that such statute requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or that the statute establishes particular criteria for withholding information, or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld; and if enacted after the date of enactment of the OPEN FOIA Act of 2009 (October 28, 2009), the statute specifically cites to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3);
4. Records containing trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
5. Interagency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the CSB, provided that the deliberative process

privilege shall not apply to records created twenty-five (25) years or more before the date on which the records were requested;

6. Personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

7. Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information:

i. Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings;

ii. Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication;

iii. Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

iv. Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;

v. Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or

vi. Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

8. Records contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, or on behalf of, or for the use of, an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions;

9. Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

Congress provided special protection in the FOIA for three narrow categories of law enforcement and national security records. The provisions protecting those records are known as “exclusions.” The first exclusion protects the existence of an ongoing criminal law enforcement investigation when the subject of the investigation is unaware that it is pending and disclosure could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings. The second exclusion is limited to criminal law enforcement agencies and protects the existence of informant records

when the informant's status has not been officially confirmed. The third exclusion is limited to the FBI and protects the existence of foreign intelligence or counterintelligence, or international terrorism records when the existence of such records is classified. Records falling within an exclusion are not subject to the requirements of the FOIA. So, when the CSB responds to your request, it will limit its response to those records that are subject to the FOIA.

VI. Response Times

Under the FOIA, all Federal agencies are required to respond to a FOIA request within twenty (20) business days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. This time period generally begins the day the request is received by the agency that maintains the records sought. For example, if the CSB were to receive a FOIA request on Monday, June 3, 2019, then that day would be Day 0. Tuesday, June 4, 2019, would be Day 1, and Monday, July 1, 2019, would be Day 20. If your request is misdirected, the CSB will forward it to the proper agency.

The CSB receives numerous FOIA requests each year. Many of these requests require a line-by-line review of hundreds, or even thousands, of pages of documents. Although the CSB makes every effort to respond to FOIA requests as quickly as possible, in some cases it simply cannot do so within the specified time period. This may be because of: 1) the volume of records at issue in a given request; or 2) a backlog of previously received requests that must be processed first.

The CSB uses “multi-track” processing to manage its heavy FOIA workload. Specifically, the CSB uses two standard processing tracks: one for simple requests, and a separate track for complex requests. The CSB will assign requests to the simple or complex track based on the estimated amount of work or time needed to process the request. Among the factors the CSB may consider are: the number of records requested; the number of pages involved in processing the request; and the need for consultations or referrals. The CSB will advise each requester of the track into which his or her request falls and, when appropriate, will offer a requester an opportunity to narrow the scope of, or modify, the request so that it can be placed in the simple processing track.

Under the FOIA, the CSB may extend the twenty-day response time when “unusual circumstances” exist. Unusual circumstances exist when:

- (1) the CSB needs to collect responsive records from separate offices within the CSB;

- (2) the request involves a “voluminous” amount of separate and distinct records that must be located, compiled, and reviewed; or
- (3) the CSB needs to consult with another Federal agency that has a substantial interest in the responsive information.

When such a time extension is needed, the CSB will notify you in writing and offer you the opportunity to modify or limit the scope of your request. Alternatively, you may agree to a different timetable for the processing of your request. The CSB’s FOIA Contact or the CSB’s Public Liaison can assist you. See Attachment B of this reference guide for contact information. The CSB will also alert requesters to the availability of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to provide dispute resolution services. See Section XI of this reference guide for more details.

VII. Expedited Processing

Under certain conditions you may be entitled to have your request processed on an expedited basis. The CSB recognizes four (4) specific standards by which requesters will be afforded expedited processing of a FOIA request or appeal. Expedited processing will be granted if:

- (1) the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose a threat to someone’s life or physical safety;
- (2) an individual will suffer the loss of substantial due process rights. In this regard, a request will not normally be expedited merely because the requester is facing a court deadline in a judicial proceeding;
- (3) the request is made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public and the information is urgently needed to inform the public concerning some actual or alleged Federal government activity; or
- (4) the subject of the request is of widespread and exceptional media interest and the information sought involves possible questions about the government’s integrity that affect public confidence. Decisions to expedite under this fourth standard are made by CSB’s Director of Public Affairs.

A request for expedited processing must be accompanied by a statement setting forth the reasons why your request or appeal should be expedited. You should certify that the reasons you

have given are true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. The CSB must notify you of its decision whether to grant or deny expedited processing within ten (10) calendar days after receiving your request for expedited processing. If the CSB denies your request for expedited processing, you will be advised of your right to submit an administrative appeal of that denial, which will be handled expeditiously. (For information about filing administrative appeals, see Section X of this Reference Guide.)

VIII. Fees

There is no initial fee required to submit a FOIA request; in fact, for a number of requests made to the CSB, no fees are ever charged. The FOIA does provide for the charging of certain types of fees in some instances; however, we notify requesters before processing their FOIA request(s) if there will be a fee. You may always include in your request letter a statement limiting the amount that you are willing to pay in fees, should fees apply.

For purposes of fee assessment only, the FOIA divides requesters into three categories. The first category includes commercial-use requesters, who may be charged fees for searching for records, reviewing them to determine the application of FOIA exemptions, and duplicating them to respond to a request. The second category includes educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, and representatives of the news media. This category of requesters is charged only for duplication fees, and are provided the first one hundred requested pages free of charge. The third category includes all other requesters, who are charged only for record searches and duplication. For non-commercial-use requesters there is no charge for the first two hours of search time, or for the first 100 pages of duplication or their cost equivalent. The CSB currently charges seventeen cents (.17) per page for hard copy duplications/copies. The CSB does *not* charge duplication costs for electronic copies of records that can be transmitted to the requester via email. The CSB's search fee roughly approximates the salary and experience level of the personnel conducting the search (for each *quarter hour* of search: \$6.00 for clerical personnel; \$11.00 for professional personnel; and \$15.00 for managerial personnel). In all cases, if the total fee is less than \$25.00, the CSB will waive the fee and will not charge you.

If the CSB estimates that the total fees for processing your request will exceed \$25.00, it will notify you in writing of the estimate and offer you an opportunity to narrow your request in

order to reduce the fees. You will ordinarily be required to pay the estimated fees in advance—that is, before the records are even processed. If the requester does not pay within thirty (30) calendar days after the date of the CSB’s fee determination, the request will be closed. If you agree to pay fees for a records search, be aware that you may be required to pay such fees even if the search does not locate any responsive records, or, if responsive records *are* located, even if they are determined to be entirely exempt from disclosure.

If you have any questions about a fee estimate or assessment, you should feel free to contact the CSB’s FOIA Contact or the CSB’s FOIA Public Liaison. See Section XI and Attachment B of this reference guide for contact information. The CSB’s FOIA Contact and FOIA Public Liaison are both available to assist you in reformulating your request to meet your needs at a lower cost.

IX. Fee Waivers

If you expect or are advised that a fee will be charged, you may request a waiver of that fee. Under the FOIA, fee waivers are limited to situations in which a requester can show that the disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. The public interest must be identified with “reasonable specificity,” *Larson v. C.I.A.*, 843 F.2d 1481, 1483 (D.C. Cir.1988; internal citations removed), and must be based on more than “conclusory allegations,” *Nat’l Treasury Employees Union v. Griffin*, 811 F.2d 644, 647 (D.C.Cir.1987). Requests for fee waivers from individuals who are seeking records pertaining to themselves usually do not meet this standard because such disclosures usually benefit the individual requester rather than increase the public’s understanding of government operations and activities. In addition, a requester’s inability to pay fees is not a legal basis for granting a fee waiver.

X. Administrative Appeals

If the CSB makes an adverse determination denying a request in any respect, it must notify the requester of that determination in writing. Adverse determinations, or denials of requests, include decisions that: the requested record is exempt, in whole or in part; the request

does not reasonably describe the records sought; the information requested is not a record subject to the FOIA; the requested record does not exist, cannot be located, or has been destroyed; or the requested record is not readily reproducible in the form or format sought by the requester. Adverse determinations also include denials involving fees or fee waiver matters or denials of requests for expedited processing.

You will be advised of your right to file an administrative appeal in the CSB's response containing the adverse determination. You will also be advised that you have the option to contact the CSB's FOIA Public Liaison or the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration. Those resources may be able to answer any questions you have about the handling of your request. You may file an administrative appeal through <https://foiaonline.gov>. If you elect to file a hard-copy appeal: it must be in writing; and to be considered timely it must be postmarked, or in the case of submission through foiaonline.gov, transmitted, within ninety (90) calendar days after the date of the CSB's response.

Hard-copy appeals can be submitted by mail to:

FOIA Appeals Officer—FOIA Appeal
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board
1750 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20006

Both the front of the envelope and the administrative appeal letter should contain the notation, "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

There is no specific form or particular language needed to file an administrative appeal. You should include the initial request number that the CSB assigned to your request. If no request number has been assigned, then you should enclose a copy of the CSB's determination letter. There is no need to attach copies of released documents unless they pertain to some specific point you are raising in your administrative appeal. You should identify which specific action by the CSB you are appealing and why.

Administrative appeals of CSB determinations are reviewed by the CSB FOIA Appeals Officer. The CSB FOIA Appeals Officer ordinarily will have available all of the files pertaining to the processing of your request and will make an independent determination as to whether the CSB has properly handled your request.

Under the FOIA, the CSB FOIA Appeals Officer is ordinarily required to make a determination on your administrative appeal within twenty (20) business days. The CSB FOIA Appeals Officer may take one of several actions on your administrative appeal. The CSB FOIA Appeals Officer may affirm the original determination in full, in which case he or she will often identify the reason why the initial determination was proper. Alternatively, the CSB FOIA Appeals Officer may affirm part of the initial determination, but otherwise “remand” the request in part for the FOIA Officer to take some further action. Finally, under some circumstances, the CSB FOIA Appeals Officer may remand the request in its entirety to the FOIA Officer for further action. When a case is remanded, you will have an opportunity to appeal again to the CSB FOIA Appeals Officer if you are dissatisfied in any respect with the FOIA Officer’s action on remand.

XI. Answers to Questions and Dispute Resolution

FOIA Contact and Public Liaison

FOIA requesters may contact the CSB’s FOIA Contact at the CSB’s FOIA Requester Service Center to check on the status of their FOIA requests during normal business hours. The CSB FOIA Contact is the name, address, and phone number at the CSB to which requesters may submit a FOIA request or inquire about a FOIA request. The CSB also has a designated FOIA Public Liaison who supervises the FOIA Requester Service Center. The most up-to-date contact information for the CSB’s FOIA Contact and the CSB’s FOIA Public Liaison can be found at www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html and in Attachment B. We strongly encourage FOIA requesters to make use of these services whenever they have a question or concern about their request.

The CSB FOIA Public Liaison is an official to whom you may turn if you are dissatisfied with the services received from the CSB’s FOIA Contact at the CSB’s Requester Service Center. The CSB FOIA Public Liaison can assist you throughout the request process, from working with you and the CSB FOIA Contact to arrange an alternative time frame for processing your request, to increasing understanding regarding the status of your request, to assisting you in resolving disputes. The contact information for CSB’s FOIA Contact and FOIA Public Liaison can be found at <https://www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html>.

In addition, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), an office created within the National Archives and Records Administration, offers mediation services to FOIA requesters. That office may be contacted in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Room 2510
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Email: ogis@nara.gov
Phone: 301-837-1996
Fax: 301-837-0348
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Finally, the FOIA provides requesters with the right to challenge an agency's final action in Federal court. Before doing so, you ordinarily will be required to have first filed an administrative appeal with the CSB. If you have received an administrative appeal determination, that final administrative appeal determination letter will advise you of your right to seek judicial review and will provide further instructions.

XII. Other Reference Materials

Other general sources of information about using the FOIA include:

Your Right to Federal Records. This pamphlet is available at www.gsa.gov by entering the pamphlet's name in the "Search GSA" field.

A Citizen's Guide on Using the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974 to Request Government Records. This report was published in 2005 by the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives. It can be accessed at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/foia/citizen.html> (link is external).

Attachments:

- A – How to Contact Other Federal Agency FOIA Officers
- B – CSB FOIA Program Contact Information
- C – Descriptions of the CSB's Major Information Systems

Attachment A – How to Contact Other Federal Agency FOIA Officers

Please visit www.foia.gov or www.foia.gov/#agency-search.

Attachment B – CSB FOIA Program Contact Information

The most up to date contact information for the CSB’s FOIA Program can all be found at: www.foia.gov. You must first type in the CSB’s name on the homepage in the box under, “Select an agency to start your request or to see an agency’s contact information.”

CSB’s FOIA Requester Service Center

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

1750 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - Suite 910, Washington, DC 20006

foia@csb.gov

(202) 261-7619

CSB’s FOIA Contact: Michele Bouziane

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

1750 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - Suite 910, Washington, DC 20006

michele.bouziane@csb.gov

(202) 261-7619

CSB’s FOIA Public Liaison: Thomas A. Goonan

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

1750 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - Suite 910, Washington, DC 20006

thomas.goonan@csb.gov

(202) 261-7625

CSB’s Appeal Officer: Thomas A. Goonan

U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

1750 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - Suite 910, Washington, DC 20006

foiaappeals@csb.gov

(202) 261-7625

Members of the media may also contact CSB Public Affairs at public@csb.gov.

Attachment C – Descriptions of the CSB’s Major Information Systems

Board Safety Publications. Through these publications the Board fulfills its statutory responsibility to “report to the public in writing the facts, conditions, and circumstances and the cause or probable cause” of the incidents it investigates. The publications take a variety of forms, including investigation reports and digests of those reports, case studies, safety bulletins, and hazard investigations. All Board safety publications are listed and described on, and can be downloaded from, the CSB website at www.csb.gov.

Recommendations. Based on the findings of its investigations, the Board issues formal recommendations to industry, government agencies, and other interested entities to propose measures that would prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. Recommendations are published in the report of the investigation from which they arise. A database of all recommendations, which includes their full text and is searchable by variety of parameters, is available on the CSB website at www.csb.gov.

Investigation Files. Individual case files for all incidents or hazards investigated by the CSB. These files include all records generated or collected in connection with each investigation, such as documentary evidence, research materials, communications, and administrative materials. Records in these files may be exempt from public disclosure because they contain sensitive information, such as trade secrets/confidential business information or privileged deliberative process information.

Regulations. Regulations governing the operations of the CSB are published in the Code of Federal Regulations at Title 40, beginning with Part 1600. Changes to these regulations are published in the Federal Register. These publications are available at most law libraries and many public libraries. In addition, the CSB’s regulations and any changes to them are published on the CSB website at www.csb.gov. They may also be found at: www.ecfr.gov.

Computer System. The CSB utilizes a computer network system at its Washington, DC, headquarters. This computer system is used for the preparation of official CSB documents, such as safety publications, recommendations, and correspondence, as well as internal working documents. The system is also used for conducting research, storing and sharing information collected in the course of agency operations, and for communications via electronic mail.

Website. The CSB maintains and disseminates a variety of information about the agency and its operations through the CSB website, www.csb.gov. The website provides information about all of the CSB's ongoing and completed investigations, including news releases, transcripts and presentations from public meetings, and complete electronic versions of investigation reports and other safety publications. Detailed information about the CSB's safety recommendations program is also available on the website. Other resources on the website include background information about the history and mission of the agency, a video archive, and real-time links to news reports on current chemical incidents.