

Other

State

[HB 509](#) (Public Act: 254) establishes a five-year statute of limitations applicable to an action for an administrative penalty brought by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The statute of limitations would require MDE to bring an action for an administrative penalty for violation of any provision of the Environment Article, or any associated regulation, order, or permit, within five years of the date that MDE knew, or reasonably should have known, of the violation. For an ongoing violation, the limitations period begins when the violation ceases. The bill does not affect MDE's authority to use administrative orders or seek injunctive relief. The bill was signed by the governor on May 12, 2015, and became effective on October 1, 2015.

The Maryland Critical Area Commission for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays [adopted](#) a rulemaking that updates provisions by incorporating changes made to other state regulations. The rulemaking: (1) removes provisions that are obsolete; (2) updates the drafting style of the regulations; (3) streamlines the regulations; and (4) inserts climate change provisions into the regulations that govern state agency actions on state-owned lands. The amendments became effective on December 22, 2014.

Federal

USEPA announced the release of the final web-based [Report on the Environment](#) ([80 FR 44104](#)). The report is a comprehensive source of scientific indicators that describe the status and trends in the nation's environment and human health condition. The indicators help to answer important questions for USEPA about the current status and historical trends in U.S. air, water, land, human health, and ecological condition at the national and regional levels. These indicators are based on data collected by USEPA, other federal and state agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

USEPA is developing a website that would function as a point of access to information and tools ([80 FR 3962](#)). The focus of the "[E-Enterprise for the Environment](#)" portal is to provide smart tools to help regulated entities understand their environmental obligations and associated permitting and reporting requirements. The portal would also be used to streamline preparation and submittal of information. USEPA is seeking comment on the value of establishing a portal, the functions that it should provide, and whether the name "portal" effectively characterizes the effort. Comments are due by April 26, 2015.

Other – Environmental management

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) released an updated version of its environmental management standard, [ISO 14000:2015](#). The revised ISO standard accommodates factoring of both external and internal elements that influence impact, including climate volatility. Other key improvements in the new version are: (1) greater commitment from leadership; (2) increased alignment with strategic direction; (3) greater protection for the environment, with a focus on proactive initiatives; (4) more effective communication, driven through a communications strategy; and (5) life-cycle thinking, considering each stage of a product or service, from development to end-of-life.