

## Executive Order 13693 & The HHS Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan (Part 2)

### Overview

As covered in Part One of this series, Executive Order (EO) 13693, Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade, was signed by President Obama on March 19, 2015. This Executive Order dictates sustainability policy and goals for executive departments and agencies. In order to achieve these goals the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has developed the Strategic Sustainability Plan.

EO 13693 sets performance targets for key sustainability concerns. Part One of this series reviewed the HHS implementation of goals for Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Creating Sustainable Buildings, Implementing Clean & Renewable Energy, and Reducing Water Use. Part Two will cover Improving Government Vehicle Efficiencies, Improving Sustainable Acquisitions, Reducing Pollution & Waste, Awarding Contracts Promoting Energy Efficient Performance, Promoting & Procuring Environmentally Sustainable Electronic Products, and Preparing for Effects of Climate Change.

### HHS Implementation & Goals

**Improving Agency Fleet Efficiency:** EO 13693 states that agencies shall take actions to reduce fleet-wide per-mile greenhouse gas emissions. The targets set forth are relative to a fiscal year (FY) 2014 baseline and be reduced at least 4% by FY 2017, 15% by FY 2020, and 30% by FY 2025. Additionally, section 3(g)(i) of EO 13693 states that agencies should determine the optimum fleet inventory and eliminate unnecessary and non-essential vehicles. In order to meet these targets HHS intends to develop a robust Fleet Management System, inventorying all HHS vehicles and further phasing out those vehicles which are greater contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Additional infrastructure and acquisitions for plug-in hybrid vehicles and zero emission vehicles will occur throughout HHS.

**Sustainable Acquisitions:** In order to promote sustainable acquisitions HHS intends to increase purchases of products with recycled content by 5%. Additionally, HHS will increase the purchases of energy and water efficient products and services by 5% as well. Many of these products are identified through ENERGY STAR and FEMP.

**Pollution Prevention & Waste Reduction:** Section 3(j) of EO 13693 requires Federal agencies divert at least 50% of non-hazardous solid waste as well as at least 50% of non-hazardous construction and demolition materials. Reductions in the use of hazardous and toxic chemicals is strongly encouraged; however, no specific target has been set. HHS has been pursuing measures to reduce waste for many years but will further these pursuits under the Strategic Sustainability Plan. Some means and methods to reduce waste are to eliminate, reduce, or recover refrigerants; expand recycling programs; reduce chemicals used in pest management

and landscaping; establish tracking programs for construction debris; and develop agency wide Chemical Inventory Plans.

**Energy Performance Contracts:** EO 13693 requires agencies to establish Energy Performance contracts for Federal buildings and further set annual targets from 2017 onward. In order to fulfill this goal HHS will commit additional funds towards energy management studies, identifying new onsite renewable energy projects, and collecting energy measurement and verification data.

**Electronic Stewardship:** As defined by EO 13693, electronic stewardship is creating procurement preferences for electronics which enable power management, have environmentally sustainable features, and / or can be disposed of in an environmentally sensitive manner. In order to promote sustainable electronics and their use at HHS, policies are being developed by both IT groups and contracting groups to ensure environmentally sensitive options of electronics considered during purchasing and during their use at the agency. Examples of this are procurement and use of printers with duplex printing capabilities and use of computers with Power Management settings.

**Climate Change Resilience:** As part of EO 13693 each Federal agency shall identify and address projected impacts of climate change on mission critical functions. Steps taken by agencies should consider cost and risk to the agency's mission. HHS intends to reduce impacts of climate change through a variety of methods including data collection on vulnerable areas of the agency, design and constructing new facilities and infrastructure to account for climate change by geographical location, and ensuring agency principals demonstrate commitment to adapting internal communications and policies.

### Conclusion

The goals of EO 13693 provide a framework for Federal agencies to address the ever important need to achieve a clean energy economy. As recognized by President Obama, Federal agencies lead by example and can have enormous influence on industry and spurring sustainable technologies and innovation. If the goals and targets of EO 13693 are followed through it will have enormous impact on the well-being of the nation as well as global climate change and future generations.

### References

1. Executive Order 13693 of March 19, 2015, Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade, *Code of Federal Regulations*, title 3 (2015): 80 FR 15869, <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/03/25/2015-07016/planning-for-federal-sustainability-in-the-next-decade>.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "2015 Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan", <http://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2015-sustainability-plan.pdf>.

