

3.1 Acceptable Letters

Only letters in braille or in 14-point or larger sight-saving type or in the form of sound recordings, and containing no advertising, may be mailed free, and only if unsealed and sent by a blind or other physically handicapped person as described in 1.3.

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An appropriate amendment to 39 CFR part 111 will be published if the proposal is adopted.

Stanley F. Mires,

Chief Counsel, Legislative.

[FR Doc. 00-22215 Filed 8-31-00; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[TX-122-1-7451b; FRL-6860-4]

Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Reasonably Available Control Technology for Major Stationary Sources of Nitrogen Oxides for the Houston/Galveston, Beaumont/Port Arthur, and Dallas/Fort Worth Ozone Nonattainment Areas

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The EPA is proposing to take direct final action on revisions to the Texas State Implementation Plan. The revisions concern Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds. Specifically, this rulemaking covers three separate actions: Converting EPA's conditional approval of the revisions to the 30 TAC, Chapter 117, Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds for major stationary sources in the Beaumont/Port Arthur (B/PA) and Houston/Galveston (H/GA) ozone nonattainment areas to a full approval, as meeting the Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) requirements for controlling Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x) emission from major stationary sources in the B/PA and H/GA ozone nonattainment areas; approving Revisions to the 30 TAC, Chapter 117, Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds for lean burn, stationary, reciprocating internal combustion engines in the B/PA, and H/GA ozone nonattainment areas; and approving Revisions to the 30 TAC, Chapter 117, Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds, for major stationary sources in the Dallas/Fort

Worth (D/FW) ozone nonattainment area, as meeting the RACT requirements for controlling the NO_x emission from major stationary sources in the D/FW ozone nonattainment area. The EPA is approving these revisions to regulate emissions of Nitrogen dioxide in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act.

In the "Rules and Regulations" section of this **Federal Register**, EPA is approving the State's SIP revision as a direct final rule without prior proposal because the EPA views this as a noncontroversial revision and anticipates no adverse comment. The EPA has explained its reasons for this approval in the preamble to the direct final rule. If EPA receives no relevant adverse comments, the EPA will not take further action on this proposed rule. If EPA receives relevant adverse comment, EPA will withdraw the direct final rule and it will not take effect. The EPA will address all public comments in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. The EPA will not institute a second comment period on this action. Any parties interested in commenting must do so at this time.

DATES: Written comments must be received by October 2, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Mr. Thomas H. Diggs, Chief, Air Planning Section (6PD-L), at the EPA Region 6 Office listed below. Copies of documents relevant to this action are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the following locations. Anyone wanting to examine these documents should make an appointment with the appropriate office at least two working days in advance.

Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, Air Planning Section (6PD-L), 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733.

Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, Office of Air Quality, 12124 Park 35 Circle, Austin, Texas 78753.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Alan Shar, P.E., Air Planning Section (6PD-L), EPA Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733, telephone (214) 665-6691.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document concerns Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds and the RACT requirements in the B/PA, H/GA, and D/FW ozone nonattainment areas. For further information, please see the information provided in the direct final action that is located in the "Rules and Regulations" section of this **Federal Register** publication.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*

Dated: August 11, 2000.

Myron O. Knudson,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region 6.

[FR Doc. 00-22057 Filed 8-31-00; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[MD008/052-3052b; FRL-6845-9]

Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Control of Iron and Steel Production Installations

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: EPA proposes to approve the State Implementation Plan (SIP) revisions submitted by the State of Maryland for the purpose of establishing opacity limits for blast furnaces constructed on or after January 1, 1977. In the Final Rules section of this **Federal Register**, EPA is approving the State's SIP submittal as a direct final rule without prior proposal because the Agency views this as a noncontroversial submittal and anticipates no adverse comments. A more detailed description of the state submittal and EPA's evaluation are included in a Technical Support Document (TSD) prepared in support of this rulemaking action. A copy of the TSD is available, upon request, from the EPA Regional Office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this document. If no adverse comments are received in response to this action, no further activity is contemplated. If EPA receives adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. EPA will not institute a second comment period. Any parties interested in commenting on this action should do so at this time.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing by October 2, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Ms. Makeba A. Morris, Chief, Technical Assessment Branch, Mailcode 3AP22, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103. Copies of the documents relevant to this action are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Air Protection Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 1650 Arch Street,

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103; and the Maryland Department of the Environment, 2500 Broening Highway, Baltimore, Maryland, 21224.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ruth E. Knapp, (215) 814-2191, at the EPA Region III address above, or by e-mail at knapp.ruth@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For further information on the opacity limits for blast furnaces constructed in Maryland on or after January 1, 1977, please see the information provided in the direct final action, with the same title, that is located in the "Rules and Regulations" section of this **Federal Register** publication.

Thomas Voltaggio,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region III.

[FR Doc. 00-22376 Filed 8-31-00; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 80

[FRL-6855-7]

Use of Alternative Analytical Test Methods in the Reformulated Gasoline Program

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule would extend the time period during which certain alternative analytical test methods may be used in the Federal reformulated gasoline (RFG) program to September 1, 2004. The time period for the use of these alternative methods originally expired on January 1, 1997 and was previously extended to September 1, 1998 and September 1, 2000. This proposed rule would also update each of these alternative methods to achieve more accurate results and to make them easier to perform. The purpose of today's proposed extension is to grant temporary flexibility until we issue a performance-based analytical test methods rule.

DATES: Comments must be submitted by October 2, 2000.

ADDRESSES: If you wish to submit comments, you should send them to the docket address listed and to Anne Pastorkovich, Attorney/Advisor, Transportation & Regional Programs Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. (6406J), Washington, DC 20460. Materials relevant to this proposed (and direct final) rule have been placed in

docket A-2000-26 located at U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Air Docket Section, Room M-1500, 401 M Street, SW., Washington, DC 20460. The docket is open for public inspection from 8 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. You may be charged a reasonable fee for photocopying services.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you would like further information about this proposed rule or to request a hearing, contact Anne Pastorkovich, Attorney/Advisor, Transportation & Regional Programs Division, (202) 564-8987.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Regulated Entities

Entities potentially regulated by the action are those that use analytical test methods to comply with the RFG program. Regulated categories and entities include:

Category	Examples
Industry	Oil refiners, gasoline importers, oxygenate blenders

This table is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather provides a guide for readers regarding entities likely to be regulated by this action. This table lists all entities that we are now aware could potentially be regulated by this action. Other types of entities not listed in this table could also be regulated by this action. To determine whether your business is regulated by this action, you should carefully examine the applicability criteria in part 80 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. If you have any questions regarding the applicability of this action to a particular entity, consult the person listed in the preceding section of this document.

II. RFG Standards & Test Methods Utilized in 40 CFR 80.46

Section 211(k) of the Clean Air Act directs EPA to establish standards requiring the greatest reduction in emissions of ozone forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and toxic air emissions achievable through the reformulation of conventional gasoline, considering cost, other health and environmental factors and energy requirements. The Act requires that RFG meet certain content standards for oxygen, benzene, and heavy metals. RFG must be used in certain ozone nonattainment areas, called "covered areas." The CAA also requires EPA to establish anti-dumping standards applicable to conventional gasoline

used in the rest of the country. We issued final RFG and anti-dumping regulations on December 15, 1993¹ and these regulations became effective in January 1995.

Under the RFG and anti-dumping program, refiners, importers, and oxygenate blenders are required to test RFG and conventional gasoline for certain parameters, including sulfur levels, aromatic content, benzene content, and oxygen content. Test methods for determining these parameters are specified in the regulation. For oxygen and oxygenate content, 40 CFR 80.46(g)(1) through (8), (9)(ii), and (h) specify the use of the gas chromatographic procedure using an oxygenate flame ionization detector, or the "GC-OFID method." For aromatics content, 40 CFR 80.46(f)(1) and (2) specifies the gas chromatography method.

Based upon comments received from the regulated industry during the RFG and anti-dumping rulemaking process, we concluded that it would be appropriate to temporarily allow the use of test methods not specified in the regulation for measuring oxygen and aromatics content. These comments tended to indicate that the designated test methods for oxygen and aromatics content were costly and relatively new, so we agreed to permit industry to use two specified alternative analytical test methods until January 1, 1997. The alternative analytical test method for oxygen is ASTM D 4815-93, entitled "Standard Test Method for Determination of MTBE, ETBE, TAME, DIPE, tertiary-Amyl Alcohol and C1 to C4 Alcohols in Gasoline by Gas Chromatography," and the alternative analytical test method for aromatics is ASTM D 1319-93, entitled "Standard Test Method for Hydrocarbon Types in Liquid Petroleum Products by Fluorescent Indicator Adsorption." These alternative analytical test methods are specified in § 80.46(g)(9)(i) and (f)(3), respectively.

We later extended the deadline for use of the two alternative analytical test methods to September 1, 1998² and September 1, 2000.³ In granting these further extensions, we determined that permitting continued use of the

¹ "Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: Standards for Reformulated and Conventional Gasoline—Final Rule," 59 FR 7812 (February 16, 1994). See 40 CFR part 80 subparts D, E, and F.

² "Use of Alternative Test Methods in the Reformulated Gasoline Program," 61 FR 58304 (November 13, 1996).

³ "Use of Alternative Test Methods in the Reformulated Gasoline Program and Revision of the Specification for the Mixing Chamber Associated with Animal Toxicity Testing of Fuels and Fuel Additives," 63 FR 63789 (November 17, 1998).