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Part III

Environmental Protection Agency

Hazardous Waste Management System: Mining and Cement Kiln Wastes Exemptions; Small Quantity Generator Standards; Generator Waste Accumulation Amendment; Hazardous Waste Spill Response Exemption, and Clarification of Interim Status Requirements

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 261

[SWH-FRL 1675-1]

Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Interim final amendment to rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: This regulation amends the hazardous waste regulations (40 CFR § 261.4(b)) to exclude from regulation under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1) solid waste from the extraction, beneficiation and processing of ores and minerals (including coal), including phosphate rock and overburden from the mining of uranium ore and (2) cement kiln dust wastes. This action is being taken to bring the regulation into conformance with Section 7 of the recently enacted Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980. The Agency, for the time being, is interpreting the scope of these exclusions broadly but is unsure that this interpretation is consistent with the intent of the Congress. Therefore, over the next 90 days, it intends to carefully examine the legislative history of the statutory amendment and consider the public comments being solicited by this action. Based on this review, the Agency, in subsequent rulemaking action, may further narrow the exclusion being promulgated today.

DATE: Effective Date: November 19, 1980.

Comment Date: This amendment is promulgated as an interim final rule. The Agency will accept comments on it until January 19, 1981.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the amendment should be sent to Docket Clerk (Docket No. 3001), Office of Solid Waste (WH-565), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, contact Alfred W. Lindsey, Office of Solid Waste, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460, (202) 755-9185. For information on implementation, contact:

Region I, Dennis Huebner, Chief, Radiation, Waste Management Branch, John F. Kennedy Building, Boston, Massachusetts 02203, (617) 223-5777

Region II, Dr. Ernest Regna, Chief, Solid Waste Branch, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, New York 10007, (212) 264-0504/5

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Region IV, James Scarbrough, Chief, Residuals Management Branch, 345 Courtland Street NE., Atlanta, Georgia 30365, (404) 881-3016

Region V, Karl J. Klepitsch, Jr., Chief, Waste Management Branch, 230 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, (312) 886-6148

Region VI, R. Stan Jorgensen, Acting Chief, Solid Waste Branch, 1201 Elm Street, First International Building, Dallas, Texas 75270, (214) 787-2645

Region VII, Robert L. Morby, Chief, Hazardous Materials Branch, 324 E. 11th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 374-3307

Region VIII, Lawrence P. Gazda, Chief, Waste Management Branch, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, Colorado 80203, (303) 837-2221

Region IX, Arnold R. Den, Chief, Hazardous Materials Branch, 215 Fremont Street, San Francisco, California 94105, (415) 556-4606

Region X, Kenneth D. Feigner, Chief, Waste Management Branch, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101, (206) 442-1260

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Reason and Basis for Today's Amendments

On May 19, 1980, EPA promulgated regulations implementing Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). See 45 FR 33066-33588. These regulations define solid wastes and hazardous wastes and establish requirements applicable to generators, transporters, treaters, storers and disposers of hazardous wastes. These regulations also require owners and operators of hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities to obtain RCRA permits.

The definition of solid waste is provided in § 261.2 of these regulations. The definition of hazardous waste is provided in § 261.3 of these regulations. Both definitions are sufficiently broad to include many solid wastes generated in the extraction, beneficiation and processing of ores and minerals, exclusive of mining overburden returned to the mine site (see § 261.4(b)(3).) Specifically, eight mining and mineral processing wastes (EPA hazardous waste Nos. FO13-FO15 and KO64-KO68) were listed as hazardous wastes in §§ 261.31 and 261.32 of the May 19 regulations (see 45 FR 33123-33124). In addition, other mining and mineral processing wastes may be hazardous wastes because they exhibit one or more of the characteristics of hazardous wastes in Subpart C of Part 261. By virtue of these definitions, a number of mining and mineral processing wastes will be subject to the regulations on November 19, 1980, the effective date of the regulations.

Additionally, some cement kiln dust waste could be hazardous waste under the regulations, if it exhibits any of the characteristics of hazardous waste in Subpart C of Part 261. Thus, some cement kiln dust waste may be subject to the regulations on and after November 19, 1980.

In Section 7 of the recently enacted Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 94-482, October 21, 1980), the Congress amended Section 3001 of RCRA to prohibit EPA from regulating certain wastes under Subtitle C of RCRA until after completion of certain studies and certain rulemaking. Among these wastes are (1) "solid waste from the extraction, beneficiation and processing of ores and minerals, including phosphate rock and overburden from the mining of uranium ore" and (2) "cement kiln dust waste." Accordingly EPA is today amending its regulations, at § 261.4, to incorporate this statutory change.

Several trade associations, representing the mining and cement industries, have asked EPA to amend its regulations by November 19, 1980, the effective date of these regulations, to incorporate the 1980 amendments concerning these wastes. In addition these associations have sought a clarification of the scope of the exclusion, particularly regarding the types of mining operations that are excluded. The statutory exclusion of mining wastes in Section 3001(b)(3) is limited to "solid waste from the extraction, beneficiation and processing of ores and minerals." One mining trade association has argued that this exclusion covers wastes from the exploration, mining, milling, smelting and refining of ores and minerals (including coal.)

In the interest of providing the mining and cement industries clear guidance on whether they are subject to the regulations, EPA is amending the regulations before the November 19 date. At the same time EPA questions whether the Section 3001(b)(3) was to be interpreted as broadly as the trade associations suggest. To resolve these questions, the Agency will have to examine carefully the legislative history and consult with the mining and cement industries and the public. The Agency could not accompish this by November 19, 1980, given the extremely large workload with which it is burdened in developing the Phase II regulations, in responding to other requests for regulatory amendments and interpretations, and in responding to petitions for judicial review of the regulations.

Consequently, the Agency has decided to provide an immediate but temporary accommodation of the requests on this matter by promulgating today interim final amendments to § 261.4(b) which provide the requested exclusion using the language of the statutory amendments. Until the Agency takes further rulemaking action on this matter, it will interpret the language of today's amendments, with respect to the mining and mineral processing waste exclusion, to include solid waste from the exploration, mining, milling, smelting and refining of ores and minerals.

This exclusion does not, however, apply to solid wastes, such as spent solvents, pesticide wastes, and discarded commercial chemical products, that are not uniquely associated with these mining and allied processing operations, or cement kiln operations. Therefore, should either industry generate any of these non-indigenous wastes and the waste is identified or listed as hazardous under Part 261 of the regulations, the waste is hazardous and must be managed in conformance with the Subtitle C regulations.

II. Intended Reconsideration of Today's Amendments

The Agency fully intends to consider the appropriate scope of the statutory exclusion and may well take rulemaking action to lessen the scope of the exclusion being promulgated today. To aid in this consideration, the Agency is soliciting public comments on this matter. In particular EPA questions whether Congress intended to exclude (1) wastes generated in the smelting, refining and other processing of ores and minerals that are further removed from the mining and beneficiation of such ores and minerals, (2) wastes generated during exploration for mineral deposits and (3) wastewater treatment and air emission control sludges generated by the mining and mineral processing industry. EPA specifically seeks comment on whether such wastes should be part of the exclusion. EPA also seeks comment on how it might distinguish between excluded and non-excluded solid wastes.

If EPA narrows the scope of the exclusion being promulgated today in future rulemaking, those who generate, transport, store, treat or dispose of wastes affected by such a change will have six months to prepare for compliance with the regulations. This six month delay in the effective date is provided under authority of Section 3010(b) of RCRA.

In addition to the consideration of the scope of the exclusion discussed above, the Agency will be considering regulatory amendments to implement other provisions of Section 3001(b)(3). Section 3001(b)(3)(B) recognizes EPA authority to issue regulations under Section 2002 of RCRA to place requirements on owners and operators of disposal sites for excluded wastes. These requirements concern identification and recording of information on the location of disposal sites as well as on the composition of the wastes that are disposed. EPA also invites public comment on how it should formulate such requirements.

III. Effect of Today's Amendments

Today's amendments relieve persons who generate or manage hazardous wastes produced in, and unique to, the exploration, mining, milling, smelting or refining of ores or minerals and persons who generate or manage a cement kiln dust waste from having to comply with EPA's regulations under Subtitle C of RCRA with respect to these wastes. Owners and operators of existing treatment, storage and disposal facilities do not have to submit a Part A, RCRA permit application by November 19, 1980, or comply with the interim status standards of Part 265 after November 19, 1980, with respect to such wastes. Also, owners and operators of new facilities for the treatment, storage or disposal of the subject wastes will not have to apply for and obtain a RCRA permit before constructing or operating such facilities.

Today's action does not relieve persons who generate or manage those wastes herein discussed from compliance with other Federal and State regulations including State regulations designed to implement Subtitle D of RCRA and State regulations being implemented in lieu of the Federal Subtitle C regulations where the State has interim or full authorization under Section 3006 of RCRA.

IV. Relationship to Final Listing of Certain Hazardous Waste in §§ 261.31 and 261.32

On November 12, 1980, in a separate rulemaking action (see 45 FR 74884), the Agency has finalized the list of most of the hazardous wastes listed in §§ 261.31 and 261.32. Included in this action was finalization of seven of the mining and mineral processing wastes mentioned above (EPA hazardous waste nos. F014–15 and K064–68). One of the wastes previously mentioned (F013) was deleted from the list of hazardous waste (§ 261.31) in that separate action. Because of the Agency's uncertainty with respect to the scope of the statutory amendments, as discussed above, it has gone ahead with the finalization of the aforementioned listed wastes. Notwithstanding, the effect of today's action is to suspend those final listings of hazardous wastes, unless and until the Agency reduces the scope of today's exclusion in subsequent rulemaking action.

V. Coal Mining Waste

The Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980 also included special provisions (Sections 1006(c) and 3005(f)) designed to coordinate regulation of coal mining waste with the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, 30 U.S.C. § 1201 *et seq.* EPA believes that these provisions present problems of legal interpretation which cannot be resolved by November 19, 1980. The Agency may seek public comment on its interpretation of those provisions in later rulemaking actions. This interim final rule does not attempt to interpret the scope of Sections 1006(c) and 3005(f). However, since coal is arguably a "mineral or ore" under Section 3001(b)(3), wastes from the extraction, beneficiation and processing of coal are excluded from RCRA Subtitle C regulation in today's amendment to § 261.4(b). Until EPA has had an opportunity to analyze the intended scope of the exclusion, the terms "extraction, beneficiation and processing" will be interpreted broadly to include coal exploration, mining, cleaning, classification, and other processing activities. As with other elements of this exclusion, EPA will be examining this exclusion, particularly the exclusions for classification, and other processing activities, in more detail later and may decide to narrow its scope.

VI. Effective Date

Section 3010(b) of RCRA provides that EPA's hazardous waste regulations and revisions thereto take effect six months after their promulgation. The purpose of this requirement is to allow persons handling hazardous wastes sufficient lead time to prepare to comply with major new regulatory requirements. The amendments promulgated today, however, serve to put in regulatory form what is already stated in statute. To establish a deferred effective date would only serve to confuse the regulated community. Consequently, the Agency is establishing an immediate effective date for this amendment.

VII. Request for Comments

The Agency invites comments on these amendments and on the issues discussed in this preamble and,

therefore, is providing a 60-day comment period.

Dated: November 14, 1980.

Douglas M. Costle,

Administrator.

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended by adding the following paragraphs to § 261.4(b):

§ 261.4 [Amended]

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(6) Solid waste from the extraction, beneficiation and processing of ores and minerals (including coal), including phosphate rock and overburden from the mining of uranium ore.

(7) Cement kiln dust waste.

These amendments are issued under the authority of Sections 1006, 2002(a) and 3001 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6905, 6912(a) and 6921.

[FR Doc. 80-36129 Filed 11-18-80; 8:45 am]

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40 CFR Parts 261 and 262

[SWH-FRL 1675-3]

Hazardous Waste Management System: Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste Standards for Generators of Hazardous Waste

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Interim final rules and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In regulations promulgated in May, 1980, establishing a federal program for the management of hazardous wastes, EPA excluded from full regulation persons handling hazardous wastes generated in small quantities (40 CFR 261.5, 45 FR 33066, 33120 (May 19, 1980)). This amendment clarifies the operation of the special requirements for hazardous waste generated by small quantity generators. Part 262 of the regulations has also been amended to ensure that these generators determine whether their wastes are hazardous.

DATE: Effective Date: November 19, 1980.

Comment Date: EPA will accept public comments on this regulation until January 19, 1981.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this regulation should be sent to the Docket Clerk [Docket Number 3001], Office of Solid Waste (WH-562), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460.

The public docket for this regulation is located in Room 2711, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. and is available for viewing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Among other items, the docket contains the background document for this regulation which has been revised to accommodate these amendments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Holloway, Office of Solid Waste, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, (202) 755-9200.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

Pursuant to Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended ("RCRA"), 42 U.S.C. § 6901 *et seq.*, EPA recently promulgated regulations establishing a comprehensive regulatory program for the management and control of hazardous wastes (45 FR 33066 (May 19, 1980)). The regulations, among other things, identify the characteristics of hazardous wastes, list particular wastes as hazardous, and establish standards for generators and transporters of hazardous waste and owners and operators of hazardous waste management facilities.

The regulations also define special requirements for hazardous waste generated by generators who produce less than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste during a calendar month. (See 40 CFR 261.5, 45 FR 33120). Hazardous waste generated by a small quantity generator is generally excluded from full regulation provided the generator stores, treats, or disposes of his hazardous waste in facilities specified as acceptable or ensures that his hazardous waste is delivered to such facilities. However, if a small quantity generator generates or accumulates acutely hazardous waste in quantities greater than specified, or if he accumulates more than a total of 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste at any time, all quantities of hazardous wastes for which an exclusion level is exceeded are fully regulated.

Since the publication of the regulation, members of the regulated community have raised a number of questions concerning the operation of the small quantity exclusion. EPA has been persuaded that, in certain respects, the regulation is ambiguous and does not clearly address certain situations. In addition, the regulation contains certain technical errors which would cause the exclusion to operate in a manner not intended by the Agency or contrary to the manner explained in the preamble to the regulation and the supporting materials. This amendment to the regulation is intended to clarify the original regulation and to correct the errors contained in it.

The revisions to the small quantity generator exclusion principally concern five aspects of the regulation: the determination of who is a small quantity generator; the requirements applicable to hazardous waste accumulated on-site; the requirements applicable to acutely hazardous wastes; the conditions applicable to wastes excluded from full regulation; and the requirements applicable to mixtures. The changes to the regulation are described in this preamble. The underlying rationale and basis for § 261.5 remain unchanged and are set forth in the preamble to the May regulation. (See 45 FR at 33102-33105.)

The background document supporting the requirements for small quantity generators has been revised to explain in greater detail the operation of § 261.5. In addition to describing the changes made by today's amendments, the background document provides guidance on the operation of regulations applicable to the small quantity generator.

It should be noted that the Agency has received a petition from the National Solid Waste Management Association ("NSWMA") which requests the Agency to make substantive revisions to § 261.5. EPA has noticed and requested comments on the petition. (45 68409 (October 15, 1980).) The amendment to § 261.5 published today does not constitute the Agency's response to the NSWMA petition. EPA's action with regard to that petition will be the subject to further notice and/or rulemaking.

II. Amendments to the Regulation

A. Determination of Small Quantity Generator Status.

Section 261.5(a) of the May regulation set forth the general test for determining who may qualify as a small quantity generator:

> * * * if a person generates, in a calendar month, a total of less than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous wastes, those wastes are not subject to regulation * * *.

Since publication of the regulation, persons have raised two questions basic to the operation of this section: (a) should the section be keyed to generators rather than persons; and (b) what wastes should be counted in determining the amount of waste generated in a calendar month? The regulation has been revised to resolve both of these questions.

Although it was EPA's intent to key the exclusion levels established in § 261.5 to individual generation sites, the May 19, 1980 regulation refers to "persons" rather than "generators". As these terms are defined in § 260.10 of this Chapter, a corporation (i.e., a person) may comprise numerous facilities that generate hazardous waste, (i.e., generators). Read literally, therefore, § 261.5 makes the Subtitle C regulations and the notification requirements of Section 3010 of RCRA fully applicable to a company which generates, in the aggregate, more than the quantity exclusion level but each of whose facilities generates less than that amount. The revised regulation replaces the prior reference to "persons" with "generators," making it clear that individual facilities which generate hazardous waste in a quantity below the exclusion levels may qualify as small quantity generators.

To provide further clarification, the amended regulation defines a small quantity generator as a generator who generates less than 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste in a calendar month. Thus, this amended regulation makes clear that a generator may be a small quantity generator in one month and a large quantity generator in another month. The recordkeeping and reporting requirements of Part 262 apply, however, only to those periods in which the generator's hazardous waste is subject to full regulation under Part 262. Thus, for example, the annual report of a generator whose waste is subject to full regulation under Part 262 for three months in a year would cover the generator's activity only for those three months.

The second issue resolved by the amended regulation concerns which hazardous wastes should be counted in determining whether a generator generates 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste in a calendar month. One question is how the exclusion of hazardous wastes that are used, re-used, recycled or reclaimed under § 261.6 relates to the § 261.5 requirements. Another set of questions focuses on the potential double-counting of wastes by a generator who removes waste from on-site storage or whose on-site treatment of wastes generates hazardous waste.

The small quantity generator requirements have been revised by the addition of a new paragraph, § 261.5(c), to clarify which hazardous wastes that are being used, re-used, recycled or reclaimed are included in determining small generator status. Section 261.6(a) excludes from regulation wastes that are hazardous because they meet EPA characteristics and that are beneficially used or re-used or legitimately recycled or reclaimed. Wastes that are excluded under § 261.6(a) are not included in the quantity determination of § 261.5. Section 261.6(b), however, makes sludges, listed hazardous wastes, and hazardous wastes containing listed hazardous wastes subject to full regulation during storage and transportation prior to their use, re-use, recycling or reclamation. Because these wastes are subject to Subtitle C regulation, the revised § 261.5 makes clear that these wastes must be included in the quantity determination and are subject to the other requirements of that section. Although this is a result that a careful reading of the May regulation would support, the revised § 261.5 should resolve any ambiguity on this issue.

A number of persons stated that use of the word "generates" in § 261.5 creates some uncertainty about what wastes should be counted in determining eligibility for small quantity generator status. These commenters believed that, without clarification, the rule might lead to double-counting of wastes when they are also treated or stored on-site. If, for example, a generator's manufacturing process generated 600 kilograms of hazardous waste in a month, and he placed that waste in storage, persons were uncertain whether, when that waste was removed from storage, the 600 kilograms was to be counted again in the quantity determination. Counting this quantity a second time would have the effect of substantially lowering the exclusion levels. A new paragraph, § 261.5(d), has been added to make it clear that a generator counts his hazardous waste only when he first generates it. He is not required to count the waste again when he removes it from on-site accumulation or storage [1] or when he produces a hazardous waste from the on-site treatment of his hazardous waste. The amendment is intended to avoid double-counting of wastes and therefore extends only to the on-site treatment or storage of hazardous wastes generated by the small quantity generator. If the generator receives hazardous waste from another person for treatment, the hazardous waste generated by the treatment process must be counted in the generator's quantity determination.

B. *Requirements Applicable to Hazardous Waste Accumulated On-site.*

Section 261.5(b) of the May regulation states that if a generator accumulates more than 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste, these wastes are subject to full Subtitle C regulation. Acutely hazardous wastes, when accumulated, are subject to the lower exclusion limits specified in § 261.5(c) of the May 19, 1980, regulation. After the publication of the regulation, persons questioned how the regulation would apply: whether the generator would be able to use the provisions of § 262.34 allowing on-site storage without a permit for 90 days prior to shipment of the wastes to treatment, storage or disposal facilities; and, if so, how the provisions of that section apply to small quantity generators.

A new paragraph, § 261.5(f), clarifies the manner in which hazardous wastes are regulated when the accumulation limit is exceeded. Because the regulation allows indefinite and unregulated storage of wastes in quantities less than 1000 kilograms, the Agency believes it unreasonable to make this 90 day period start at the time the waste was first generated. Such a result would place generators who exceed the accumulation levels but whose accumulation began more than 90 days prior to exceeding the 1000 kilogram level immediately in violation of the regulatory requirements by storing wastes without a permit or without interim status under Section 3005(e) of RCRA. The revised § 261.5(f) states that at the time the allowable accumulation limit is exceeded, the waste becomes fully regulated and § 262.34 becomes applicable. Section 262.34 provides the generator 90 days to remove the waste from on-site storage without the necessity of having either a permit or interim status for that storage. To take advantage of § 262.34, however, the generator must satisfy the conditions of that section. This will ensure that the generator handles the waste in a satisfactory manner while providing him some time to arrange for proper treatment, storage or disposal.

The revised regulation also clarifies that once the accumulated amounts exceed 1000 kilograms, all of those wastes and those subsequently added to that accumulation are fully regulated until all the waste is sent to a hazardous waste treatment, storage or disposal facility. This rule means that those wastes remain subject to full regulation even if the quantity of wastes accumulated or stored becomes less than 1000 kilograms. In addition, those wastes remain fully regulated regardless of when the wastes are removed from storage or accumulation and regardless of whether the generator is a small

[1] Under the definition of generation, removal from storage is not an act or process that produces a hazardous waste, although it is an act which may subject a waste to regulation. The Agency intends to publish regulations on this subject in the near future.

quantity generator in the month they are removed from storage. Certain persons thought that only the amount exceeding 1000 kilograms was subject to regulation. This position was not, however, supported by the language in the May regulation which stated that, if a person accumulates more than 1000 kilograms, "those accumulated wastes" would be subject to full regulation. The revised language should resolve any ambiguity that may have been created by the original language. The provisions for acutely hazardous waste apply similarly.

C. *Requirements Applicable to Acutely Hazardous Waste.*

Section 261.5(c) of the May regulation sets lower exclusion levels for acutely hazardous discarded chemical products, their off-specification variants, containers and inner liners that held these wastes, and residue and debris resulting from spills of these wastes. The revised regulation, § 261.5(e), clarifies two ambiguities in the regulation: (a) whether the exclusion levels apply to the total amount of acutely hazardous waste generated and (b) whether the exclusion levels apply only to small quantity generators.

With respect to the first question, the language of the regulation has been revised to state that the exclusion levels apply to the aggregate of all of the acutely hazardous wastes subject to a particular exclusion. Thus, if a generator discards in a calendar month 0.5 kilograms of one commerical chemical product listed in § 262.33(e) and 0.5 kilogram each of two other listed commercial chemical products, the total 1.5 kilograms of acutely hazardous wastes would be subject to full Subtitle C regulation. The exclusion thus applies to acutely hazardous wastes in the same manner as it applies to other hazardous wastes. The rationale for aggregating wastes to determine the amount of wastes generated applies with equal force to acutely hazardous waste as to other hazardous waste. The need for full regulatory control of these wastes is the same whether the total is comprised of one listed substance or three such substances.

Second, the regulation is revised to clarify that the lower exclusion levels for acutely hazardous waste apply only to generators who otherwise are deemed small quantity generators. The Agency believes that a generator who produces more than 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste a month and is therefore subject to full regulation should handle his acutely hazardous wastes in the same manner as his other wastes. The basis for the exclusion levels is the administrative impossibility of EPA regulating all generators of hazardous waste. If a generator is subject to regulation on the basis of generating more than 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste, there is no reason to exclude from regulation his small quantities of those wastes which the Agency has identified as acutely hazardous. There will be no additional drain in the administrative demands placed on the Agency and the protection of human health and the environment will be significantly increased.

A final change to § 261.5 has been made with respect to acutely hazardous wastes. Section 261.5(c) of the May regulation established exclusion levels for containers and inner liners that held acutely hazardous waste. A new section, 261.7, has been added to the regulations under separate rulemaking that excludes "empty" containers from regulation. If a container or inner liner that has held acutely hazardous waste is empty, it is not subject to regulation and not subject to the exclusion levels set in § 261.5. The residues of acutely hazardous waste in nonempty containers or inner liners are subject to the exclusion levels of § 261.5(g) and the requirements of the section. The reference to containers and inner liners that appeared in § 261.5(c) of the May regulations is deleted.

D. *Conditions Applicable to Waste Excluded from Full Regulation.*

Section 261.5(d) of the May regulation specified the facilities in which hazardous waste excluded from full regulation could be managed. The Agency inadvertently omitted facilities that beneficially use or re-use, or legitimately recycle or reclaim waste from the list of acceptable facilities. The Congressional policy of promoting resource recovery, as implemented by the Subtitle C regulatory program in § 261.6, would not be served by denying to small quantity generators the same opportunity to use, re-use, recyle or reclaim their waste which is provided to other generators. Accordingly, the regulation is revised to allow small quantity generators to treat or dispose of their waste in such facilities. The regulation is also redesignated § 261.5(g).

Section 261.5(g) has also been revised to state that hazardous waste must be stored on-site in accordance with § 261.5(f). This latter paragraph, as described above, covers the accumulation and storage of wastes on-site. This revision merely reiterates that storing or accumulating wastes on-site under § 261.5(f) is allowed.

Today's amendments make one additional technical correction to the May regulations. Section 261.5(d) required generators, as a condition of the exclusion from full regulation, to determine under § 262.11 whether their wastes were hazardous. Section 262.11(a), however, stated that, if a generator determined that he was subject only to § 261.5, he did not have to determine whether his waste was hazardous. The Agency has corrected this inconsistency by deleting the reference to § 261.5 in § 262.11. The generator of solid waste must determine whether his waste is hazardous before determining whether his waste is conditionally excluded under § 261.5 from full regulation. Without such a determination the generator of hazardous wastes would not know whether any of the Subtitle C requirements, including the reduced requirements, apply to the waste nor whether, if the exclusion levels were exceeded, the full requirements would apply.

E. *Requirements Applicable to Mixtures.*

Section 261.5(e) of the May regulation established a special mixture provision for hazardous wastes which were excluded from full regulation by § 261.5. This provision is redesignated as § 261.5(h) and has not been revised.

A new paragraph, § 261.5(i), is added to make clear that mixtures of solid waste and hazardous wastes which have exceeded an exclusion level are subject to full Subtitle C regulation. Pursuant to § 261.3(a)(3)(ii), a mixture of solid waste and hazardous wastes is a hazardous waste. Members of the regulated community have asked what exclusion level applies to the mixture; for example, whether a mixture containing an acutely hazardous waste that has exceeded an exclusion level remains subject to the lower exclusion levels applicable to that waste. This new paragraph clarifies that the lower exclusion level applies. A contrary result would encourage generators to mix acutely hazardous wastes subject to full regulation (i.e., because they are generated or accumulated in quantities greater than one kilogram) with other hazardous excluded wastes (e.g., those generated in quantities of less than 1000 kilograms a month) and thus escape the regulatory controls which the Agency has determined are essential for the safe handling and management of hazardous wastes.

III. Effective Date

Section 3010(b) of RCRA provides that EPA's hazardous waste regulations and revisions thereto take effect six months after their promulgation. The purpose of this requirement is to allow persons handling hazardous wastes sufficient

lead time to prepare to comply with major new regulatory requirements. For the amendment to § 261.5 promulgated today, however, the Agency believes that an effective date six months after promulgation would cause substantial and unnecessary disruption in the implementation of the regulations and would be contrary to the interests of the regulated community and the public. The amended regulation is an integral part of a regulatory program that becomes effective on November 19, 1980. In addition, the principal revisions to the regulation simply clarify and make technical corrections to the regulation. The revisions also allow greater flexibility in the manner in which small quantity generators handle their hazardous waste.

The Agency believes it makes little sense to allow the small quantity generator requirements promulgated on May 19, 1980, to become effective on November 19, 1980, and then to have them substantially revised on a subsequent date by this amendment. Clarification of regulatory requirements and increasing their flexibility are not the types of regulation revision that Congress had in mind when it provided a six month delay between the promulgation and the effective date of revisions to regulations. Consequently, the Agency is setting an effective date of November 19, 1980, for the amendments to §§ 261.5 and 262.11 promulgated in this rulemaking action.

IV. Promulgation in Interim Final Form

These amendments to § 261.5 are designed principally to clarify the manner in which the regulations published in May of 1980 are to operate. EPA has received many questions on the regulation. These questions indicated that there is substantial confusion on the part of the regulated community about the exclusion of generators of small quantities of hazardous waste. Absent immediate effectuation of these clarifying amendments, EPA believes that this confusion will persist after the effective date of the Subtitle C regulations, November 19, 1980. This confusion will lead, EPA believes, to real and substantial hardship for persons subject to the reduced requirements of § 261.5. If uncertain about the rule's application or operation, many responsible generators of hazardous waste may unnecessarily comply with the full Subtitle C regulations. Immediate implementation of the amendment small quantity generator requirements is necessary in order to avoid inadvertantly imposing substantial burdens on literally thousands of generators who are uncertain whether they are excluded from full regulation under § 261.5. Given the real and substantial cost that delay might create, the Agency finds good cause to promulgate these rules without prior notice and opportunity for comment.

V. Request for Comments

The Agency invites comments on all aspects of these amendments to the regulations and on all issues discussed in this preamble. EPA is hopeful that the regulations as revised are reasonable, understandable, and workable. The Agency will be receptive to comments which would improve the regulation.

VI. Regulatory Impacts

The effect of these amendments is to reduce the overall costs, economic impact and reporting and recordkeeping impacts of EPA's hazardous waste management regulations. This is achieved by clarifying the operation of the regulations and increasing their flexibility. The Agency is unable to estimate these reductions.

Dated: November 14, 1980.

Douglas M. Costle,

Administrator.

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

1. Section 261.5 is revised to read as follows:

§ 261.5 Special requirements for hazardous waste generated by small quantity generators.

(a) A generator is a small quantity generator in a calendar month if he generates less than 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste in that month.

(b) Except for those wastes identified in paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section, a small quantity generator's hazardous wastes are not subject to regulation under Parts 262 through 265 and Parts 122 and 124 of this chapter, and the notification requirements of Section 3010 of RCRA, provided the generator complies with the requirements of paragraph (g) of this section.

(c) Hazardous waste that is beneficially used or re-used or legitimately recycled or reclaimed and that is excluded from regulation by § 261.6(a) is not included in the quantity determinations of this section, and is not subject to any requirements of this section. Hazardous waste that is subject to the special requirements of § 261.6(b) is included in the quantity determinations of this section and is subject to the requirements of this section.

(d) In determining the quantity of hazardous waste he generates, a generator need not include:

(1) His hazardous waste when it is removed from on-site storage; or

(2) Hazardous waste produced by on-site treatment of his hazardous waste.

(e) If a small quantity generator generates acutely hazardous waste in a calendar month in quantities greater than set forth below, all quantities of that acutely hazardous waste are subject to regulation under Parts 262 through 265 and Parts 122 and 124 of this chapter, and the notification requirements of Section 3010 of RCRA:

(1) A total of one kilogram of a commercial chemical products and manufacturing chemical intermediates having the generic names listed in § 261.33(e), and off-specification commercial chemical products and manufacturing chemical intermediates which, if they met specifications, would have the generic names listed in § 261.33(e); or

(2) A total of 100 kilograms of any residue or contaminated soil, water or other debris resulting from the clean-up of a spill, into or on any land or water, of any commercial chemical products or manufacturing chemical intermediates having the generic names listed in § 261.33(e).

(f) A small quantity generator may accumulate hazardous waste on-site. If he accumulates at any time more than a total of 1000 kilograms of his hazardous waste, or his acutely hazardous wastes in quantities greater than set forth in paragraphs (e)(1) or (e)(2) of this section, all of those accumulated wastes for which the accumulation limit was exceeded are subject to regulation under Parts 262 through 265 and Parts 122 and 124 of this chapter, and the notification requirements of Section 3010 of RCRA. The time period of § 262.34 for accumulation of wastes on-site begins for a small quantity generator when the accumulated wastes exceed the applicable exclusion level.

(g) In order for hazardous waste generated by a small quantity generator to be excluded from full regulation under this section, the generator must:

(1) Comply with § 262.11 of this chapter;

(2) If he stores his hazardous waste on-site, store it in compliance with the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section; and

(3) Either treat or dispose of his hazardous waste in an on-site facility, or ensure delivery to an off-site storage, treatment or disposal facility, either of which is:

(i) Permitted under Part 122 of this chapter;

(ii) In interim status under Parts 122 and 265 of this chapter;

(iii) Authorized to manage hazardous waste by a State with a hazardous waste management program approved under Part 123 of this chapter;

(iv) Permitted, licensed or registered by a State to manage municipal or industrial solid waste; or

(v) A facility which:

(A) Beneficially uses or re-uses, or legitimately recycles or reclaims his waste; or

(B) Treats his waste prior to beneficial use or re-use, or legitimate recycling or reclamation.

(h) Hazardous waste subject to the reduced requirements of this section may be mixed with non-hazardous waste and remain subject to these reduced requirements even though the resultant mixture exceeds the quantity limitations identified in this section, unless the mixture meets any of the characteristics of hazardous wastes identified in Subpart C.

(i) If a small quantity generator mixes a solid waste with a hazardous waste that exceeds a quantity exclusion level of this section, the mixture is subject to full regulation.

2. Section 262.11(a) is revised to read as follows:

§ 262.11 Hazardous waste determination.

(a) He should first determine if the waste is excluded from regulation under 40 CFR 261.4.

* * * * *

These amendments are issued under the authority of Sections 1006, 2002(a) and 3002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6905, 6912(a), and 6922.

[FR Doc. 80-36130 Filed 11-18-80; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 6560-30-M

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40 CFR Part 262

[SWH-FRC 1675-4]

Hazardous Waste Management System; Standards Applicable to Generators of Hazardous Waste

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Interim final rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In regulations promulgated in May, 1980, establishing a federal program for the management of hazardous wastes, EPA placed requirements on generators of hazardous waste that accumulated their waste on the site of generation prior to shipment to off-site hazardous waste management facilities [40 CFR § 262.34, 45 FR 33066, 33143 (May 19, 1980)]. One of these requirements was that a generator ship all accumulated waste off-site in 90 days or less. This amendment eliminates the distinction between accumulation for on-site and off-site treatment, storage or disposal, provided that, within 90 days, the waste is sent to a hazardous waste management facility that is either permitted or in interim status. The other requirements of § 262.34 are not changed by this rule.

DATES: Effective Date: This requirement is effective on November 19, 1980. Comment date: Comments are due January 19, 1981.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to the Docket Clerk (Docket 3002), Office of Solid Waste (WH-562), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rolf Hill, Office of Solid Waste, (WH-563), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460, (202) 755-9145.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

In regulations promulgated in February and May, 1980, EPA established standards applicable to generators of hazardous waste. 40 CFR Part 262, 45 FR 12722 (February 26, 1980), 45 FR 33140 (May 19, 1980). These standards, among other things, require generators to initiate a manifest to track the movement of hazardous waste, maintain records, and provide proper containers, labels and placards for the transportation of hazardous waste. Most of these requirements apply only to generators who send their hazardous wastes off the site of generation for treatment, storage or disposal. Some of these requirements, however, apply to generators who treat, store or dispose of their wastes on the site of generation. (See 40 CFR 262.10(b)).

Recognizing that many generators would accumulate hazardous waste for a period of time prior to shipping the waste to an off-site hazardous waste management facility, EPA set special requirements in § 262.34 which, if met by the generator, would allow him to accumulate the waste on-site without having to obtain a RCRA permit for a storage facility under Part 122 of the regulations or comply with the applicable standards under Parts 264 and 265 of the regulations.

The basis and rationale for these special 90-day accumulation rules appear in the preambles to, and the background documents supporting, the generator regulations first published in Feburary, 1980, and then revised in May, 1980. See 45 FR 12722, 12730 (February 26, 1980) and 45 FR 33140, 33141 (May 19, 1980). By allowing short-term accumulation without a permit, the regulation reflects the congressional intent that the RCRA program not interfere with the manufacturing process. See H.R. Rep. No. 94-1491, 94th Cong. 2d Sess. 26 (Sept. 9, 1976). Generation of hazardous waste necessarily requires some accumulation of that waste prior to taking it to a hazardous waste management facility. On the basis of information received in the comment period, the Agency selected ninety days as a period that provided sufficient time for such accumulation to occur in all reasonable situations.

Holding hazardous waste for a short period, however, entails many of the same risks to human health and environment as long-term storage, and therefore the Agency imposed specific requirements for short-term accumulation. The special requirements of § 262.34 require the generator to (1) ship the wastes off-site within 90 days; (2) place the waste in containers or tanks meeting specified technical standards; (3) mark the date accumulation began on the container or tank; (4) properly label and mark the containers; and, (5) comply with the Part 265 regulations concerning preparedness and prevention, contingency plans and emergency procedures. These requirements are designed to ensure that short-term accumulation of hazardous wastes will be done in a manner that ensures protection of human health and the environment.

Since the publication of the regulations, members of the regulated community have raised two questions that are basic to the application and operation of this regulation. First, these persons have stated that the distinction between accumulation of hazardous waste prior to off-site shipment and accumulation prior to on-site treatment, storage or disposal is arbitrary and that the 90-day accumulation provision should apply to both types of accumulation. Second, these persons have stated that although the special 90-day accumulation requirements of § 262.34 may be appropriate for the more centralized areas and facilities where hazardous wastes are accumulated prior to off-site transport or ultimate on-site disposition, they are more stringent than necessary for the accumulation and very short-term storage of wastes at areas where the wastes are generated and initially

accumulated—often in small containers—prior to movement to the more centralized on-site accumulation and storage areas.

The amendment being promulgated today responds to the first of these concerns. For reasons discussed below, however, EPA believes that more information is necessary prior to ascertaining the need for amending the regulations to respond to the second concern.

II. On-site Accumulation Prior to On-site Treatment, Storage or Disposal

The effect of the current regulations is to allow one class of generators (i.e., those who ship their wastes off-site) to "accumulate" their waste for up to 90-days without having a permit or interim status and to require all other generators (i.e., those who treat, store and dispose of the wastes on-site) to obtain a RCRA permit or interim status for the same activity. The standards applicable to both classes, however, are similar. Generators who accumulate waste on-site under § 262.34 would have to store their wastes in compliance with virtually all of the technical requirements of Part 265 and also satisfy many of the general requirements of that Part, e.g., prepare contingency plans and emergency procedures. The principal difference the Agency had discerned between these two classes of generators that was that the areas used for accumulation by the generator who performed such activities on-site would be included in their permit covering the other on-site treatment, storage and disposal facilities. In addition, certain provisions of the Part 265 regulations apply to the accumulation areas of generators who manage their wastes on-site; these include security, financial responsibility, closure and post-closure requirements.

EPA now believes, however, that the regulations as currently written impose substantially different requirements for generators who ship their wastes off-site as opposed to those who do not. These differences do not appear warranted. The most important of these differences concerns eligibility for interim status if short-term accumulation is considered storage for generators who treat, store or dispose of their wastes on-site. To obtain interim status a storage facility must be "in existence" on November 19, 1980. Section 3005(e), 42 U.S.C. § 6925(e) as amended by the Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980, P.L. 96-482 (October 21, 1980). A generator who sends his wastes off-site would be able to construct a new loading dock or storage shed for short-term accumulation; a generator who does not send his wastes off-site could not construct a new loading dock (i.e., a new storage facility) without obtaining a RCRA permit. Second, although applying for a permit for these accumulation areas may not entail significant increased burden, the terms and conditions of the permit could impose requirements beyond those required for generators who ship their wastes off-site. In addition, other differences between on-site accumulation and on-site storage may emerge as the regulations are interpreted and applied.

EPA believes that there is no basis for the distinction and accordingly has amended the requirement of § 262.34(a)(1) that accumulated wastes be shipped off-site within 90 days. The requirements of § 262.34 are designed to ensure protection of human health and the environment during short-term accumulation. The destination of the waste does not change the protection that this rule ensures. Section 262.34 requires that wastes that are accumulated on-site still must, within 90 days, go to treatment, storage or disposal facilities which are permitted or in interim status. The regulation now provides that such facilities may be on-site as well as off-site; the manner of regulation and the degree of environmental control is the same for these facilities.

The selection of a 90-day period in the original rule reflected the maximum accumulation time that the Agency thought was necessary prior to transporting wastes off-site. The generator does not wholly control the timing of the transportation because arrangements have to be made with the transporter and the hazardous waste management facility. The situation is obviously different if the generator is sending his waste to a treatment, storage or disposal facility located on the site of generation. In this situation, the generator has greater control over the handling of the waste and the timing of its shipment. The Agency solicits information on whether given this difference whether a shorter period, say 30 days, should be provided for generators who subsequently send their wastes to an on-site treatment, storage or disposal facility.

III. Application of Requirements to All Accumulation Areas

In promulgating the regulations establishing the requirements for on-site accumulation, EPA assumed that accumulation generally would occur in discrete areas in the manufacturing complex where wastes would be held prior to shipment to a treatment, storage or disposal facility. Technical standards for tanks or containers, the preparation of contingency plans and similar requirements are appropriate for loading docks, storage buildings and sheds, and other areas in a manufacturing complex where hazardous wastes are collected and accumulated.

Members of the regulated community, however, have pointed out that, within a manufacturing complex, there may be dozens of places where hazardous wastes are collected during daily operations prior to taking a container containing hazardous waste to the loading dock or other accumulation area. These commenters have questioned the appropriateness of applying the requirements of § 262.34 to each place where hazardous wastes may be initially collected.

EPA believes, however, that the requirments of § 262.34 are appropriate for both centralized and satellite accumulation areas. The Agency, however, is soliciting information on whether, in some situations, different requirements should govern these accumulation activities.

Whether at satellite or centralized accumulation areas, the hazardous waste requires proper management in order to minimize the threat to human health and the environment. The requirements of § 262.34 are designed to provide such protection. Containers that meet DOT specifications and tanks that meet Part 265 design and operating requirements appear necessary and appropriate for the accumulation of hazardous waste regardless of whether the accumulation occurs at a centralized facility or in different places within a plant. The other requirements of § 262.34 similarly appear appropriate to all accumulation activities on the site of generation; these include marking and labeling containers; weekly inspections of containers; locating of containers holding ignitable and reactive wastes away from the property line; requirements concerning preparedness and prevention, contingency plans and emergency response and personnel training. The protection that these requirements ensure appear appropriate and necessary wherever hazardous wastes are accumulated.

The Agency recognizes that there may be certain stituations in which the requirements of § 262.34 might not work well for the initial collection and accumulation of hazardous waste. For example, the Agency does not expect a company to engage in major reconstruction of a facility simply to be able to fit a DOT container beneath a hard-to-reach leaky pipe. The Agency does, however, want to ensure that all

hazardous waste, once generated, are safely and properly handled. The Agency requests comments on situations in which the requirements of § 262.34 may be inappropriate and on the manner in which EPA should handle such situations.

IV. Effective Date

Section 3010(b) of RCRA provides that EPA's hazardous waste regulations and revisions thereto take effect six months after their promulgation. The purpose of this requirement is to allow persons handling hazardous wastes sufficient lead time to prepare to comply with major new regulatory requirements. For the amendments to § 262.34 promulgated today, however, the Agency believes that an effective date six months after promulgation would cause substantial and unnecessary disruption in the implementation of the regulations and would be contrary to the interests of the regulated community and the public. The regulatory provision that this amendment modifies takes effect on November 19, 1980. In the absence of the immediate effectuation of this amendment, generators who accumulate wastes for on-site treatment, storage or disposal must prepare to operate these facilities as fully regulated hazardous waste storage facilities on and after November 19, 1980. This would include preparation and submission of a Part A permit application covering the accumulation area.

The Agency believes it makes little sense to allow the requirements promulgated on May 19, 1980, to become effective on November 19, 1980, and then have them substantially modified on a subsequent date, i.e., the six-month effective date for these amendments. Leasing of regulatory requirements is not the type of revision to regulations for which Congress intended a six-month delay occur between its promulgation and effective date. Consequently, the Agency is setting an effective date of November 19, 1980, for the amendment to § 262.34 promulgated in this rulemaking action.

V. Interim Final Promulgation

This regulation is being promulgated in interim final form. The reasons for taking this exceptional procedure are similar to those supporting the immediate effective date. The delay involved in initiating normal rulemaking would cause substantial hardship on generators who treat, store or dispose of their hazardous wastes on-site. During the pendency of rulemaking, these generators would not be able to construct new accumulation areas in their manufacturing facilities without obtaining a RCRA permit. Because such areas are intimately tied to the manufacturing process itself, such a delay might in effect create a prohibition of redesign and reconstruction of these manufacturing units.

Although the Agency does not adopt this procedure lightly, the circumstances indicate that the use of interim final promulgation is appropriate. As one court has noted "[i]t is an appropriate safety valve to be used where delay would do real harm." *U.S. Steel Corp.* v. *EPA*, 595 F.2d 207, 214 (5th Cir., 1979). EPA believes that the effect of delaying promulgation of this amendment would cause substantial, and unnecessary, hardship on a large number of manufacturing operations. In this situation, the use of advance notice and comment procedures would be contrary to the public interest and therefore good cause exists for adopting this amendment in interim final form. See 5 U.S.C. § 553(b)(B).

VII. Request for Comments

The Agency invites comments on all aspects of this amendment to the regulation and on all the issues discussed in this preamble. The Agency has recently requested comments of one aspect of § 262.34, its applicability to product storage tanks. 45 CFR 72024 (October 30, 1980). The Agency will consider all comments received on § 262.34 prior to promulgating this rule in final form. EPA desires to formulate sound and sensible regulations concerning the proper handling of hazardous waste. The requirements of § 262.34 are an important aspect of this broader concern, and, if commenters have suggestions on ways to improve this regulation, the Agency would be receptive to their suggestions.

VIII. Regulatory Impacts

The effect of this amendment is to reduce the overall costs, economic impact and reporting and recordkeeping impacts of EPA's hazardous waste management regulations. This is achieved by removing accumulation areas of generators who send accumulated wastes to on-site disposal facilities from full regulation as storage facilities. The Agency is unable to estimate these cost and impact reductions because it does not have an estimate of the number of such areas that otherwise would be fully regulated. For the reasons already discussed, notwithstanding these cost and impact reductions, the Agency believes that human health and environmental protection will not be reduced by this action.

Dated: November 14, 1980.

Douglas M. Costle,

Administrator.

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

§ 262.34 [Amended]

1. In § 262.34, paragraph (a)(1) is revised to read as follows.

(a) A generator may accumulate hazardous waste on-site without a permit or without having interim status, provided that:

(1) All such waste is, within 90 days, shipped off-site to a designated facility or placed in an on-site facility that is permitted under Part 122 of this Chapter, has interim status under Parts 122 of this Chapter, or is authorized to manage hazardous waste by a State with a hazardous waste management program approved under Part 123 of this Chapter.

* * * * *

These amendments are issued under the authority of Sections 1006, 2002(a), 3002, 3003, 3004 and 3005 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6905, 6912(a), 6922, 6923, 6924 and 6925.

[FR Doc. 80-36131 Filed 11-18-80; 8:45 am]
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40 CFR Parts 122, 260, 264 and 265

[SWH-FRL 1675-5]

Hazardous Waste Management System

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Interim final rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In regulations promulgated in May of 1980, the Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") established a comprehensive program for the handling and management of hazardous wastes. 45 FR 33066 (May 19, 1980). The regulations, among other things, set forth substantive requirements for the treatment and storage of hazardous wastes and require owners and operators of treatment and storage facilities to have Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permits or interim status pursuant to Parts 265 and 122 of the regulations. Certain activities which persons may take in response to spills of hazardous wastes or materials which, when spilled, become hazardous waste might be considered treatment (e.g., absorption, neutralization) or storage (e.g., diking, containment). In this action EPA makes clear that the requirements for treatment and storage are not applicable to actions taken to

immediately contain and treat spills of hazardous wastes and materials which, when spilled, become hazardous waste. This action also adds a definition of spill in §§ 260.10 and 122.3.

DATES: Effective date: These amendments become effective on November 19, 1980.

Comment Date: The Agency will accept comments on these amendments until January 19, 1981.

ADDRESS: Comments on these amendments should be addressed to the Docket Clerk (Docket 3004, Office of Solid Waste (WH-562), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, contact Amy Mills, Office of Solid Waste (WH-563), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. For information on implementation, contact:

Region I, Dennis Hueber, Chief, Radiation, Waste Management Branch, John F. Kennedy Building, Boston, Massachusetts 02203, (617) 223-5777

Region II, Dr. Ernest Regna, Chief, Solid Waste Branch, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, New York 10007, (212) 264-0504/5

Region III, Robert L. Allen, Chief, Hazardous Materials Branch, 6th and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106, (215) 597-0980

Region IV, James Scarbrough, Chief, Residuals Management Branch, 345 Courtland Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30365, (404) 881-3016

Region V, Karl J. Klepitsch, Jr., Chief, Waste Management Branch, 230 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, (312) 886-6148

Region VI, R. Stan Jorgensen, Acting Chief, Solid Waste Branch, 1201 Elm Street, First International Building, Dallas, Texas 75270, (214) 787-2645

Region VII, Robert L. Morby, Chief, Hazardous Materials Branch, 324 E. 11th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 347-3307

Region VIII, Lawrence P. Gazda, Chief, Waste Management Branch, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, Colorado 80203, (303) 837-2221

Region IX, Arnold R. Den, Chief, Hazardous Materials Branch, 215 Fremont Street, San Francisco, California 94105, (415) 556-4606

Region X, Kenneth D. Feigner, Chief, Waste Management Branch, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101, (206) 442-1260

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

In May of 1980, EPA promulgated regulations implementing Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended ("RCRA"). These regulations, among other things, identify and list hazardous wastes (Part 261), establish standards for generators and transporters of hazardous waste (Parts 262 and 263), and set standards and permit requirements for owners and operators of facilities that treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste (Parts 264 and 265 and Parts 122 and 124). 45 FR 33066 (May 19, 1980). These regulations are designed to ensure the proper handling and management of hazardous wastes from their generation through their ultimate disposition.

Because wastes may be produced, handled and disposed of in a large number of ways, the regulations necessarily are cast in broad terms. A generator is anyone whose act or process produces a hazardous waste or whose action first causes a hazardous waste to become subject to regulation. Section 260.10(a), 45 FR 72024 (October 30, 1980). This act or process may be the manufacture of goods or materials, service operations such as cleaning with chemical solvents listed in § 261.31, or the discard of commercial chemical products listed § 261.33. Storage is defined as "the holding of hazardous waste for a temporary period . . .", and treatment as "any method, technique, or process, including neutralization, designed to change the physical, chemical, or biological character or composition of any hazardous waste so as to neutralize such waste, or so as to render such waste nonhazardous, or less hazardous; safer to transport, store or dispose of; or amenable for recovery, amenable for storage, or reduced in volume." Section 260.10(a).

This action concerns how the regulations apply to hazardous wastes that are created by spills of hazardous waste or materials which, when spilled, become hazardous waste. For reasons discussed below, the word "spill" is defined in the amendments published today as "the accidental spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, or dumping of hazardous waste or material which, when spilled, becomes hazardous waste into or on any land or water." This definition obviously covers spills of those hazardous waste listed in §§ 261.31 and 261.32 and those solid wastes that exhibit any of the characteristics of hazardous wastes defined in Subpart C of Part 261. This definition also covers spills of the commercial chemical products and manufacturing chemical intermediates listed in § 261.33 (e) and (f). The Agency interprets spills of these materials to constitute discarding of such materials (see definitions in § 261.2 (c) and (d)). These materials, when discarded, are hazardous waste (see § 261.33). In addition, other materials, when spilled, are considered solid waste because spilling constitutes discarding and may exhibit the characteristic of hazardous waste defined in Subpart C of Part 261.

Members of the regulated community have asked whether certain activities taken in immediate response to such spills constitute treatment (e.g., neutralizing the hazardous waste) or storage (e.g., containing the waste in order to prevent its spread). These questions have significant practical implications. Treatment and storage of hazardous wastes, under the regulations, must be carried out in facilities that have interim status under Section 3005(e) of RCRA and 40 CFR Part 122 or that have a storage or treatment permit from EPA or a State authorized to run a hazardous waste program under Section 3006.[1] Spills are sudden, unplanned events. In many cases, the treatment or storage necessary to respond to spills will not be covered by a RCRA permit or interim status. This is particularly true for generators who do not treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste and transporters who would have neither a permit nor interim status. It also may be true for owners and operators of treatment, storage or disposal facilities where their permit or interim status may not cover the types of treatment or storage performed in responding to a particular spill. Persons responding to the spills would be placed in the uncomfortable position of taking actions necessary to protect human health and the environment while being in violation of RCRA.[2]

In addition, Parts 264 and 265 set forth the manner in which persons may treat

[1] Under § 122.27 the Regional Administrator is authorized to issue emergency permits if there is an imminent and substantial endangerment to human health or the environment to allow the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous waste for a nonpermitted facility or activities not covered by a permit. § 122.27 set forth procedures governing the issuance of emergency permits. EPA is presently developing guidance for the issuance of these permits.

[2] Hazardous wastes produced in small quantities are excluded from full Subtitle C regulation under § 261.5. A condition of that exclusion, however, is that wastes subject to § 261.5 must be managed in Subtitle C facilities, facilities approved by the State, or use, re-use, recycling or reclamation facilites. Thus, even for spills by small quantity generators, the same dilemma is posed for persons whose response might constitute treatment or storage.

or store hazardous wastes. With respect to chemical, physical, and biological treatment, for example, the regulations prescribe such things as general operating requirements, waste analysis and trail tests, inspections, and closure requirements. See 40 CFR 265 Subpart Q. If, for example, reagents are used to absorb or neutralize a chemical product listed in § 261.33 which has spilled in a plant, the treatment requirements specified in the regulations would technically govern the response to the spill.

This amendment is designed to allow appropriate responses to spills of hazardous wastes without being limited by the treatment and storage standards and the permit and interim status requirements of the regulations. It should be noted that EPA is developing regulations which will address in more comprehensive fashion the application of the RCRA regulations to spill response activities. That rulemaking will clarify, among other things, relationship of RCRA and other Federal statutes, particularly the Clean Water Act and the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, which concern spill activities.

II. What These Amendments Do

The amendments published today add three new elements to the regulations published in May, 1980: they add a definition of spill; exempt immediate containment and treatment activities from the Part 264 and 265 regulations governing treatment and storage; and, amend Part 122 to indicate that such activities do not have to be covered by a RCRA permit or interim status.

The definition of "spill" is the same as the definition of "discharge" in § 260. 10(a), except that the word "intentional" has been deleted from the definition of spill and the phrase "material which, when spilled, becomes hazardous waste" has been added. The exclusion from regulation provided in today's amendments is designed to allow persons to respond immediately to sudden, unplanned occurrences, i.e., accidents, which release materials or wastes into the environment. There does not appear to be any basis to extend today's action to intentional releases which might occur. Releases which occur from burst pipes and ruptured containers would be considered spills; releases which routinely occur from, for example, scheduled maintenance of machinery would not be. The Agency specifically requests comment on whether the definition of spills provides appropriate scope for the substantive amendments published today. For purposes of the RCRA portions of the consolidated permit regulations, a corresponding definition of spill has been added to § 122.3.

The amendments to Parts 264 and 265 state that treatment and containment actions taken in immediate response to spills are not considered treatment or storage of hazardous waste. These response activities are not subject, therefore, to the detailed requirements of those parts governing treatment and storage. The amendment to § 122.21 indicates that these activities do not have to be covered by a RCRA permit.

The amendments only cover activities during the immediate response to a spill. As discussed below, once this response is accomplished, other regulatory provisions apply. Section IV of this preamble provides examples of how these amendments and the other regulatory provisions apply to spill situations. These amendments are designed to allow persons to respond immediately to spills which may pose dangers to human health and the environment. If the Agency believes that anyone is abusing this provision, it will not hesitate to bring enforcement actions, including, under appropriate circumstances, criminal prosecutions.

III. Regulations not Affected by This Amendment

The purpose of today's amendments is to allow persons to treat and contain spills without having engaged in treatment and storage activities and to recognize that spills occur at places which might otherwise not be treatment and storage facilities. These amendments do not affect whether the spilled substance, residue or debris is a hazardous waste or not; Part 261 will govern. They do not affect in an way the application of the generator and transporter requirements; Parts 262 and 263 will govern these activities. After the immediate response activities are completed, the hazardous waste is subject to all the requirements for transportation, treatment, storage, or disposal.

The regulations promulgated in May, 1980, explicitly place specific requirements for certain spills of hazardous waste—discharges occurring during transportation and releases occurring at on-site accumulation areas and in treatment, storage and disposal facilities. These regulations, described briefly below, are unaffected by the amendments published today. These amendments complement the regulations by clarifying that actions taken in response to spills and in compliance with those regulations are not subject to the treatment and storage regulations and do not have to be carried out at a treatment or storage facility with a RCRA permit or in interim status.

Discharges of hazardous waste during transportation are subject to the provisions of Part 263 concerning immediate action, reporting, and cleanup. 40 CFR 263.30 and 263.31, 45 FR 12744 (February 26, 1980), republished at 45 FR 33152 (May 19, 1980). Discharges of hazardous materials during transportation are also subject to the reporting provisions of DOT regulations under the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. 49 CFR 171.15, 171.16. These regulations will apply to spills during transportation and these requirements are not affected by today's amendment.

The Part 264 and 265 regulations contain extensive requirements for hazardous waste management facilities concerning preparedness and prevention, and contingency plans and emergency procedures. 40 CFR Part 265, Subparts C and D, 45 FR 33236, 33237 (May 19, 1980). To ensure proper response to explosions, fires, and other releases of hazardous waste, these provisions require owners and operators of regulated facilities to have safety equipment and systems, arrangements with relevant local authorities, a contingency plan and emergency procedures covering response activities. These regulations continue to apply to releases at hazardous waste management facilities which present dangers to human health and the environment. For example, §§ 264.56 and 265.56, concerning emergency procedures, have not been exempted. The emergency coordinator must follow the procedures set forth in those sections. Today's amendment simply means that actions taken, for example, under § 265.56(e), are not subject to the treatment and storage requirements of Part 265.

Regulations promulgated under other Federal, state or local laws may apply to spills of hazardous waste and other materials. On the Federal level, two examples are Section 311 of the Clean Water Act and the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. Under Section 311 of the Clean Water Act, discharges of oils and hazardous substances (which may also be hazardous wastes) are subject to regulation. Hazardous materials, as regulated by DOT under the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, include hazardous wastes. See 45 FR 3451 (May 22, 1980). The amendments published today concern only RCRA requirements and in no way affect a person's obligations or responsibilities under any other applicable Federal, state or local law.

IV. Examples of How These Amendments Operate

The following examples illustrate the manner in which the amendments published today operate and tie in with the other RCRA regulations.

1. A manufacturer spills a commercial chemical product listed in § 261.33(e) on the floor of his plant. He immediately uses a reagent to absorb or neutralize the spill, whose residue amounts to more than 100 kilograms. He places the residue in containers for subsequent transportation off-site. What regulations apply?

The manufacturer is a generator of a hazardous waste—the spilled chemical as well as the resulting residue. He is not a small quantity generator because he has generated more than 100 kilograms of § 261.33(e) residue. See 40 CFR § 261.5(e)(2). His use of the reagent is not subject to treatment regulations of Parts 264 and 265 and this use does not have to be covered by a RCRA permit or interim status. Once the immediate response is over, however, he becomes subject to the generator requirements of Part 262. These include requirements for accumulation on-site, use of EPA identification numbers prior to transporting the residue off-site, initiation of the manifest, and use of appropriate packaging, labelling, marking and placarding.[3] Manufacturers who anticipate such spills may, as a precautionary measure, make necessary arrangements to comply with the Part 262 regulations in advance. And, the transportation and subsequent treatment, storage or disposal of the spill residue is subject to the requirements of Parts 263, 264, 265 and 122.

2. A tank used to accumulate hazardous waste (under the requirements of § 262.34) ruptures and the wastes spill on to the ground. Because the tank does not have a secondary containment system, the generator immediately builds an emergency dike to contain the spilled waste. He subsequently pumps the spilled waste into drums and, after several weeks, ships those drums off-site to an incinerator.

The design, construction and operation of the emergency containment dike is not subject to the RCRA Subtitle C regulations (however, the overall response to the spill is subject to the requirements of Subparts C and D of Part 265 which apply by reference through § 262.34). The storage of the cleaned-up wastes in drums is subject to the accumulation requirements of § 262.34 if storage in the drums is for less than 90-days before off-site shipment or in a on-site. If storage in the drums exceeds 90-days, then this must be covered by a RCRA permit (an existing permit, a new permit, or an emergency permit) or be covered by interim status, and must be carried out in compliance with the applicable requirements of Parts 264 or 265. The incinerator that the drummed wastes shipped to, must have a RCRA permit or interim status.

If, as part of the immediate clean-up action, the containment soil of the diked containment area is treated (e.g., decontamination of the soil in a mobile treatment unit) or the spilled waste is treated, such activity also would not be subject to regulation. However, if such treatment extends beyond the immediate clean-up action, EPA will require an emergency RCRA permit to be obtained. If contaminated soil is left in place, this constitutes disposal and will require a RCRA permit.

3. A spill of hazardous waste material listed in § 261.33(e) occurs in transportation. What must the transporter do?

Under § 263.30(a), the transporter must take appropriate immediate action to protect human health and the environment. The spill containment or treatment action taken in immediate response is exempt from the treatment and storage requirements of Parts 264 and 265 and the transporter is not required to have a RCRA permit or interim status for such action. If he has generated hazardous waste, he must comply with Part 262 when the immediate actions are over. If he transports the spill residue from the spill site, he must comply with the transporter requirements of Part 263 and transport the residue to a facility with a RCRA permit or interim status.

If required by DOT regulations (see 49 CFR 171.15) or other federal regulations (see, e.g., 40 CFR 117.21 and 33 CFR 153.201), the transporter must notify the National Response Center. If an on-scene coordinator or other official arrives, that official may undertake response activities which are exempted by today's amendments from the RCRA standards and permit requirements for treatment and storage. Under the present regulations, § 263.30(b), these officials may authorize the removal of the waste by transporters without EPA identification numbers and without the preparation of a manifest. The hazardous waste residue must be sent to a hazardous waste management facility with a RCRA permit or interim status. If long-term containment or treatment occurs at the spill site, the site must have a full RCRA permit, interim status, or an emergency permit.

4. A spill occurs on the site of disposal facility which is in interim status. The operator of the facility undertakes immediate containment and clean up. He subsequently disposes of the waste at his facility.

The immediate containment and clean up activities are exempted from the requirements of Part 264 and storage and treatment. The owners and operators of the facility must, however, carry out the provisions of the contingency plan under § 265.51 and follow the emergency procedures § 265.56. The disposal of the hazardous waste is subject to the disposal requirements of Part 265. If the disposal facility is unable to dispose of the spill residue, the owner or operator of the facility, if he has generated a hazardous waste, may accumulate the waste on-site under the provisions of § 262.34, and must comply with all the Part 262 requirements applicable to generators of hazardous waste.

V. Effective Date

Section 3010(b) of RCRA provides that EPA's hazardous waste regulations and revisions thereto take effect six months after their promulgation. The purpose of this requirement is to allow persons handling hazardous wastes sufficient lead time to prepare to comply with major new regulatory requirements. For the amendments promulgated today, however, the Agency believes that an effective date six months after promulgation would cause substantial and unnecessary disruption in the implementation of the regulations and would be contrary to the public interest. The amendments make clear that persons responding to spills are not engaging in treatment and storage activities and that such activities do not have to be done in facilities with a RCRA permit or in interim status. The effect of the amendments will be to relieve these persons of having to comply with a number of impractical requirements with respect to spills response actions. The Agency believes that this is not the type of regulation revision that Congress had in mind

[3] EPA recognizes that certain persons, including manufacturers and transporters of hazardous materials, may not have EPA identification numbers prior to a spill which creates hazardous waste. At this time EPA has decided not to exempt discharges from the requirement of having an EPA ID number. Generators do not need an EPA ID number at the time of generation but rather at the time of treating, storing or disposing of the waste or transporting or offering the waste for transportation. Generators will have an opportunity to obtain an EPA ID number after the spill. And, persons who anticipate that they may generate hazardous waste in the future may obtain an EPA ID number in advance. For these reasons, EPA believes that at this time there is no reason to exempt these generators from this requirement.

when it provided a six month delay between the promulgation and the effective date of revisions to regulations. Consequently, the Agency is setting an effective date of November 19, 1980, for these amendments.

VI. Promulgation in Interim Final Form

These amendments operate as a clarification of the hazardous waste regulations published in May of 1980. 45 FR 33066 (May 19, 1980). With certain exceptions, those regulations did not address containment and treatment of spills of hazardous wastes or materials which, when spilled, become hazardous wastes. A literal interpretation of the May regulations, however, would mean that such actions constitute storage and disposal fully subject to regulation. These amendments conform the regulations to their original intent. The Agency believes that good cause exists for promulgation of this rule in final form. See 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B).

Delaying the application of these rules to allow opportunity for public notice and comment would work substantial hardship on persons handling hazardous waste. The regulatory program goes into effect on November 19, 1980. Spills are everyday occurrences in the real world. Without immediate clarification of the regulations, all persons who might in the future spill a hazardous material or hazardous waste would have to the prepared to be in full compliance with the Part 265 regulations governing treatment and storage. Without these clarifying amendments substantial hardship would be imposed, without appreciable benefit, on the regulated community.

VII. Requests for Comments

The Agency is soliciting comments on all aspects of the amendments and on all issues discussed in this preamble. In addition, the Agency may initiate more comprehensive rulemaking in the near future on RCRA's application to spill responses. The amendments published today will be subject to reconsideration at that time. The public may accordingly be provided additional opportunity to comment on the Agency's regulation of spills.

VIII. Regulatory Impacts

The effect of these amendments is to reduce the overall costs, economic impact and reporting and recordkeeping impacts of EPA's hazardous waste management regulations. The Agency is unable to estimate these reductions.

Dated: November 14, 1980.

Douglas M. Costle,

Administrator.

Title 40 of the code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

§ 260.10 [Amended]

1. Add the following definition to § 260.10(a)(64a):

"Spill" means the accidental spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, or dumping of hazardous wastes or materials which, when spilled, become hazardous wastes into or on any land or water.

§ 122.3 [Amended]

2. Add the following definition to § 122.3:

"Spill" [RCRA] means the accidental spilling, leaking, pumping, emitting, emptying, or dumping of hazardous wastes or materials which, when spilled, become hazardous wastes into or on any land or water.

§ 264.1 [Amended]

3. Add the following paragraph (g)(8) to § 264.1:

* * * * *

(g) * * *

(8) Persons with respect to those activities which are carried out to immediately contain or treat a spill of hazardous waste or material which, when spilled, becomes a hazardous waste, except that, with respect to such activities, the appropriate requirements of Subpart C and D of this Part are applicable to owners and operators of treatment, storage and disposal facilities otherwise subject to this Part. [Comment: This paragraph only applies to activities taken in immediate response to a spill. After the immediate response activities are completed, the applicable regulations of this Chapter apply fully to the management of any spill residue or debris which is a hazardous waste under Part 261.]

§ 265.1 [Amended]

4. Add the following paragraph (c)(11) to § 265.1:

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(11) Persons with respect to those activities which are carried out to immediately contain or treat a spill of hazardous waste or material which, when spilled, becomes a hazardous waste, except that, with respect to such activities, the appropriate requirements of Subpart C and D of this Part are applicable to owners and operators of treatment, storage and disposal facilities otherwise subject to this Part. [Comment: This paragraph only applies to activities taken in immediate response to a spill. After the immediate response activities are completed, the regulations of this Chapter apply fully to the management of any spill residue or debris which is a hazardous waste under Part 261.]

§ 122.21 [Amended]

5. Add the following paragraph (d)(3) to § 122.21:

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(3) Further exclusions. A person is not required to obtain a RCRA permit for those activities he carries out to immediately contain or treat a spill of hazardous waste or material which, when spilled, becomes a hazardous waste. [Comments: This exclusion is intended to relieve persons of the necessity of obtaining a RCRA permit where the treatment or storage of hazardous waste is undertaken as part of an immediate response to a spill. Any treatment, storage or disposal of spilled material or spill residue or debris that is undertaken must be covered by a RCRA permit, an emergency RCRA permit or interim status.]

These amendments are issued under the authority of Sections 1006, 2002(a), 3004 and 3005 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6905, 6912(a), 6924 and 6925.

[FR Doc. 80-36132 Filed 11-18-80; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-30-M

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40 CFR Part 122

[SWH-FRL 1675-2]

Hazardous Waste Management System: General and EPA Administered Permit Programs: The Hazardous Waste Permit Program

AGENCY: United States Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Interim final rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") is today amending its hazardous waste permit regulations to clarify the circumstances under which hazardous waste management facilities may qualify for interim status. Interim status is the condition under which certain facilities would be treated as having been issued a permit until such time as final administrative action was taken on their permit application. These amendments have been prompted by questions from States and the regulated community concerning the eligibility of various types of facilities for interim status.

This notice also solicits comment on enforcement and regulatory policies which EPA is considering adopting to deal with facilities which miss the notice and application filing deadlines for interim status.

DATES: Effective date: November 19, 1980. Comment Date: Comments on the amendments and policies discussed in this notice are due February 17, 1981.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John H. Skinner, Director, State Programs and Resource Recovery Division (WH-564), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, 202/755-9107.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to Docket Clerk, Office of Solid Waste (WH-562), 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. The comments should refer to "Docket 3005-Interim status".

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, as amended ("RCRA"), 42 U.S.C. §§ 6921-6933, requires EPA to establish a comprehensive Federal regulatory program to assure the proper management of hazardous waste. One of the most important features of this program is the rquirement that facilities[1] which treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste obtain a permit from EPA (or a State authorized by EPA to conduct a hazardous waste program) and that hazardous wastes only be designated for, delivered to and treated, stored or disposed of in these permitted facilities (Sections 3002, 3003, 3004 and 3005). Indeed, after the effective date of EPA's regulations identifying hazardous wastes, it is a felony to transport those wastes to an unpermitted facility or to treat, store or dispose of them at an unpermitted facility (Sections 3008(d)(1) and (2)).

Recognizing that EPA and authorized States would not be able to issue permits to all hazardous waste management facilities before the Subtitle C program became effective, Congress provided in Section 3005(e) of RCRA that certain facilities would be treated as having been issued a permit until such time as final administrative action was taken on their permit application. This statutory permit—commonly referred to as "interim status", the title of Section 3005(e)—is conditioned on a facility's meeting the following three requirements:

1. The facility must have been in existence on November 19, 1980.[2]
2. The facility must have "complied with the requirements of section 3010(a)" of RCRA (notification of hazardous waste activity).
3. The facility must have filed an application for a permit under Section 3005.

On May 19, 1980, EPA published regulations defining when a hazardous waste management facility may qualify for interim status. See 40 CFR §§ 122.22(a) and 122.23(a), 45 FR 33433-33434 (May 19, 1980). Those regulations provide that interim status may only be obtained by an existing facility (defined in § 122.3) which has "[n]otified the Administrator within 90 days from the promulgation or revision of Part 261 as required by Section 3010 of RCRA" (§ 122.23(a)(1)) and submitted an application within "six months after the first promulgation of regulations in 40 CFR Part 261 listing and identifying hazardous wastes"—i.e., November 19,1980 (§ 122.22(a)).

EPA has received numerous questions about these provisions since their publication. Most have focused on two major issues: whether facilities can qualify for interim status after November 19, 1980, and whether facilities which missed statutory or regulatory filing deadlines can qualify for iterim status. We have examined these issues carefully and have concluded that §§ 122.22(a) and 122.23 need to be amended to better define the universe of hazardous waste management facilities which are eligible for interim status under Section 3005(e). We have also decided that the Agency needs to establish enforcement and regulatory policies to deal with facilities which have failed to meet applicable deadlines for filing notifications and permit applications. These amendments and policies are discussed below in the context of the three statutory prerequisites for interim status.

II. Requirement That Facilities "Comply With the Requirements of Section 3010(a)"

Section 3005(e)(2) of RCRA conditions interim status on a facility's having "complied with the requirements of Section 3010(a)." Section 3010(a) in turn requires that:

> Not later than ninety days after promulgation of regulations under section 3001 identifying * * * or listing any substance as a hazardous waste . . . any person generating or transporting such substance or owning or operating a facility for the treatment, storage or disposal of such substance shall file with the Administrator (or with States having authorized hazardous waste permit programs * * *) a notification stating the location and general description of the activity and the identified or listed hazardous wastes handled by such person.

Three major questions have been raised concerning the interrelationship between Sections 3005(e)(2) and 3010(a).

A. *Requirement to notify.*

A number of facilities have pointed out to EPA that they were not required to notify under Section 3010(a). They have asked whether a facility which is not required to notify under Section 3010(a) (and therefore did not submit a timely notification) would be eligible for interim status.

These facilities are correct in their observation that Section 3010(a) does not require all hazardous waste management facilities to notify. The notification requirements of Section 3010 are triggered only by the publication of regulations under Section 3001 "identify by its characteristics or listing any substance as hazardous waste subject to . . . subtitle [C]" and apply only to persons who are handling those substances at the time the regulations are published. See also 45 FR 12747-12748 (February 26, 1980). Moreover, EPA has, by regulation, exempted several classes of facilities which would otherwise be required to notify under Section 3010 from having to comply with any notification requirements (e.g., on-site storage facilities operated by small quantity generators (see § 261.5) and recycling facilities (see § 261.6)).

If a facility is not required to file a Section 3010 notification, it is EPA's opinion that it has "complied with the requirements of Section 3010(a)" and has met that prerequisite for interim status. A contrary construction of Section 3005(e)(2)—which would have eligibility for interim status turn on whether a facility had filed a notification, irrespective of whether it was required to—would condition interim status on a facility's meeting a requirement which was not dictated by either statute or regulation. Indeed, in some cases—e.g., where a facility did not begin handling hazardous waste until after the ninety-day notification deadline—it would condition interim status on a facility's meeting a requirement with which it could not, as a practical matter, comply.

EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations defining when a facility may obtain

[1] Throughout this notice, EPA will use the term "facility" to refer to the owner and operator of a hazardous waste management facility as well as the facility itself. Thus where, for example, the notice speaks of a "facility" being issued a permit, that term should be understood to mean the owner and operator of the facility.

[2] When RCRA was originally enacted, Section 3005(e) provided that a facility had to be in existence as of "the date of enactment of this Act"—i.e., October 21, 1976. Recent amendments to RCRA have changed this date to November 19, 1980. See Section 10 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980, P.L. 96-482 (October 21, 1980).

interim status did not reflect the distinction between filing a notification and being required to file a notification under Section 3010. To correct this error, EPA is today amending § 122.23(a)(1) to make it clear that a facility which is not required to notify under Section 3010 may obtain interim status without filing a notification if it meets the remaining two prerequisites set forth in Section 3005(e).[3]

B. *Ninety day filing deadline.*

A number of facilities which were required to file a notification as a result of the publication of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations have advised the Agency that they did not file a notification within ninety days. These facilities have asked whether they will be eligible for interim status if they file a late notification.

As noted above, Section 3010(a) requires facilities handling wastes listed in EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations not only to file a notification, but to file the notification within ninety days (i.e., by August 18, 1980). It is EPA's opinion that a facility which was required to notify as a result of the publication of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations and did not file a notification by August 18, 1980, has not "complied with the requirements of section 3010(a)" and is not eligible for interim status. A contrary interpretation of Section 3010(a) would essentially read the ninety-day deadline out of the statute.

EPA recognizes that this literal construction may have the effect of preventing some well-managed facilities from ever qualifying for interim status. We have developed two policies to provide relief in these situations. The first deals with facilities whose failure to notify is attributable to ambiguities in EPA's regulations; the second with facilities whose failure to notify is their own fault. In our opinion, these policies will preserve the integrity of the ninety-day deadline in Section 3010 while at the same time providing the administrative flexibility necessary to deal with late filings on a case-by-case basis.

1. *Revised notification requirements.*

Since the publication of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations, members of the regulated community, States and environmental groups have brought to EPA's attention a number of provisions in the regulations which were not clear, or, as applied to specific waste management situations, did not make sense. In an August 19, 1980, Federal Register notice (45 FR 55386), EPA identified approximately twenty of these provisions, and promised to issue regulatory amendments or regulatory interpretation memoranda (RIMs) to correct, modify or clarify them.

Some of these provisions deal with the issue of whether a person was handling a hazardous waste on May 19, 1980, and therefore was required to notify EPA under Section 3010 by August 18, 1980. In most cases, the regulatory amendments and RIMs which are now being developed by EPA will have the effect of narrowing the universe of persons who were required to notify on August 18, 1980 (based on a literal reading of the regulations). In a few cases, however, they may bring within Subtitle C control owners and operators of facilities who could reasonably have concluded, based on a careful reading of the May 19, 1980, regulations, that they were not required to notify on August 18, 1980.

We do not think it is fair to penalize facilities for failing to notify under Section 3010 where that failure is attributable to major ambiguities in EPA's hazardous waste regulations. Although we do not believe we have the authority to waive the ninety-day statutory filing deadline for facilities which were required to notify on August 18, 1980, we do think we have the authority under RCRA to issue a *post hoc* administrative finding that a particular class of facilities was not required to notify at all because of major uncertainties in EPA's regulations. It is our intent, therefore, at the time EPA publishes future Federal Register notices announcing amendments to or interpretations of our hazardous waste regulations, (1) to decide whether some class of facilities may have failed to notify because of ambiguities in those regulations and if so, (2) to issue a determination that that class of facilities was not required to notify under Section 3010 on August 18, 1980, and to establish new deadlines for submitting permit applications and complying with interim status standards under 40 CFR Part 265.[4] The effect of this determination will be to make the designated facilities eligible for interim status even though they failed to notify on August 18, 1980.

b. *Enforcement discretion.*

In addition to facilities which failed to file a timely notification because of major ambiguities in EPA's regulations, there are no doubt a number of facilities which failed to notify as a result of clerical errors, oversight or other factors. Some may be well-managed facilities whose continued operation is in the public interest.

Although EPA cannot grant interim status to facilities which failed to file a timely Section 3010 notification, we are prepared to exercise our enforcement discretion to allow such facilities to continue operating after November 19, where their continued operation would be in the public interest. To provide formal assurances to these facilities that they will not be prosecuted for operating without a permit, EPA is considering issuing Interim Status Compliance Letters ("ISCLs") to qualifying facilities stating that the Government will not prosecute them for operating without a permit if they file a permit application and comply with all applicable Part 265 standards. The ISCL would contain similar provisions shielding generators and transporters using these facilities from Federal prosecution for sending wastes to an unpermitted facility. Compliance orders issued under Section 3008 of RCRA (with or without a civil penalty assessment) could also be used to achieve essentially the same result.

Although a facility operating under an ISCL or compliance order and complying with EPA's Part 265 regulations would not be immune from citizen suits under Section 7002 of RCRA because it was technically operating without a permit, we doubt that such suits would ever be successful. Federal courts sitting in equity are not likely to close down facilities which have failed to submit a timely notification under Section 3010 if they are otherwise fully complying with all applicable substantive environmental standards.

An ISCL or compliance order would also assist facilities which must file under Section 13 of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, in making a full disclosure of the extent of their potential liability under RCRA. As noted above, for a facility which is complying with its ISCL or compliance order, potential liability under Section 3008 or 7002 should be negligible.

EPA expressly solicits comment on these approaches. A similar enforcement policy was successfully used by EPA under the Clean Water Act ("CWA") to deal with an inflexible statutory deadline much like the ninety-day deadline in Section 3010.[5] The main

[3] Facilities which have not submitted a notification under Section 3010(a) would, of course, still be required to file for an EPA identification number. See 40 CFR § 265.11, 45 FR 33234 (May 19, 1980).

[4] If an amendment deals with the issue whether a material is a hazardous waste, EPA may at the same time trigger a new opportunity for notification under Section 3010.

[5] Section 301(b) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1331(b), requires all point source dischargers to meet effluent limitations based on the best practicable control technology by July 1, 1977. When it became apparent that some dischargers would not be able to meet July 1, 1977 deadline, EPA began issuing letters and orders to these facilities stating

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difference between the CWA policy and the policy announced above is that under the latter EPA would generally not extend deadlines for complying with applicable regulatory requirements. In this respect, we think it is an even more judicious and envionmentally sound exercise of EPA's enforcement discretion.

3. *A Caveat.*

Facilities should not construe the announcement of the foregoing policies (or the amendments discussed in Section III, below) as an invitation to miss applicable statutory or regulatory filing deadlines. These policies are designed to address situations where facilities have acted reasonably and in good faith or where well-operated facilities have through clerical error or oversight failed to submit a timely notification date. They are not intended for facilities which have made little or no effort to comply with EPA's regulations.

C. *1980 Amendments to Section 3010(a).*

The Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980, P.L. 96-482 (October 21, 1980), amend Section 3010(a) of RCRA to make notifications triggered by amendments to EPA's Section 3001 regulations after October 21, 1980, discretionary with the Administrator. EPA has been asked what effect these amendments will have on facilities' eligibility for interim status.

We see two important consequences for interim status flowing from the enactment of these amendments. First, facilities which handle wastes listed or identified as hazardous wastes by EPA after October 21, 1980, are no longer automatically required to notify under Section 3010. Only if EPA expressly requires facilities to notify will notification under Section 3010(a) be required.

Second, there is no longer any statutory deadline for filing notifications. In the future, all notification deadlines will be set by regulation. This will give EPA the same administrative flexibility to deal with late notifications that it currently has with respect to late permit applications. See Section III, below.

III. Requirement that a Facility Have "Filed an Application Under this Section"

A second statutory prerequisite of interim status is that the owner and operator of a facility have "filed an application under * * * section [3005]". Section 3005(e)(3) EPA's regulations implementing Section 3005 condition eligibility for interim status on a facility's having "complied with the requirements of § 122.22(a) * * * governing submissions of Part A applications." See § 122.23(a)(2). Section 122.22(a)(2) in turn requires that a Part A application be submitted by November 19, 1980.

EPA has been asked whether, in light of these requirements, an existing hazardous waste management facility which is not now subject to EPA's hazardous waste regulations will be able to obtain interim status by filing an application after November 19, 1980, if EPA amends its regulations to bring them into the hazardous waste management system. The answer to this question is yes, if the owner and operator of the facility file a permit application within six months of the amendment to EPA's regulations which first subjects the facility to the requirements of Part 265 or 266. EPA is today amending § 122.23(a) to clarify this point. As noted in the "comment" to this amendment, EPA will make every effort to identify permit filing deadlines in the Federal Register publications announcing amendments to its regulations to avoid future confusion about when Part A permit applications must be submitted. *See, e.g.*, 45 FR 47832 (July 16, 1980), 45 FR 74884-74885 (November 12, 1980).

EPA is also adding a paragraph to § 122.22(a) to make it clear that a facility which submits a permit application by a revised filing deadline announced by EPA in a Federal Register notice clarifying its regulations (see discussion in Section II.B.1, above) has met the prerequisites of Section 3005(e)(3) and is eligible for interim status.

Some existing hazardous waste management facilities may need to qualify for interim status in the future, not as a result of EPA regulatory action, but because of changes in their own operations. For example, a small quantity generator may start generating over 1,000 kg of hazardous waste a month and need to obtain interim status for an exisitng on-site treatment, storage or disposal facility. Or a facility which properly determined on August 1, 1980, that the solid waste it was treating did not exhibit any of the characteristics of hazardous waste may retest it after November 19, 1980, and find that it exhibits the characteristic of extraction procedure toxicity. We have been asked whether the facilities will be able to qualify for interim status if they do not submit a permit application by November 19, 1980.

EPA believes these facilities should be eligible for interim status if they promptly file a permit application. Accordingly, we are today amending § 122.22(a) to allow these facilities to qualify for interim status if they file a permit application within 30 days after they lose their regulatory exemption or begin handling hazardous waste.

Readers should note that these facilities will technically be operating without a permit until they submit their permit application. EPA will not initiate any enforcement action against them, however, if they contact their EPA Regional Office immediately and file an application within the thirty-day period.

EPA believes these amendments will cover most situations where facilities which are eligible for interim status under Sections 3005(e) (1) and (2) must file a permit application. In the event they do not, and in the event some facilities inadvertently miss the filing deadlines set forth in § 122.23(a), EPA is adding another new provision to that section which allows a facility to obtain interim status if it files a permit application by the deadline set forth in a compliance order issued by EPA under Section 3008.

IV. Requirement that a Facility Be "in Existence on November 19, 1980"

The final statutory prerequisite for obtaining interim status is that a facility have been "in existence on November 19, 1980". EPA regulations define "existing facility" as a "facility in operation," (i.e., a facility "receiving hazardous waste for treatment, storage or disposal") or "facility for which construction has commenced." 40 CFR § 122.3 (definitions of "existing HWM facility" and "in operation"). EPA has been asked if a facility which was handling a solid waste on November 19, 1980, that was not identified or listed as a hazardous waste in EPA's Part 261 regulations prior to November 19, 1980, but was identified or listed in a subsequent amendment to those regulations could qualify as an existing hazardous waste management facility for purposes of obtaining interim status.

In EPA's opinion, if a facility was receiving for treatment, storage or disposal on or before November 19, 1980, a solid waste which is subsequently listed or identified as a hazardous waste by EPA, the facility was "in existence on November 19, 1980" and is eligible for interim status if it files a timely permit application and Section 3010 notification (if required). Limiting eligibility for interim status only to those facilities which were

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that the Agency would not prosecute them for failing to meet the July 1, 1977, date if they met an alternative deadline and accompanying compliance schedule set forth in the letter or order.

handling a solid waste on November 19, 1980, that had been listed or identified as a hazardous waste prior to that date, would attach too much regulatory significance to the order in which EPA promulgates its hazardous waste listings. It would also prevent any facility which was handling a solid waste now temporarily exempted from Subtitle C controls as a "special waste" from ever obtaining interim status.[6]

Readers should note, however, that for a facility to qualify as an "existing facility" in this situation, the solid waste which the facility was handling on or before November 19, 1980, must be the same waste which is later identified or listed in EPA's hazardous waste regulations. A facility which is handling trash on November 19, 1980, for example, would not qualify as an existing facility simply because after November 19, 1980, it began handling a solid waste which was subsequently listed as a hazardous waste in EPA's Part 261 regulations.

EPA recognizes that it may be difficult for some facilities to establish a precise correlation between solid wastes handled prior to and after November 19, 1980, because of changes in manufacturing processes, wastewater treatment processes, air emission controls, raw materials or other similar components of the manufacturing and waste treatment process. The Agency solicits comment on what types of guidelines it should follow in these situations to determine if the wastes being handled prior to and after November 19, 1980, are the "same waste."

V. Practical application

To assist readers in understanding the amendments and policies which have been outlined above, EPA believes it would be useful to discuss how they would apply in concrete factual situations.

1. The ABC Company completed construction of a hazardous waste incinerator on October 1, 1980. On October 2, 1980, the facility begins incinerating a number of hazardous wastes listed in EPA's May 19, 1980 regulations. The facility submitted a permit application on November 1, 1980, but did not notify on August 18, 1980. Does the facility have interim status?

Yes. The facility was not required to file a Section 3010 notification because it was not handling hazardous waste at the time of promulgation of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations. Thus, although it has not notified, it has nevertheless "complied with section 3010(a)" within the meaning of Section 3005(e).

The facility also meets the other two prerequisites for interim status.

2. The ABC Company owns a landfill which, since 1978, has been used continuously and exclusively for the disposal of sludges from the treatment of wastewater from widgit production. On January 1, 1982, EPA adds wastewater treatment sludge from the production of widgits to its hazardous waste list. The preamble to the Federal Register publication announcing the new listing does not expressly require facilities handling wastewater treatment sludges from widgit production to notify. It does state, however, that such facilities must file a permit application and begin complying with all applicable iterim status standards by July 1, 1982. The ABC Company files a complete permit application by July 1, 1982. Does it have interim status?

Yes. Section 3010(a) of RCRA was amended by the Solid Waste Disposal Act Amendments of 1980 on October 21, 1980, to make Section 3010(a) notifications based on revisions to EPA's hazardous waste list and characteristics discretionary with the Agency. Thus, in the absence of an explicit EPA directive to notify, a company handling a hazardous waste listed in a revision to EPA's Part 261 regulations which was published after October 21, 1980, would not be required to submit a new Section 3010 notification.

The ABC Company landfill also meets the two remaining prerequisites for interim status. Because it was handling a solid waste on November 19, 1980, which was subsequently listed as a hazardous waste by EPA, it was a hazardous waste management facility which was "in existence on November 19, 1980." It also filed a timely permit application.

3. The ABC Company owns an on-site landfill which was handling garbage on November 19, 1980. On January 1, 1981, the company goes into the widgit production business and begins using the landfill to dispose of sludges from the treatment of wastewater generated by the widgit production process. On January 1, 1982, EPA lists wastewater treatment sludges from the production of widgits as a hazardous waste. The preamble to the Federal Register publication announcing the new listing requires facilities handling widgit wastewater treatment sludges to notify by March 30, 1982, and submit a permit application by July 1, 1982. The ABC Company files a timely notification and permit application. Does its landfill have interim status?

No. On November 19, 1980, the landfill was not handling a hazardous waste (as defined by EPA in its May 19, or July 16, 1980, regulations) or a solid waste which was subsequently identified or listed as a hazardous waste by EPA. It was therefore not "in existence" as a hazardous waste management facility on November 19, 1980, and cannot qualify for interim status.

4. The ABC Company generates 500 kg per month of a waste listed in EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations. Since 1975, the company has disposed of this waste in an unlicensed on-site landfill. Starting on November 19, 1980, the company starts sending its waste to a state approved industrial landfill in order to take advantage of EPA's small quantity generator regulations. Later, EPA lowers the small quantity generator exemption to 100 kg per month. The ABC Company cannot find a nearby hazardous waste management facility to take its waste and would like to reactivate its on-site landfill. Is the landfill eligible for interim status?

Yes. The landfill can meet all three prerequisites for interim status if it submits complete permit application within six months after EPA amends Part 261 to lower the small quantity generator exemption.

5. The ABC Company treats a waste which it believes is exempted as hazardous waste under § 261.4 of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations. It does not notify on August 18, 1980, or submit a permit application by November 19, 1980. On March 1, 1981, EPA issues an interpretation of § 261.4 which makes it clear that the waste treated by the company is not exempt. The company tests the waste against the characteristics of hazardous waste identifed in Subpart C of Part 261 and the waste exhibits several of the characteristics. Can the company's treatment facility qualify for interim status?

This will depend on the content of the Federal Register notice announcing EPA's regulatory interpretation. If the Agency decides that the exemption in § 261.4 was so vague or ambiguous that facilities in the position of the ABC Company could not reasonably have been expected to know that they were required to notify and submit a permit application, it will (1) include as part of its interpretation a formal Agency determination that those facilities were not required to notify and (2) set a new deadline by which those facilities must submit a complete permit application if they wish to qualify for interim status. Thus, if the ABC Company submits a complete application by the new

[6] The same reasoning applies to facilities which commenced construction by November 19, 1980.

deadline, its treatment facility will have qualified for interim status.

On the other hand, if EPA decides that the regulation was not vague or ambiguous or that Agency's resolution of ambiguities in the regulation does not affect facilities in the position of the ABC Company, it will not modify existing filing and compliance dates for those facilities. In this situation, the treatment facility cannot qualify for interim status because it has not submitted a timely notification and permit application.

VI. Miscellaneous Issues

A. Protective filings.

We have been advised that a number of facilities which are not now subject to EPA's hazardous waste regulations have filed "protective" notifications and permit applications to comply with EPA's May 19, 1980, Part 122 regulations and thus assure that they will be able to obtain interim status in the future (if necessary). Many of these filings may not be necessary under today's revised regulations.

We urge facilities which have filed unnecessary notifications or permit applications to advise the EPA Regional Office. This will help assure that our list of existing hazardous waste management facilities is accurate for enforcement and other purposes.

B. Units within existing facilities.

Section 122.3 of EPA's May 19, 1980, regulations defines the term "hazardous waste management facility" to include sites consisting of several operational units which handle hazardous waste. A facility, for example, may consist of two hazardous waste storage facilities, a hazardous waste landfill and a hazardous waste incinerator.

Section 122.23(c) restricts the modifications which may be made during interim status to the design capacity of an existing facility and to the processes used by the facility to treat, store or dispose of hazardous waste. EPA has been asked whether, when an individual unit in an interim status facility later qualifies for interim status, that constitutes a "change" in existing design capacity or processes and, if so, whether that change would be subject to the restrictions set forth in § 122.23(c).

The restrictions on modifications in § 123.23(c) are intended to prevent interim status facilities from making major changes in their existing operations which either would be tantamount to the construction of a new facility or should ideally be made after an individual permit is issued. *See* 45 FR 33324 (May 19, 1980). They are not intended to restrict the number of individual units within those facilities which can qualify for interim status. Thus, EPA would not consider the fact that an individual unit within a facility has independently qualified for interim status (or is operating under an ISCL or compliance order, as discussed above) to be a "change" to the facility subject to the restrictions of § 122.23(c). The individual unit would, of course, be subject to those restrictions if the facility sought to enlarge the design capacity of the unit or modify the processes used by the unit to handle hazardous waste.

VII. Interim Final Regulations and Effective Date

A. Interim final regulations.

EPA has determined under Section 553 of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. § 553, that there is good cause for promulgating these amendments without prior notice and comment. As discussed above, EPA's regulations defining when a facility can obtain interim status have erroneoulsy led many facilities to believe that unless they file a permit application by November 19, 1980, they will never be able to obtain interim status. We think it is essential to correct this error before November 19, 1980, or else a significant number of facilities will be filing unnecessary permit applications on November 19, 1980. Readers will have ample opportunity (ninety days) to comment on these amendments before they are issued in "final final" form.

B. Effective date.

Section 3010(b) of RCRA requires that revisions to "regulations * * * respecting * * * requirements [for] permits * * * shall take effect on the date six months after the date of * * * revision." We do not think a literal application of this requirement would make sense in this case. The purpose of Section 3010(b) is to allow persons handling hazardous waste sufficient lead time to prepare to comply with major new regulatory requirements. Delaying the effective date of amendments which reduce existing regulatory requirements is not necessary to carry out this objective. Furthermore, for the reasons stated above, EPA believes an effective date of six months after promulgation would be counterproductive since much of the unnecessary regulatory burden which these amendments seek to avert will already have been imposed. We are therefore making these amendments effective on November 19, 1980, the effective date of the remainder of EPA's May 19, 1980, hazardous waste regulations.

Dated: November 14, 1980.

Douglas M. Costle,

Administrator.

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

1. Section 122.22 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (a)(2) and (a)(3) as paragraphs (a)(4) and (a)(5) respectively, and revising paragraph (a)(1) and adding new paragraphs (a)(2) and (a)(3) to read as follows:

§ 122.22 Application for a permit.

* * * * *

(a) *Existing HWM facilities.* (1) Owners and operators of existing hazardous waste management facilities must submit Part A of their permit application to the Regional Administrator no later than (i) six months after the date of publication of regulations which first require them to comply with the standards set forth in 40 CFR Parts 265 or 266, or (ii) thirty days after the date they first become subject to the standards set forth in 40 CFR Parts 265 or 266, whichever first occurs. [Comment: For facilities which must comply with Part 265 because they handle a waste listed in EPA's May 19, 1980, Part 261 regulations (45 FR 33006 et seq.), the deadline for submitting an application is November 19, 1980. Where other existing facilities must begin complying with Parts 265 or 266 at a later date because of revisions to Parts 260, 261, 265, or 266, the Administrator will specify in the preamble to those revisions when those facilities must submit a permit application.]

(2) The Administrator may by publication in the Federal Register extend the date by which owners and operators of specified classes of existing hazardous waste management facilities must submit Part A of their permit application if he finds that (i) there has been substantial confusion as to whether the owners and operators of such facilites were required to file a permit application and (ii) such confusion is attributable to ambiguities in EPA's Parts 260, 261, 265, or 266 regulations.

(3) The Administrator may by compliance order issued under Section 3008 of RCRA extend the date by which the owner and operator or an existing hazardous waste management facility must submit Part A of their permit application.

* * * * *

2. Section 122.23 is amended by revising paragraph (a)(1) to read as follows:

§ 122.23 Interim status.

(a) * * *

(1) Complied with the requirements of Section 3010(a) of RCRA pertaining to notification of hazardous waste activity. [Comment: Some existing facilities may not be required to file a notification under Section 3010(a) of RCRA. These facilities may qualify for interim status by meeting paragraph (a)(2) of this Section.]

* * * * *

These amendments are issued under the authority of Sections 1006, 2002(a) and 3005 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6905, 6912(a) and 6925.

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