

Dated: August 22, 2000.

Robert Perciasepe,

Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 194

[FRL-6859-4]

RIN 2060-AG85

Waste Characterization Program Documents Applicable to Transuranic Radioactive Waste From the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site for Disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Notice of availability; opening of public comment period.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the availability of, and soliciting public comments for 30 days on, a Department of Energy (DOE) document applicable to characterization of transuranic (TRU) radioactive waste at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) proposed for disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The document is entitled, "Operating the Neutron Multiplicity Counters and TRIFID Gamma-Ray Isotopics Systems, Rev. 1, 12/17/99." It is available for review in the public dockets listed in **ADDRESSES**. We will conduct an inspection of waste characterization systems and processes at RFETS to verify that the proposed nondestructive assay process at RFETS can characterize transuranic waste in accordance with EPA's WIPP compliance criteria. EPA will perform this inspection the week of September 18, 2000.

DATES: EPA is requesting public comment on the document. Comments must be received by EPA's official Air Docket on or before September 27, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted to: Docket No. A-98-49, Air Docket, Room M-1500 (LE-131), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20460. The DOE documents are available for review in the official EPA Air Docket in Washington, DC, Docket No. A-98-49, Category II-A2, and at the following three EPA WIPP informational docket locations in New Mexico: in Carlsbad at the Municipal Library, Hours: Monday-Thursday, 10 am-9 pm, Friday-

Saturday, 10 am-6 pm, and Sunday 1 pm-5 pm; in Albuquerque at the Government Publications Department, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Hours: vary by semester; and in Santa Fe at the New Mexico State Library, Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

As provided in EPA's regulations at 40 CFR part 2, and in accordance with normal EPA docket procedures, if copies of any docket materials are requested, a reasonable fee may be charged for photocopying.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Scott Monroe, Office of Radiation and Indoor Air, (202) 564-9310, or call EPA's toll-free WIPP Information Line, 1-800-331-WIPP.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

DOE has opened the WIPP near Carlsbad, New Mexico, as a deep geologic repository for disposal of TRU radioactive waste. As defined by the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act (LWA) of 1992 (Public Law 102-579), as amended (Public Law 104-201), TRU waste consists of materials containing elements having atomic numbers greater than 92 (with half-lives greater than twenty years), in concentrations greater than 100 nanocuries of alpha-emitting TRU isotopes per gram of waste. Much of the existing TRU waste consists of items contaminated during the production of nuclear weapons, such as rags, equipment, tools, and sludges.

On May 13, 1998, we announced our final compliance certification decision to the Secretary of Energy (published May 18, 1998, 63 FR 27354). This decision stated that the WIPP will comply with EPA's radioactive waste disposal regulations at 40 CFR part 191, subparts B and C.

The final WIPP certification decision includes conditions that: (1) prohibit shipment of TRU waste for disposal at WIPP from any site other than the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) until the EPA determines that the site has established and executed a quality assurance program, in accordance with §§ 194.22(a)(2)(i), 194.24(c)(3), and 194.24(c)(5) for waste characterization activities and assumptions (Condition 2 of appendix A to 40 CFR part 194); and (2) prohibit shipment of TRU waste for disposal at WIPP from any site other than LANL until the EPA has approved the procedures developed to comply with the waste characterization requirements of § 194.22(c)(4) (Condition 3 of appendix A to 40 CFR part 194). Our approval process for waste generator sites is described in § 194.8. As part of our decision-making

process, the DOE is required to submit to us documents describing the quality assurance and waste characterization programs at each DOE waste generator site seeking approval for shipment of TRU radioactive waste to WIPP. In accordance with § 194.8, we place these documents in the official Air Docket in Washington, D.C., and in supplementary dockets in the State of New Mexico, for public review and comment.

EPA approved the required quality assurance program at RFETS in March 1999. EPA also approved certain waste characterization processes at RFETS in March 1999, June 1999, and January 2000. DOE is proposing to use additional nondestructive assay processes that EPA did not previously inspect at RFETS. EPA will conduct a inspection of RFETS to verify that the proposed processes are effective as part of the system of controls for waste characterization in accordance with 40 CFR 194.24.

We have placed the governing procedure for the Canberra Neutron Multiplicity Counters and Transuranic Isotopic Fraction Identification Device (TRIFID) Gamma-Ray Isotopics Systems in the public docket described in **ADDRESSES**. The document is entitled, "Operating the Neutron Multiplicity Counters and TRIFID Gamma-Ray Isotopics Systems, Rev. 1, 12/17/99." We have also placed the most recent revision (No. 4) of the RFETS "Transuranic Waste Management Manual" in the docket. In accordance with 40 CFR 194.8, as amended by the final certification decision, we are providing the public 30 days to comment on these documents.

If we determine as a result of the inspection that the proposed processes at RFETS adequately control the characterization of transuranic waste, we will notify DOE by letter and place the letter in the official Air Docket in Washington, DC, as well as in the three duplicate dockets in New Mexico. A letter of approval will allow the DOE to ship from RFETS the TRU waste that may be characterized using the approved processes. We will not make a determination of compliance prior to the inspection or before the 30-day comment period has closed.

Information on the certification decision is filed in the official EPA Air Docket, Docket No. A-93-02 and is available for review in Washington, DC, and at three EPA WIPP informational docket locations in New Mexico. The dockets in New Mexico contain only major items from the official Air Docket in Washington, DC, plus those documents added to the official Air

Docket since the October 1992 enactment of the WIPP LWA.

Dated: August 22, 2000.

Robert Perciasepe,

Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation.

[FR Doc. 00-21889 Filed 8-23-00; 4:45 pm]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 300

[FRL-6854-2]

National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan; National Priorities List

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed deletion of the General Tire Landfill Site from the National Priorities List (NPL).

SUMMARY: The EPA proposes to delete the General Tire Landfill Site (site) from the NPL and requests public comment on this action. The NPL constitutes appendix B to Part 300 of the National and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), which EPA

promulgated pursuant to section 105 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) as amended. The EPA has determined that the site poses no significant threat to public health or the environment, as defined by CERCLA, and therefore, no further remedial measures pursuant to CERCLA is warranted.

We are publishing this rule without prior proposal because the EPA views this as a noncontroversial revision and anticipates no dissenting comments. A detailed rationale for this approval is set forth in the direct final rule. If no dissenting comments are received, no further activity is contemplated. If EPA receives dissenting comments, the direct final action will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. The EPA will not institute a second comment period. Any parties interested in commenting should do so at this time.

DATES: Comments concerning this action must be received by September 28, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed to Nestor Young, Remedial Project Manager, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street,

SW., Atlanta, GA 30303. Comprehensive information on this site is available through the public docket which is available for viewing at the site information repositories at the following locations: U.S. EPA Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street, SW., Atlanta, GA 30303; and the Graves County Library, 601 North 17 Street, Mayfield, Kentucky 42066, (270) 247-2911.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nestor Young, Remedial Project Manager, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street, SW., Atlanta, GA 30303, (404) 562-8812, Fax (404) 562-8788, young.nestor@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For additional information, see the Direct Final Action which is located in the Rules section of this **Federal Register**.

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1321(c)(2); 42 U.S.C. 9601-9657; E.O. 12777, 56 FR 54757, 3 CFR, 1991 Comp.; p.351; E.O. 12580, 52 FR 2923, 3 CFR, 1987 Comp.; p. 193.

Dated: August 9, 2000.

A. Stanley Meiburg,

*Acting Regional Administrator,
EPA Region 4.*

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