

(3) *Other members.* In consultation with the committee members, OPM may invite other current full-time Federal employees to serve on the committee. OPM will coordinate such invitations with the employing agencies.

(d) *Functions of committees.* COLA partnership committees may—

(1) Advise and assist OPM in planning living-cost surveys;

(2) Provide or arrange for observers for data collection during living-cost surveys;

(3) Advise and assist OPM in the review of survey data;

(4) Advise OPM on its administration of the COLA program, including survey methodology and other issues relating to the compensation of Federal employees in the allowance areas; and

(5) Assist OPM in the dissemination of information to affected employees about the living-cost surveys and the COLA program.

(e) *Data collection observers.* In consultation with the committees, OPM will determine the number of observers required to accompany OPM officials during the collection of living-cost data. All observers shall be from the local area and shall be full-time Federal employees performing official business of the Federal Government. The committees will nominate observers, and OPM will select from among these nominations in consultation with the nominees' employing agencies.

(f) *Subcommittees.* In consultation with the committees, OPM may establish one or more subcommittees to advise the committee on issues relating to the allowance areas and survey areas within the geographic area represented by the committee. If such subcommittees are established, they shall be composed of up to two agency representatives and two employee representatives from the local area, as well as one or more OPM representatives. OPM may, in consultation with the committee and subcommittee, invite additional Federal employees to serve on the subcommittee. Subcommittee agency and employee representatives shall be nominated and appointed in the same manner as committee members. All subcommittee members shall be current full-time Federal employees performing official business of the Federal Government.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

10 CFR Part 430

[Docket No. EE-RM-93-801]

Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products: Energy Conservation Standards for Refrigerators, Refrigerator-Freezers, and Freezers

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Proposed rule; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy provides notice that the comment period is reopened on a proposal to amend the energy conservation standards for refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers (refrigerator products). The Department is reopening the comment period on this proposal to obtain further comment on issues related to the appropriate consideration of the relationship between regulations under the Clean Air Act banning manufacture of hydrochlorofluorocarbon-141b (HCFC-141b) and the effective date and revised standard levels for DOE efficiency standards.

DATES: The comment period on this proposal is reopened until September 11, 1996. The Department requests 10 copies of the comments and, if possible, a computer disk.

ADDRESSES: Written comments are to be submitted to: Refrigerator Rulemaking (Docket No. EE-RM-93-801), U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Codes and Standards, EE-43, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 1J-018, Washington, D.C. 20585-0121, (202) 586-7574.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael G. Raymond, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Forrestal Building, Mail Station EE-43, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585-0121, (202) 586-9611.

Eugene Margolis, Esq., U.S. Department of Energy, Office of General Counsel, Forrestal Building, Mail Station GC-72, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585-0103, (202) 586-9507.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On July 20, 1995, the Department issued a notice of proposed rulemaking

to amend the energy efficiency standards for refrigerator products. 60 FR 37388 (July 20, 1995). The proposal described two tiers of standards for different products: (1) Standards for products manufactured with the current insulation blowing agent, HCFC-141b (the "Tier 1 standards"); (2) standards for products manufactured with a non-HCFC substitute blowing agent (the "Tier 2 standards"). The Tier 1 standards would be more stringent than Tier 2. Overall, the Tier 1 standards would result in a 30 percent improvement in energy efficiency relative to current standards, although the improvement varied considerably among the different classes of covered products. The Tier 2 standards would be less stringent—they would permit use of 10 percent more energy than the Tier 1 standard for all product classes and sizes to compensate for the assumed energy penalty of the replacement for HCFC-141b. The revised standards would take effect three years after the promulgation of the final rule. The Tier 2 standards would be in effect for six years, after which time all products would be required to meet the Tier 1 standard level. The two tiers were developed to accommodate the interrelationship between the revised DOE standards and regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Clean Air Act. The EPA regulations will prohibit production and import of HCFC-141b after January 1, 2003. 40 CFR § 82.4 (l), (m). The July 1995 notice of proposed rulemaking discussed the relationship between the DOE standards and the EPA standards, and acknowledged the uncertainty with regard to what substitutes for HCFC-141b would be available. 60 FR at 37396.

The July 1995 proposed rule was based in large part on a joint comment, filed by manufacturers, efficiency advocates, states and utilities in November 1994, that made a consensus recommendation on revised standards. In September and October of 1995, a number of manufacturers submitted comments on the proposed refrigerator standards indicating that, for a variety of reasons, they no longer supported the imposition of updated standards prior to 2003, and emphasizing the continuing uncertainty surrounding the thermal efficiency characteristics and costs of insulation produced using a blowing agent other than HCFC-141b. Efficiency advocates have indicated that the consensus recommendation on standards was based on estimates of the

efficiency of compressors to be available in 2000, and that if the effective date of the standard were delayed to 2003, further improvements in compressor efficiency likely to occur by 2003 should be considered in adopting any 2003 standard level.

To inform the development of a final rule on revised refrigerator standards, DOE is seeking further comment on these issues related to the relationship between revising DOE efficiency standards and EPA regulation of HCFCs, and on several options for responding to the comments received on this issue to date, as described below. No amendment to the July 1995 notice of proposed rulemaking is required to address these issues. However, consistent with the Department's commitment to providing ample opportunity for public input, DOE has concluded that reopening the comment period on these important matters is an appropriate step prior to promulgating a final rule.

Possible Responses To Comment on Effective Date and Standard Levels

To respond to comments about the effective date and uncertainty relating to substitute blowing agents, DOE is considering several possible adjustments to the standard levels and effective date for updated standards described in the July 1995 proposed rule:

1. DOE could promulgate the two-tiered standards as described in the July 1995 proposed rule effective on January 1, 2000. The less stringent Tier 2 would phase out 6 years thereafter. This approach would probably save more energy than the other approaches listed herein, but could result in manufacturers making two significant product design changes within a three-year period for some products.

2. DOE could promulgate the less stringent Tier 2 standards effective January 1, 2000, and begin a new rulemaking to consider revisions to take effect January 1, 2005. The energy savings from this approach could be comparable to the energy savings of the approach described in the proposed rule, depending on the outcome of the new rulemaking. The effective date of 2000, combined with EPA's 2003 phaseout date for HCFC-141b, could result in two significant product design changes within a three-year period.

3. DOE could promulgate the less stringent Tier 2 standards effective January 1, 2003, and begin a new rulemaking for further revised standards to take effect January 1, 2008. This approach would fully address manufacturer concerns about timing of

redesigns, but could sacrifice energy savings because it assumes that there will be a 10 percent energy penalty for the HCFC-141b substitute.

4. DOE could promulgate a final rule establishing that the revised standards between the Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels would take effect January 1, 2003, and that the precise levels would be set in 1999 based on a narrow determination concerning the energy penalty, if any, of using an HCFC substitute. Because the possible energy penalty of the replacement blowing agent is unknown at this time, the Department would not establish the final standard until late 1999. Prior to that determination, DOE would solicit public comment on the issue of the magnitude of the energy penalty for available substitutes of HCFC-141b. After identifying blowing agents likely to be used by manufacturers of refrigerators produced for the U.S. market, DOE would make a determination by the end of 1999 concerning the energy penalty, if any, associated with an HCFC-141b substitute that: (1) Will be available for use (e.g., satisfies regulatory criteria relating to toxicological effects and could be produced in adequate quantities by 2003); (2) appears likely to result in the smallest energy penalty (or greatest efficiency improvement); and (3) is sufficiently comparable in cost to HCFC-141b so as not to require substantial revision of the economic analysis supporting the proposed standards. This determination would be used to establish specific standard levels for refrigerator products within the range between the Tier 1 and Tier 2 standards. Standard levels outside this range would not be considered. In determining this level, DOE would carefully consider the cost impacts on manufacturers of the use of particular HCFC-141b substitutes, using data obtained from manufacturers and other interested parties.

The Tier 1 standards would be the standard if there were no energy penalty for the replacement blowing agent relative to HCFC-141b. If the energy penalty relative to HCFC-141b is 10 percent or greater, the standards would be set at the Tier 2 standards. If the energy penalty is determined to be between 0 and 10 percent, the standard would be finalized at $(1+.01 \times)$ times the Tier 1 standard. Thus, for instance, if the energy penalty was determined to be 5 percent, the standards would be set at the mid-point between the Tier 1 and Tier 2 standards.

This approach addresses manufacturer concerns about the timing of the effective date of the revised standards, and addresses the

uncertainty regarding the energy penalty of substitute blowing agents by deferring that narrow question until there is better information. This approach achieves significant energy savings in any case, and implements the more energy efficient Tier 1 standards if there is no energy penalty associated with the HCFC-141b substitute. This approach also takes advantage of the bulk of the work done by manufacturers, efficiency advocates, states and utilities to develop the joint recommendation on refrigerator standards, and the DOE's analytical work to support the proposal based on that recommendation.

5. DOE could promulgate a final rule with the standard level at a specified intermediate level between Tier 1 and Tier 2, effective January 1, 2003. This approach would require a judgment now about the characteristics of likely available HCFC substitutes, but would avoid the need for a subsequent determination in 1999.

6. DOE could promulgate a final rule with two separate product classes. The class of refrigerator products manufactured with HCFC and hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) foams would be subject to standards at the Tier 1 level, and the class of refrigerator products manufactured with hydrocarbon (HC) foams would be subject to standards at the Tier 2 level. This approach would require a judgment now about the characteristics of likely HFC and HC substitutes for HCFCs, but would avoid the need for a subsequent determination in 1999.

7. DOE could discard the work done to date and start a new rulemaking from the outset using the full panoply of procedures and policies established in the DOE final rule on procedures for consideration of new or revised energy conservation standards issued on July 15, 1996. 61 FR 36974 (July 15, 1996).

DOE's preferred option is that described in item 4 above—promulgate a final rule establishing that standards will be set in the range between Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels effective January 1, 2003, with the final levels to be set based on a narrow determination of the energy penalty of HCFC-141b substitutes to be made in 1999. This approach is consistent with the program policies outlined in the July 15, 1996, final rule on procedures for developing standards: it addresses concerns about mitigating the cumulative impact of multiple regulations; it acknowledges uncertainty about a key engineering issue and crafts a sensible approach for addressing that uncertainty; and it puts to use the hard work of stakeholders to develop a consensus recommendation to the DOE on revised standards.

Issues for Comment

DOE requests comments and supporting data on any issue related to the relationship between the phaseout of HCFC-141b and revised DOE standards for refrigerator products. DOE also requests comments on the advantages or disadvantages of the approaches described in this notice, and particularly on the preferred option as described in item 4 above. DOE specifically requests input on the following:

- When should new refrigerator standards take effect? Would significant cost savings result from having the standards take effect at the same time as the HCFC production ban? Information and data on the cost impacts of a refrigerator efficiency standard taking effect in 2000 combined with a 2003 phaseout of HCFCs are specifically requested.
- What standard level, or range of standard levels, should be adopted given current information on blowing agents?
- Is new information available on design options, including more efficient compressors, that would indicate that the analysis that accompanied the 1995 proposed rule should be redone?
- What blowing agents will be available to replace HCFC-141b? If there is uncertainty now, will there be sufficient information available in 1999 to make this assessment?
- What will be the range of impacts on manufacturers of using a substitute blowing agent?
- If a later determination is to be made on energy penalties of HCFC-141b substitutes, what procedure should be followed to determine the energy penalty and the resulting final standard? If this approach is adopted, should the final rule specify a baseline or default standard level that would take effect in the event no determination is made?
- Under what range of conditions concerning the cost of HCFC substitutes, and related manufacturing cost impacts, can the existing economic analysis be used?

Issued in Washington, DC, August 6, 1996.
Christine A. Ervin,

Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

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**NATIONAL CREDIT UNION
ADMINISTRATION****12 CFR Part 703****Investment and Deposit Activities**

AGENCY: National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

ACTION: Proposed rule; Extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: On November 29, 1995 (60 FR 61219), the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) published for public comment a proposed rule regarding investment and deposit activities for credit unions. The comment period for this proposed rule was to have expired on March 28, 1996. The original comment period was extended to June 26, 1996 (61 FR 8499). At the request of a national trade association, the NCUA Board approved an additional extension until September 30, 1996 (61 FR 29697). Now, to encourage additional comments, the NCUA Board has decided to extend the comment period on the proposed rule one more time. The extended comment period now expires November 18, 1996. **DATES:** The comment period has been extended and now expires November 18, 1996. Comments must be received on or before November 18, 1996. **ADDRESSES:** Comments should be directed to Becky Baker, Secretary of the Board. Mail or hand-deliver comments to: National Credit Union Administration Board, 1775 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3428. Fax comments to (703) 518-6319. Post comments on NCUA's electronic bulletin board by dialing (703) 518-6480. Please send comments by one method only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David M. Marquis, Director, Office of Examination and Insurance, (703) 518-6360, or Daniel Gordon, Senior Investment Officer, (703) 518-6620, or at the above address.

By the National Credit Union Administration Board on August 6, 1996.

Becky Baker,

Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 96-20491 Filed 8-9-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7535-01-M

12 CFR Part 704**Corporate Credit Unions:
Requirements for Insurance**

AGENCY: National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

ACTION: Proposed rule; Extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: On June 4, 1996, (61 FR 28085), the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) published for public comment a proposed rule revising its regulations governing corporate credit unions and requirements for insurance. The comment period for this proposed rule was to have expired on September 3, 1996. On July 23, 1996, the NCUA published for public comment a related proposed rule which would add a new section governing wholesale corporate credit unions (61 FR 38117). In order to provide the public with sufficient time to analyze the June 4, 1996 proposed rule and the July 23, 1996 proposed rule, the NCUA has decided to extend the comment periods of both rules until October 18, 1996.

DATES: The comment period has been extended and now expires October 18, 1996. Comments must be received on or before October 18, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be directed to Becky Baker, Secretary of the Board. Mail or hand-deliver comments to: National Credit Union Administration Board, 1775 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3428. Fax comments to (703) 518-6319. Post comments on NCUA's electronic bulletin board by dialing (703) 518-6480. Please send comments by one method only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert F. Schafer, Acting Director, Office of Corporate Credit Unions, (703) 518-6640, or at the above address.

By the National Credit Union Administration Board on August 6, 1996.

Becky Baker,

Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 96-20492 Filed 8-9-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7535-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****14 CFR Chapter I**

[Summary Notice No. PR-96-4]

**Petition for Rulemaking; Summary of
Petitions Received; Dispositions of
Petitions Issued**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of petitions for rulemaking received and of dispositions of prior petitions.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to FAA's rulemaking provisions governing the application, processing, and disposition of petitions for rulemaking (14 CFR Part 11), this