and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The EPA would like to solicit comments to:

(I) evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(ii) evaluate the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(iii) enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(iv) minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Burden: The average burden per response for these activities is estimated to range from less than 30 seconds to respond to an Internet feedback screen, to 2 hours for participation in a focus group. The Agency plans to use many different instruments of survey. These include: minimal question comment cards with narrow scope; longer comment sheets to evaluate training, events or publications; telephone follow-up surveys; in person surveys; Internet feedback systems; short and long written surveys; focus groups, and exit interviews. Burden means the total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide information to or for a Federal agency. This includes the time needed to: review instructions; develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating, and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information. Labor costs were estimated based on the Labor Department's (Bureau of Labor Statistics) April 18, 1997 release of weekly earnings of wage and salary workers using the median earnings ($504/week).

In FY 1998, EPA expects that up to 53,395 respondents will reply to our various forms of customer surveys, and anticipates a total burden of 12,761.48 hours. There are no direct respondent costs except time, estimated overall at $160,794.64.

In FY 1999, EPA expects that up to 52,545 respondents will reply to our various forms of customer surveys, and anticipates a total burden of 12,608.18 hours. There are no direct respondent costs except time, estimated overall at $158,863.06.

In FY 2000, EPA expects that up to 53,345 respondents will reply to our various forms of customer surveys, and anticipates a total burden of 13108.18 hours. There are no direct respondent costs except time, estimated overall at $165,163.06.

Dated: April 21, 1997.

Patricia A. Bonner,

Director, Customer Service.

[FR Doc. 97–11163 Filed 4–29–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OPP–00465A; FRL–5712–5]

Department of Defense Plan for Certification of Pesticide Applicators

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of Approval of Certification Plan.

SUMMARY: On February 12, 1997, EPA announced its intention to approve the revised Department of Defense (DOD) Certification Plan for restricted use pesticide applicators. The revised plan reflects changes in their administrative procedures and adoption of several new subcategories of certification. The February 12, 1997 Notice solicited comments on the revised DOD Plan. One comment was received which supported the addition of categories within the DOD Plan and asked if DOD certified applicators are required to obtain state licenses. DOD certified applicators are not required to obtain additional state certification or licenses while engaged in the performance of their official duties on DOD land or property. No further comments were received and EPA therefore approves the DOD Certification Plan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert V. Bielarski, Office of Pesticide Programs (7506C), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Office location, telephone number, and e-mail address: Crystal Mall #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Rm. 1121, Arlington, VA, Telephone: (703) 305-6708, e-mail: bielarski.robert@epamail.epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Availability: Electronic copies of this document and the revised DOD pesticide applicator certification plan are available from the EPA home page at the Environmental Sub-Set entry for this document under ''Regulations'' (http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/).

In the **Federal Register** of February 12, 1997 (62 FR 6520) (FRL–5581–3), notice was published of the intent of the EPA Assistant Administrator for Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances, to approve the revised DOD plan for the certification of its employees to apply or supervise the application of restricted use pesticides in the performance of their official duties. The revised DOD plan updated administrative procedures and added the following new pest control subcategories: (1) Subcategory 3a., soil fumigation, under the existing ornamental and turf category, (2) subcategory 6a., grassland and non-crop agricultural land, under the existing right-of-way category, and (3) subcategory 7a., stored product fumigation, under the existing industrial, institutional, structural and health-related category. The revised DOD plan will retain the aerial application category. The remaining categories are similar to established EPA categories. The DOD competency standards for each category meet the requirements contained in the corresponding EPA standards at 40 CFR 171.4(c).

The comment period for the proposed plan ended March 14, 1997. One comment was received from a State Department of Agriculture which supported the DOD decision to add new subcategories within the DOD plan and asked if DOD applicators were required to obtain other state licenses. The DOD Plan only applies to DOD employees applying any pesticides on DOD land or property under the jurisdiction of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). DOD employees who are certified in accordance with the Plan may, without obtaining any additional state certification, use and supervise the use of restricted use pesticides while engaged in the performance of their official duties. In infrequent instances when DOD employees will be required to apply pesticides on other than DOD property, they will work under the supervision of appropriately certified state or federal personnel. The DOD

plan also includes adequate provisions for DOD cooperation with state agencies on issues of mutual concern.

Employees of commercial firms, contracting to apply pesticides for DOD components, will not be DOD certified but must be certified by the appropriate regulatory authority under the provisions of EPA-approved plans.

The DOD certification program will continue to be administered by the Armed Forces Pest Management Board within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Certification and recertification will require the taking and passing of a written examination. Recertification will be required every 3 years.

This notice announces EPA's approval of the revised DOD Pesticide Applicator Certification Plan.

Copies of the approved DOD plan are available for review at the following locations during normal business hours:

1. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pesticide Programs, Crystal Mall #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Room 1121, Arlington, VA 22202. Contact: Robert V. Bielarski, (703) 305–6708.

2. U.S. Department of Defense, Armed Forces Pest Management Board, Forest Glen Section, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC 30307–5001. Contact: Major Charles E. Cannon, (301) 295–7476/77.

3. Select U.S. Department of Defense installations. Contact Major Cannon at the aforementioned location for a list of locations.

List of Subjects

Environmental protection, Certified pesticide applicators.

Dated: April 18, 1997.

Lynn R. Goldman,

Assistant Administrator for Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances.

[FR Doc. 97–11153 Filed 4–29–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–F

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OPP–50829; FRL–5714–8]

Receipt of Notifications to Conduct Small-Scale Field Testing of Genetically Engineered Microbial Pesticides

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt of three notifications of intent to conduct small-scale field testing involving microorganisms which have been genetically engineered to express pesticidal toxins. Two, from Dupont and American Cyanimid, respectively, involve baculoviruses expressing synthetic genes which encode for insect-specific toxins from the scorpion *Leiurus quinquestriatus hebraeus*, and the other, from the University of Wisconsin, involves various strains of nitrogen-fixing bacteria of the genera, *Rhizobium* and *Sinorhizobium*, containing a plasmid which has been engineered to express trifolitoxin, an antibiotic derived from *Rhizobium* species, in order to inhibit the growth of competing soil bacteria. The Agency has determined that these notifications may be of regional and national significance. Therefore, in accordance with 40 CFR 172.11(a), the Agency is soliciting public comments on these notifications.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to EPA by May 30, 1997.

ADDRESSES: By mail, submit written comments identified by the document control number [OPP–50829] and the appropriate file symbol to: Public Response and Program Resources Branch, Field Operations Divisions (7506C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. In person, bring comments to: Rm. 1132, CM #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA.

Comments and data may also be submitted electronically by following the instructions under the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION unit of this document. No Confidential Business Information (CBI) should be submitted through e-mail.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William R. Schneider, Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division (7501W), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Office location, telephone number, and e-mail address: 5th Floor, CS #1, 2805 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA, (703) 308–8683; e-mail: schneider.william@epamail.epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA received three notifications of proposed small-scale field testing as follows. Notice of receipt of these notifications does not imply a decision by the Agency on these notifications.

1. A Notification (352-NMP-004) was received from DuPont Agricultural Products of Delaware. The proposed small-scale field trial involves the introduction of two baculoviruses, *Autographa californica* Multiple-embedded Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus (AcMNPV), and *Helicoverpa zea* Single-embedded Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus (HzSNPV), which have been genetically engineered to express a synthetic gene which encodes for an insect-specific toxin from the venom of the scorpion *Leiurus quinquestriatus hebraeus*.

The purpose of the proposed testing will be to assess and compare the efficacy of these baculoviruses alone and in combination with each other against the tobacco budworm (*Heliothis virescens*), cotton bollworm (*Helicoverpa zea*), and beet armyworm (*Spodoptera exigua*), on cotton. The proposed program will be conducted in 1997, and the total acreage for all sites will not exceed 6 acres. The number of acres and site per state are: Alabama (0.24 acre), Georgia (0.24 acre), Louisiana (2 sites, 1.48 acres), Maryland (1.0 acre), Mississippi (3 sites, 0.18 acre), North Carolina (0.24 acre), South Carolina (0.36 acre), and Texas (3 sites, 1.l6 acres). The total amount of baculovirus for all of the testing will not exceed 6E13 occlusion bodies. Extensive monitoring to gather persistence data will be conducted on the Louisiana site and effects on non-target beneficial arthropods will be studied at the Texas site. On completion of the test, the crops will remain standing for at least 1 week prior to destruction, except for the monitoring site. At the completion of the study, all plots will be oversprayed with wild-type virus.

2. A Notification (241-NMP-U) was received from American Cyanimid Company. The proposed small-scale field trial involves the introduction of a baculovirus, *Autographa californica* Multiple-embedded Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus (AcMNPV), which has been genetically engineered to express a synthetic gene which encodes for an insect-specific toxin from the venom of the scorpion *Leiurus quinquestriatus hebraeus*. This is the same construct that was previously field tested in 1995 and 1996.

The purpose of the proposed testing will be to evaluate the efficacy of the baculovirus against the tobacco budworm (*Heliothis virescens*) and cabbage looper (*Trichoplusia ni*) on cotton, tobacco, and leafy vegetables. The proposed program will be conducted in 1997, and the total acreage for all sites will not exceed 9.9 acres. Individual tests will be conducted in: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. The total amount of AcMNPV for all of the testing will not exceed 250 grams of active ingredient. On completion of the test, the crops will be destroyed. Ground spray equipment will be used and will be disinfected with