

**IX. Unfunded Mandates**

Under Section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 ("Unfunded Mandates Act"), EPA must prepare a budgetary impact statement to accompany any proposed or final rule that includes a federal mandate that may result in estimated costs to state, local, or tribal governments in the aggregate, or to the private sector, of \$100 million or more. Under Section 205, EPA must select the most cost effective and least burdensome alternative that achieves the objectives of the rule and is consistent with statutory requirements. Section 203 requires EPA to establish a plan for informing and advising any small governments that may be significantly or uniquely impacted by the rule.

EPA has determined that the exemption in this notice does not include a federal mandate that may result in estimated costs of \$100 million or more to those entities mentioned above. This federal action approves a request for exemption by petitioners in CNMI to reduce the cost of implementing the Clean Air Act. Accordingly, no additional costs to state, local, or tribal governments, or to the private sector result from this action.

**X. Submission to Congress and the General Accounting Office**

Under 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A) as added by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, EPA submitted a report containing this decision and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office prior to publication of the decision in today's **Federal Register**. This action is not a "major rule" as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

**XI. Electronic Copies of Decision**

A copy of this action is available on the Internet at [www.epa.gov/OMSWWW](http://www.epa.gov/OMSWWW) under the title: "EPA Decision to Grant Conventional Gasoline Anti-dumping Exemption to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands."

**XII. Statutory Authority**

Authority for the action described in this notice is in section 325(a)(1) (42 U.S.C. 7625-1(a)(1)) of the Clean Air Act as amended.

Dated: November 25, 1997.

**Carol M. Browner,**  
Administrator.

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**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY****40 CFR Part 180**

[OPP-300574; FRL-5754-1]

RIN 2070-AB78

**Sodium Chlorate; Exemption From Pesticide Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This regulation establishes a time-limited exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of sodium chlorate in or on wheat. This action is in connection with crisis exemptions declared by the states of Arkansas and Mississippi under section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act authorizing use of the pesticide on wheat in Arkansas and Mississippi. This regulation establishes an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of sodium chlorate in this food commodity pursuant to section 408(l)(6) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996. The exemption will expire and is revoked on July 31, 1998.

**DATES:** This regulation is effective December 3, 1997. Objections and requests for hearings must be received by EPA on or before February 2, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Written objections and hearing requests, identified by the docket control number, [OPP-300574], must be submitted to: Hearing Clerk (1900), Environmental Protection Agency, Rm. M3708, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Fees accompanying objections and hearing requests shall be labeled "Tolerance Petition Fees" and forwarded to: EPA Headquarters Accounting Operations Branch, OPP (Tolerance Fees), P.O. Box 360277M, Pittsburgh, PA 15251. A copy of any objections and hearing requests filed with the Hearing Clerk identified by the docket control number, [OPP-300574], must also be submitted to: Public Information and Records Integrity Branch, Information Resources and Services Division (7502C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. In person, bring a copy of objections and hearing requests to Rm. 1132, Crystal Mall #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA.

A copy of objections and hearing requests filed with the Hearing Clerk

may also be submitted electronically by sending electronic mail (e-mail) to: [opp-docket@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:opp-docket@epamail.epa.gov). Copies of objections and hearing requests must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Copies of objections and hearing requests will also be accepted on disks in WordPerfect 5.1/6.1 file format or ASCII file format. All copies of objections and hearing requests in electronic form must be identified by the docket control number [OPP-300574]. No Confidential Business Information (CBI) should be submitted through e-mail. Electronic copies of objections and hearing requests on this rule may be filed online at many Federal Depository Libraries.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** By mail: Libby Pemberton, Registration Division 7505C, Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Office location, telephone number, and e-mail address: CM #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA, (703) 308-9364, e-mail: [pemberton.libby@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:pemberton.libby@epamail.epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** EPA, on its own initiative, pursuant to section 408(e) and (l)(6) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), 21 U.S.C. 346a(e) and (l)(6), is establishing an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of the defoliant/desiccant sodium chlorate, in or on wheat. This exemption will expire and is revoked on July 31, 1998. EPA will publish a document in the **Federal Register** to remove the revoked exemption from the Code of Federal Regulations.

**I. Background and Statutory Authority**

The Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) (Pub. L. 104-170) was signed into law August 3, 1996. FQPA amends both the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), 21 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*, and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), 7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.* The FQPA amendments went into effect immediately. Among other things, FQPA amends FFDCA to bring all EPA pesticide tolerance-setting activities under a new section 408 with a new safety standard and new procedures. These activities are described below and discussed in greater detail in the final rule establishing the time-limited tolerance associated with the emergency exemption for use of propiconazole on sorghum (61 FR 58135, November 13, 1996) (FRL-5572-9).

New section 408(c)(2)(A)(i) of the FFDCA allows EPA to establish an

exemption from tolerance (the legal limit for a pesticide chemical residue in or on a food) only if EPA determines that the exemption from tolerance is "safe." Section 408(c)(2)(A)(ii) defines "safe" to mean that "there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue, including all anticipated dietary exposures and all other exposures for which there is reliable information." This includes exposure through drinking water and in residential settings, but does not include occupational exposure. New section 408(c)(2)(B) requires EPA to take into account, among other relevant conditions, the considerations set forth in 408(c)(2)(C) and (D). Section 408(b)(2)(C) requires EPA to give special consideration to exposure of infants and children to the pesticide chemical residue in establishing a tolerance and to "ensure that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to infants and children from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue. . . ."

Section 18 of FIFRA authorizes EPA to exempt any Federal or State agency from any provision of FIFRA, if EPA determines that "emergency conditions exist which require such exemption." This provision was not amended by FQPA. EPA has established regulations governing such emergency exemptions in 40 CFR part 166.

Section 408(l)(6) of the FFDCA requires EPA to establish a time-limited tolerance or exemption from the requirement for a tolerance for pesticide chemical residues in food that will result from the use of a pesticide under an emergency exemption granted by EPA under section 18 of FIFRA. Such tolerances can be established without providing notice or period for public comment.

Because decisions on section 18-related tolerances must proceed before EPA reaches closure on several policy issues relating to interpretation and implementation of the FQPA, EPA does not intend for its actions on such tolerance to set binding precedents for the application of section 408 and the new safety standard to other tolerances and exemptions.

## II. Emergency Exemption for Sodium Chlorate on Wheat and FFDCA Tolerances

On May 27 and June 6, 1997, the states of Mississippi and Arkansas, respectively, availed themselves of the authority to declare the existence of a crisis situation within each state, thereby authorizing use under FIFRA section 18 of sodium chlorate on wheat

as a defoliant or desiccant to aid in the harvest of wheat. A cool, wet spring delayed the wheat harvest in these states. Continued heavy rains resulted in the need for a harvest aid to desiccate winter weeds which developed in the thin stands of an already diminished wheat crop.

As part of its assessment of these crisis exemptions, EPA assessed the potential risks presented by residues of sodium chlorate in or on wheat. In doing so, EPA considered the new safety standard in FFDCA section 408(c)(2), and EPA decided that an exemption from the requirement for a tolerance under FFDCA section 408(l)(6) would be consistent with the new safety standard and with FIFRA section 18. Consistent with the need to move quickly on the emergency exemption in order to address an urgent non-routine situation and to ensure that the resulting food is safe and lawful, EPA is issuing this exemption from the requirement of a tolerance without notice and opportunity for public comment under section 408(e), as provided in section 408(l)(6). Although this exemption from the requirement of a tolerance will expire and is revoked on July 31, 1998, under FFDCA section 408(l)(5), residues of the pesticide remaining in or on wheat after that date will not be unlawful, provided the pesticide is applied in a manner that was lawful under FIFRA. EPA will take action to revoke this exemption earlier if any experience with, scientific data on, or other relevant information on this pesticide indicate that the residues are not safe.

Because this exemption from the requirement of a tolerance is being approved under emergency conditions EPA has not made any decisions about whether sodium chlorate meets EPA's registration requirements for use on wheat or whether a permanent exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for this use would be appropriate. Under these circumstances, EPA does not believe that this exemption serves as a basis for registration of sodium chlorate by a State for special local needs under FIFRA section 24(c). Nor does this exemption serve as the basis for any State other than Arkansas and Mississippi to use this pesticide on this crop under section 18 of FIFRA without following all provisions of section 18 as identified in 40 CFR part 166. For additional information regarding the emergency exemption for sodium chlorate, contact the Agency's Registration Division at the address provided above.

## III. Risk Assessment and Statutory Findings

EPA performs a number of analyses to determine the risks from aggregate exposure to pesticide residues. First, EPA determines the toxicity of pesticides based primarily on toxicological studies using laboratory animals. These studies address many adverse health effects, including (but not limited to) reproductive effects, developmental toxicity, toxicity to the nervous system, and carcinogenicity. Second, EPA examines exposure to the pesticide through the diet (e.g., food and drinking water) and through exposures that occur as a result of pesticide use in residential settings.

### A. Toxicity

1. *Threshold and non-threshold effects.* For many animal studies, a dose response relationship can be determined, which provides a dose that causes adverse effects (threshold effects) and doses causing no observed effects (the "no-observed effect level" or "NOEL").

Once a study has been evaluated and the observed effects have been determined to be threshold effects, EPA generally divides the NOEL from the study with the lowest NOEL by an uncertainty factor (usually 100 or more) to determine the Reference Dose (RfD). The RfD is a level at or below which daily aggregate exposure over a lifetime will not pose appreciable risks to human health. An uncertainty factor (sometimes called a "safety factor") of 100 is commonly used since it is assumed that people may be up to 10 times more sensitive to pesticides than the test animals, and that one person or subgroup of the population (such as infants and children) could be up to 10 times more sensitive to a pesticide than another. In addition, EPA assesses the potential risks to infants and children based on the weight of the evidence of the toxicology studies and determines whether an additional uncertainty factor is warranted. Thus, an aggregate daily exposure to a pesticide residue at or below the RfD (expressed as 100% or less of the RfD) is generally considered acceptable by EPA. EPA generally uses the RfD to evaluate the chronic risks posed by pesticide exposure. For shorter term risks, EPA calculates a margin of exposure (MOE) by dividing the estimated human exposure into the NOEL from the appropriate animal study. Commonly, EPA finds MOEs lower than 100 to be unacceptable. This 100-fold MOE is based on the same rationale as the 100-fold uncertainty factor.

Lifetime feeding studies in two species of laboratory animals are conducted to screen pesticides for cancer effects. When evidence of increased cancer is noted in these studies, the Agency conducts a weight of the evidence review of all relevant toxicological data including short-term and mutagenicity studies and structure activity relationship. Once a pesticide has been classified as a potential human carcinogen, different types of risk assessments (e.g., linear low dose extrapolations or MOE calculation based on the appropriate NOEL) will be carried out based on the nature of the carcinogenic response and the Agency's knowledge of its mode of action.

2. *Differences in toxic effect due to exposure duration.* The toxicological effects of a pesticide can vary with different exposure durations. EPA considers the entire toxicity data base, and based on the effects seen for different durations and routes of exposure, determines which risk assessments should be done to assure that the public is adequately protected from any pesticide exposure scenario. Both short and long durations of exposure are always considered. Typically, risk assessments include "acute," "short-term," "intermediate term," and "chronic" risks. These assessments are defined by the Agency as follows.

Acute risk, by the Agency's definition, results from 1-day consumption of food and water, and reflects toxicity which could be expressed following a single oral exposure to the pesticide residues. High end exposure to food and water residues are typically assumed.

Short-term risk results from exposure to the pesticide for a period of 1-7 days, and therefore overlaps with the acute risk assessment. Historically, this risk assessment was intended to address primarily dermal and inhalation exposure which could result, for example, from residential pesticide applications. However, since enactment of FQPA, this assessment has been expanded to include both dietary and non-dietary sources of exposure, and will typically consider exposure from food, water, and residential uses when reliable data are available. In this assessment, risks from average food and water exposure, and high-end residential exposure, are aggregated. High-end exposures from all three sources are not typically added because of the very low probability of this occurring in most cases, and because the other conservative assumptions built into the assessment assure adequate protection of public health. However, for cases in which high-end exposure

can reasonably be expected from multiple sources (e.g., frequent and widespread homeowner use in a specific geographical area), multiple high-end risks will be aggregated and presented as part of the comprehensive risk assessment/characterization. Since the toxicological endpoint considered in this assessment reflects exposure over a period of at least 7 days, an additional degree of conservatism is built into the assessment; i.e., the risk assessment nominally covers 1-7 days exposure, and the toxicological endpoint/NOEL is selected to be adequate for at least 7 days of exposure. (Toxicity results at lower levels when the dosing duration is increased.)

Intermediate-term risk results from exposure for 7 days to several months. This assessment is handled in a manner similar to the short-term risk assessment.

Chronic risk assessment describes risk which could result from several months to a lifetime of exposure. For this assessment, risks are aggregated considering average exposure from all sources for representative population subgroups including infants and children.

#### *B. Aggregate Exposure*

In examining aggregate exposure, FFDCA section 408 requires that EPA take into account available and reliable information concerning exposure from the pesticide residue in the food in question, residues in other foods for which there are tolerances, residues in groundwater or surface water that is consumed as drinking water, and other non-occupational exposures through pesticide use in gardens, lawns, or buildings (residential and other indoor uses). Dietary exposure to residues of a pesticide in a food commodity are estimated by multiplying the average daily consumption of the food forms of that commodity by the tolerance level or the anticipated pesticide residue level. The Theoretical Maximum Residue Contribution (TMRC) is an estimate of the level of residues consumed daily if each food item contained pesticide residues equal to the tolerance. In evaluating food exposures, EPA takes into account varying consumption patterns of major identifiable subgroups of consumers, including infants and children. The TMRC is a "worst case" estimate since it is based on the assumptions that food contains pesticide residues at the tolerance level and that 100% of the crop is treated by pesticides that have established tolerances. If the TMRC exceeds the RfD or poses a lifetime cancer risk that is greater than approximately one in a

million, EPA attempts to derive a more accurate exposure estimate for the pesticide by evaluating additional types of information (anticipated residue data and/or percent of crop treated data) which show, generally, that pesticide residues in most foods when they are eaten are well below established tolerances.

Percent of crop treated estimates are derived from federal and private market survey data. Typically, a range of estimates are supplied and the upper end of this range is assumed for the exposure assessment. By using this upper end estimate of percent of crop treated, the Agency is reasonably certain that exposure is not understated for any significant subpopulation group. Further, regional consumption information is taken into account through EPA's computer-based model for evaluating the exposure of significant subpopulations including several regional groups, to pesticide residues. For this pesticide, the most highly exposed population subgroup (children 1-6 years old) was not regionally based.

#### **IV. Aggregate Risk Assessment and Determination of Safety**

Consistent with section 408(b)(2)(D), EPA has reviewed the available scientific data and other relevant information in support of this action, EPA has sufficient data to assess the hazards of sodium chlorate and to make a determination on aggregate exposure, consistent with section 408(b)(2), for a time-limited exemption from the requirement of a tolerance for residues of sodium chlorate on wheat. EPA's assessment of the dietary exposures and risks associated with establishing the tolerance exemption follows.

##### *A. Toxicological Profile*

EPA has evaluated the available toxicity data and considered its validity, completeness, and reliability as well as the relationship of the results of the studies to human risk. EPA has also considered available information concerning the variability of the sensitivities of major identifiable subgroups of consumers, including infants and children. The nature of the toxic effects caused by sodium chlorate are discussed below.

1. *Acute toxicity.* No acute dietary endpoint was identified. This conclusion was based on a developmental toxicity study in which rats were dosed at the limit dose of 1,000 mg/kg/day without any ill effects to the dams or their fetuses.

2. *Short- and intermediate-term non-dietary toxicity.* The available acute

dermal and inhalation studies are of dilute mixtures with other active ingredients. The Toxicity Categories were III for the dermal studies, and IV for the inhalation studies. Aqueous sodium chlorate has been used as an antiseptic wash for the skin and mucous membranes. Considering the low toxicity of sodium chlorate, non-dietary exposure is not a concern.

3. *Chronic toxicity.* EPA has not established an RfD for sodium chlorate. For purposes of this exemption, based upon available toxicity data, an RfD for sodium chlorate of 0.1 milligrams/kilogram/day (mg/kg/day) was used. This RfD is based on a 90-day oral toxicity study in rats with a NOEL of 100 mg/kg/day and an uncertainty factor of 1,000 (10-fold each for inter and intra-species extrapolation, and use of a less-than-chronic endpoint) based on anemia, reticulocytosis, and depressed adrenal weights at the LOEL of 1,000 mg/kg/day.

4. *Carcinogenicity.* Sodium chlorate is used as a desiccant. Because it is chemically similar to chlorine dioxide and chlorite which are not carcinogenic, and dietary exposure is virtually eliminated by hydrolysis during cooking, carcinogenicity is not a concern.

#### B. Exposures and Risks

##### 1. From food and feed uses.

Exemptions from the requirement of tolerances have been established (40 CFR 180.1020) for the residues of sodium chlorate, in or on a variety of raw agricultural commodities, including corn, rice, safflower, and sorghum. Risk assessments were conducted by EPA to assess dietary exposures and risks from sodium chlorate as follows:

i. *Acute exposure and risk.* Acute dietary risk assessments are performed for a food-use pesticide if a toxicological study has indicated the possibility of an effect of concern occurring as a result of a one day or single exposure.

ii. *Chronic exposure and risk.* Field trial residue values were non-detectable at the limit of detection of 2 ppm, even at the 2x rate. The risk assessment assumed that 100% of all wheat commodities will contain sodium chlorate residues and those residues would all be at 2 ppm, which results in an overestimate of human dietary exposure. Additionally, residues of sodium chlorate would likely be substantially reduced through hydrolysis during cooking, although this reduction was not taken into account for this conservative risk assessment.

2. *From drinking water.* There is no established Maximum Concentration Level for residues of sodium chlorate in

drinking water. No drinking water health advisory levels have been established for sodium chlorate.

*Chronic exposure and risk.* Because the Agency lacks sufficient water-related exposure data to complete a comprehensive drinking water risk assessment for many pesticides, EPA has commenced and nearly completed a process to identify a reasonable yet conservative bounding figure for the potential contribution of water-related exposure to the aggregate risk posed by a pesticide. In developing the bounding figure, EPA estimated residue levels in water for a number of specific pesticides using various data sources. The Agency then applied the estimated residue levels, in conjunction with appropriate toxicological endpoints (RfDs or acute dietary NOELs) and assumptions about body weight and consumption, to calculate, for each pesticide, the increment of aggregate risk contributed by consumption of contaminated water. While EPA has not yet pinpointed the appropriate bounding figure for exposure from contaminated water, the ranges the Agency is continuing to examine are all below the level that would cause sodium chlorate to exceed the RfD if the exemption being considered in this document were granted. The Agency has therefore concluded that the potential exposures associated with sodium chlorate in water, even at the higher levels the Agency is considering as a conservative upper bound, would not prevent the Agency from determining that there is a reasonable certainty of no harm if the exemption is granted.

3. *From non-dietary exposure.* Sodium chlorate is currently registered for use on the following residential non-food sites: wood treatment, outdoor turf, and ornamental perennials, shrubs, and trees. The available acute dermal and inhalation studies are of dilute mixtures with other active ingredients. The Toxicity Categories are III for the dermal studies, and IV for the inhalation studies. Aqueous sodium chlorate has been used as an antiseptic wash for the skin and mucous membranes. Agricultural workers would be exposed to aqueous solutions containing a low percentage of sodium chlorate. Considering the low toxicity of sodium chlorate, non-dietary exposure is not a concern.

4. *Cumulative exposure to substances with common mechanism of toxicity.* Section 408(b)(2)(D)(v) requires that, when considering whether to establish, modify, or revoke a tolerance, the Agency consider "available information" concerning the cumulative effects of a particular pesticide's

residues and "other substances that have a common mechanism of toxicity." The Agency believes that "available information" in this context might include not only toxicity, chemistry, and exposure data, but also scientific policies and methodologies for understanding common mechanisms of toxicity and conducting cumulative risk assessments. For most pesticides, although the Agency has some information in its files that may turn out to be helpful in eventually determining whether a pesticide shares a common mechanism of toxicity with any other substances, EPA does not at this time have the methodologies to resolve the complex scientific issues concerning common mechanism of toxicity in a meaningful way. EPA has begun a pilot process to study this issue further through the examination of particular classes of pesticides. The Agency hopes that the results of this pilot process will increase the Agency's scientific understanding of this question such that EPA will be able to develop and apply scientific principles for better determining which chemicals have a common mechanism of toxicity and evaluating the cumulative effects of such chemicals. The Agency anticipates, however, that even as its understanding of the science of common mechanisms increases, decisions on specific classes of chemicals will be heavily dependent on chemical specific data, much of which may not be presently available.

Although at present the Agency does not know how to apply the information in its files concerning common mechanism issues to most risk assessments, there are pesticides as to which the common mechanism issues can be resolved. These pesticides include pesticides that are toxicologically dissimilar to existing chemical substances (in which case the Agency can conclude that it is unlikely that a pesticide shares a common mechanism of activity with other substances) and pesticides that produce a common toxic metabolite (in which case common mechanism of activity will be assumed).

EPA does not have, at this time, available data to determine whether sodium chlorate has a common mechanism of toxicity with other substances or how to include this pesticide in a cumulative risk assessment. Unlike other pesticides for which EPA has followed a cumulative risk approach based on a common mechanism of toxicity, sodium chlorate does not appear to produce a toxic metabolite produced by other substances. For the purposes of this tolerance action, therefore, EPA has not

assumed that sodium chlorate has a common mechanism of toxicity with other substances.

#### *C. Aggregate Risks and Determination of Safety for U.S. Population*

1. *Chronic risk.* Using the very conservative TMRC exposure assumptions described above, EPA has concluded that aggregate exposure to sodium chlorate from food will utilize 3% of the RfD for the U.S. population. The major identifiable subgroup with the highest aggregate exposure is children (1-6 years old) discussed below. EPA generally has no concern for exposures below 100% of the RfD because the RfD represents the level at or below which daily aggregate dietary exposure over a lifetime will not pose appreciable risks to human health. Despite the potential for exposure to sodium chlorate in drinking water and from non-dietary, non-occupational exposure, EPA does not expect the aggregate exposure to exceed 100% of the RfD. EPA concludes that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from aggregate exposure to sodium chlorate residues.

2. *Short- and intermediate-term risk.* Short- and intermediate-term aggregate exposure takes into account chronic dietary food and water (considered to be a background exposure level) plus indoor and outdoor residential exposure.

#### *D. Aggregate Risks and Determination of Safety for Infants and Children*

1. *Safety factor for infants and children—i. In general.* In assessing the potential for additional sensitivity of infants and children to residues of sodium chlorate, EPA considered data from developmental toxicity studies in the rat. The developmental toxicity studies are designed to evaluate adverse effects on the developing organism resulting from maternal pesticide exposure during gestation. Reproduction studies provide information relating to effects from exposure to the pesticide on the reproductive capability of mating animals and data on systemic toxicity.

FFDCA section 408 provides that EPA shall apply an additional tenfold margin of safety for infants and children in the case of threshold effects to account for pre- and post-natal toxicity and the completeness of the database unless EPA determines that a different margin of safety will be safe for infants and children. Margins of safety are incorporated into EPA risk assessments either directly through use of a MOE analysis or through using uncertainty (safety) factors in calculating a dose

level that poses no appreciable risk to humans. EPA believes that reliable data support using the standard 100-fold safety factor (usually 100 for combined inter- and intra-species variability)) and not the additional tenfold safety factor when EPA has a complete data base under existing guidelines and when the severity of the effect in infants or children or the potency or unusual toxic properties of a compound do not raise concerns regarding the adequacy of the standard safety factor.

ii. *Developmental toxicity studies.* In the developmental study in rats, the maternal (systemic) NOEL was >1,000 mg/kg/day. The developmental (fetal) NOEL was also >1,000 mg/kg/day.

iii. *Pre- and post-natal sensitivity.* Sodium chlorate is not a developmental toxicant in rats. EPA has already applied an additional 10-fold uncertainty factor (resulting in a total 1,000-fold uncertainty factor) to the NOEL used to set the RfD. This additional 10-fold uncertainty factor should be adequate to protect infants and children.

2. *Chronic risk.* Using the very conservative exposure assumptions described above, EPA has concluded that aggregate exposure to sodium chlorate from food will utilize from 1% of the RfD for nursing infants up to 6% for children 1-6 years old. EPA generally has no concern for exposures below 100% of the RfD because the RfD represents the level at or below which daily aggregate dietary exposure over a lifetime will not pose appreciable risks to human health. Despite the potential for exposure to sodium chlorate in drinking water and from non-dietary, non-occupational exposure, EPA does not expect the aggregate exposure to exceed 100% of the RfD. EPA concludes that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to infants and children from aggregate exposure to sodium chlorate residues.

#### **V. Other Considerations**

##### *A. Metabolism In Plants and Animals*

The metabolism of sodium chlorate in plants is adequately understood. The residue of concern is sodium chlorate and sodium chloride. The nature of the residue in animals is not applicable due to no reasonable expectation of transfer of residues to meat/milk/poultry/eggs.

##### *B. Analytical Enforcement Methodology*

Analytical methods for detecting and measuring the levels of the pesticide residue are not needed. The Agency proposes to establish an exemption from the requirement of a tolerance without any numerical limitation; therefore, the

Agency has concluded that analytical methods are not required for enforcement purposes for sodium chlorate.

#### *C. Magnitude of Residues*

No detectable residues were found in wheat grain or straw from wheat treated at the 2x rate. Considering that no detectable residues were found in wheat grain, it is unlikely that significant residues will occur in the processed fractions of wheat. There is no likelihood of transfer of residues to meat/milk/poultry/eggs. Therefore, magnitude of the residue data in those commodities is not required.

#### *D. International Residue Limits*

No CODEX, Canadian, or Mexican maximum residue levels have been established for residues of sodium chlorate.

#### *E. Rotational Crop Restrictions*

Considering the phytotoxic nature of sodium chlorate, which would preclude the planting of a crop soon after treatment of a previous crop, coupled with the fact that residues are below the limit of quantitation shortly after application to target crops, EPA does not believe measurable residues would be detected in rotational crops. For the purposes of this section 18 use, rotational crop tolerances and/or plant back restrictions will not be necessary.

#### **VI. Conclusion**

Therefore, the exemption from the requirement of a tolerance is established for residues of sodium chlorate in wheat.

#### **VII. Objections and Hearing Requests**

The new FFDCA section 408(g) provides essentially the same process for persons to "object" to a tolerance regulation issued by EPA under new section 408(e) and (l)(6) as was provided in the old section 408 and in section 409. However, the period for filing objections is 60 days, rather than 30 days. EPA currently has procedural regulations which govern the submission of objections and hearing requests. These regulations will require some modification to reflect the new law. However, until those modifications can be made, EPA will continue to use those procedural regulations with appropriate adjustments to reflect the new law.

Any person may, by February 2, 1998, file written objections to any aspect of this regulation and may also request a hearing on those objections. Objections and hearing requests must be filed with the Hearing Clerk, at the address given

above (40 CFR 178.20). A copy of the objections and/or hearing requests filed with the Hearing Clerk should be submitted to the OPP docket for this rulemaking. The objections submitted must specify the provisions of the regulation deemed objectionable and the grounds for the objections (40 CFR 178.25). Each objection must be accompanied by the fee prescribed by 40 CFR 180.33(i). If a hearing is requested, the objections must include a statement of the factual issues on which a hearing is requested, the requestor's contentions on such issues, and a summary of any evidence relied upon by the requestor (40 CFR 178.27). A request for a hearing will be granted if the Administrator determines that the material submitted shows the following: There is genuine and substantial issue of fact; there is a reasonable possibility that available evidence identified by the requestor would, if established, resolve one or more of such issues in favor of the requestor, taking into account uncontested claims or facts to the contrary; and resolution of the factual issues in the manner sought by the requestor would be adequate to justify the action requested (40 CFR 178.32). Information submitted in connection with an objection or hearing request may be claimed confidential by marking any part or all of that information as CBI. Information so marked will not be disclosed except in accordance with procedures set forth in 40 CFR part 2. A copy of the information that does not contain CBI must be submitted for inclusion in the public record. Information not marked confidential may be disclosed publicly by EPA without prior notice.

#### VIII. Public Record and Electronic Submissions

EPA has established a record for this rulemaking under docket control number [OPP-300574] (including any comments and data submitted electronically). A public version of this record, including printed, paper versions of electronic comments, which does not include any information claimed as CBI, is available for inspection from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The public record is located in Room 1132 of the Public Information and Records Integrity Branch, Information Resources and Services Division (7502C), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, CM #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA.

Electronic comments may be sent directly to EPA at: opp-docket@epamail.epa.gov.

Electronic comments must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption.

The official record for this rulemaking, as well as the public version, as described above will be kept in paper form. Accordingly, EPA will transfer any copies of objections and hearing requests received electronically into printed, paper form as they are received and will place the paper copies in the official rulemaking record which will also include all comments submitted directly in writing. The official rulemaking record is the paper record maintained at the Virginia address in ADDRESSES at the beginning of this document.

#### IX. Regulatory Assessment Requirements

This final rule establishes a time-limited exemption from the tolerance requirement under FFDCA section 408(l)(6). The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has exempted these types of actions from review under Executive Order 12866, entitled Regulatory Planning and Review (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993). This final rule does not contain any information collections subject to OMB approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*, or impose any enforceable duty or contain any unfunded mandate as described under Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) (Pub. L. 104-4). Nor does it require any prior consultation as specified by Executive Order 12875, entitled Enhancing the Intergovernmental Partnership (58 FR 58093, October 28, 1993), or special considerations as required by Executive Order 12898, entitled Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (59 FR 7629, February 16, 1994), or require OMB review in accordance with Executive Order 13045, entitled Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks (62 FR 19885, April 23, 1997).

In addition, since these tolerances and exemptions that are established under FFDCA section 408 (l)(6), such as the exemption in this final rule, do not require the issuance of a proposed rule, the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) do not apply. Nevertheless, the Agency has previously assessed whether establishing tolerances, exemptions from tolerances, raising tolerance levels or expanding exemptions might adversely impact small entities and concluded, as a generic matter, that there is no adverse economic impact.

The factual basis for the Agency's generic certification for tolerance actions published on May 4, 1981 (46 FR 24950), and was provided to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

#### X. Submission to Congress and the General Accounting Office

Under 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A), as added by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, the Agency has submitted a report containing this rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office prior to publication of this rule in today's **Federal Register**. This is not a "major rule" as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

#### List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 180

Environmental protection, Administrative practice and procedure, Agricultural commodities, Pesticides and pests, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: November 21, 1997.

**Linda A. Travers,**

*Acting Director, Office of Pesticide Programs.*

Therefore, 40 CFR chapter I is amended as follows:

#### PART 180—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for part 180 continues to read as follows:

**Authority :** 21 U.S.C. 346a and 371.

2. Section 180.1020 is amended by designating the existing text as paragraph (a) and by adding paragraph (b) to read as follows:

#### § 180.1020 Sodium chlorate; exemption from the requirement of a tolerance.

\* \* \* \*

(b) A time-limited exemption from the requirement of a tolerance is established for residues of the defoliant/desiccant in connection with use of the pesticide under section 18 emergency exemptions granted by EPA. The exemption will expire and is revoked on the date specified in the following table:

Commodity	Parts per million	Expiration/revocation date
Wheat .....	NA	7/31/98

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