

standards (VCS) in its regulatory activities unless to do so would be inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical. The VCS are technical standards (e.g., materials specifications, test methods, sampling procedures, and business practices) that are developed or adopted by VCS bodies. The NTTAA directs EPA to provide Congress, through OMB, explanations when the Agency decides not to use available and applicable VCS.

This revision to the regulations does not involve technical standards. Therefore, EPA is not considering the use of any VCS.

However, EPA will encourage the Federal agencies to consider the use of such standards, where appropriate, in the implementation of the General Conformity Regulations.

J. Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

Executive Order 12898 requires that each Federal agency make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minorities and low-income populations.

The EPA believes that these proposed revisions to the regulations should not raise any environmental justice issues. The proposed revisions to the regulations would, if promulgated, revise procedures for other Federal agencies to follow. They do not disproportionately affect the health or safety of minority or low income populations. The EPA encourages other agencies to carefully consider and address environmental justice in their implementation of their evaluations and conformity determinations.

List of Subjects

40 CFR Part 51

Environmental protection, Administrative practice and procedures, Air pollution control, Carbon monoxide, Intergovernmental relations, Lead, Nitrogen dioxide, Ozone, Particulate matter, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Sulfur dioxide, Volatile organic compounds.

40 CFR Part 93

Environmental protection, Administrative practice and procedures, Air pollution control, Carbon monoxide, Intergovernmental relations, Lead, Nitrogen dioxide, Ozone, Particulate matter, Reporting and recordkeeping

requirements, Sulfur dioxide, Volatile organic compounds.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401–7671q.

Dated: March 31, 2006.

Stephen L. Johnson,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 06–3310 Filed 4–4–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[EPA–R03–OAR–2006–0153; FRL–8053–9]

Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Revised Definition of “Volatile Organic Compound”

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: EPA is proposing to approve a State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision submitted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. This revision amends Virginia regulation 9 VAC 5–10–20 by updating the definition of “volatile organic compound”. This action is being taken under the Clean Air Act (CAA or the Act).

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 5, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID Number EPA–R03–OAR–2006–0153 by one of the following methods:

A. <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.

B. E-mail: morris.makeba@epa.gov.

C. Mail: EPA–R03–OAR–2006–0153, Makeba Morris, Chief, Air Quality Planning Branch, Mailcode 3AP21, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103.

D. Hand Delivery: At the previously-listed EPA Region III address. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket’s normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

Instructions: Direct your comments to Docket ID No. EPA–R03–OAR–2006–0153. EPA’s policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change, and may be made available online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information

whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected through <http://www.regulations.gov> or e-mail. The <http://www.regulations.gov> Web site is an “anonymous access” system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an e-mail comment directly to EPA without going through <http://www.regulations.gov>, your e-mail address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD-ROM you submit. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses.

Docket: All documents in the electronic docket are listed in the <http://www.regulations.gov> index. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, i.e., CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other material, such as copyrighted material, is not placed on the Internet and will be publicly available only in hard copy form. Publicly available docket materials are available either electronically in <http://www.regulations.gov> or in hard copy during normal business hours at the Air Protection Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103. Copies of the State submittal are available at the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, 629 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Helene Drago, (215) 814–5796, or by e-mail at drago.helene@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 12, 2006, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality submitted a revision to its State Implementation Plan (SIP). The revision updated the definition of “volatile organic compound”. The revision consists of amendments to Regulation 9 VAC 5–10–20 “Terms defined”.

I. Background

The Virginia Register of Regulations defines “volatile organic compound” as

9 VAC 5–10–20 under “Terms defined”. On January 12, 2006, the Commonwealth submitted a SIP revision request which updated the definition of “volatile organic compound”.

II. Summary of SIP Revision

On January 12, 2006, the Commonwealth submitted a SIP revision request which amends the definition of “volatile organic compound” found under 9 VAC 5–10–20. The amendment revises the definition of the term “volatile organic compound” to exclude four compounds that have been demonstrated to be less reactive: 1,1,1,2,2,3,3-heptafluoro-3-methoxy-propane, 3-ethoxy-1,1,1,2,3,4,5,5,6,6-dodecafluoro-2-(trifluoromethyl) hexane, 1,1,1,2,3,3,3-heptafluoropropane, and methyl formate. The definition of VOC has also been revised in order to partially exclude t-butyl acetate. The amendment states that the compound, t-butyl acetate, should be considered to be a VOC for record keeping, emissions reporting, photochemical dispersion modeling and inventory requirements that apply to VOCs and should be uniquely identified in emission reports, but it is not a VOC for purposes of VOC emission standards, emission limitations, or content requirements. This definition update is consistent with Federal regulations.

III. General Information Pertaining to SIP Submittals From the Commonwealth of Virginia

In 1995, Virginia adopted legislation that provides, subject to certain conditions, for an environmental assessment (audit) “privilege” for voluntary compliance evaluations performed by a regulated entity. The legislation further addresses the relative burden of proof for parties either asserting the privilege or seeking disclosure of documents for which the privilege is claimed. Virginia’s legislation also provides, subject to certain conditions, for a penalty waiver for violations of environmental laws when a regulated entity discovers such violations pursuant to a voluntary compliance evaluation and voluntarily discloses such violations to the Commonwealth and takes prompt and appropriate measures to remedy the violations. Virginia’s Voluntary Environmental Assessment Privilege Law, Va. Code Sec. 10.1–1198, provides a privilege that protects from disclosure documents and information about the content of those documents that are the product of a voluntary environmental assessment. The Privilege Law does not

extend to documents or information (1) that are generated or developed before the commencement of a voluntary environmental assessment; (2) that are prepared independently of the assessment process; (3) that demonstrate a clear, imminent and substantial danger to the public health or environment; or (4) that are required by law.

On January 12, 1998, the Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Attorney General provided a legal opinion that states that the Privilege law, Va. Code Sec. 10.1–1198, precludes granting a privilege to documents and information “required by law,” including documents and information “required by Federal law to maintain program delegation, authorization or approval,” since Virginia must “enforce Federally authorized environmental programs in a manner that is no less stringent than their Federal counterparts * * *.” The opinion concludes that “[r]egarding § 10.1–1198, therefore, documents or other information needed for civil or criminal enforcement under one of these programs could not be privileged because such documents and information are essential to pursuing enforcement in a manner required by Federal law to maintain program delegation, authorization or approval.”

Virginia’s Immunity law, Va. Code Sec. 10.1–1199, provides that “[t]o the extent consistent with requirements imposed by Federal law,” any person making a voluntary disclosure of information to a state agency regarding a violation of an environmental statute, regulation, permit, or administrative order is granted immunity from administrative or civil penalty. The Attorney General’s January 12, 1998 opinion states that the quoted language renders this statute inapplicable to enforcement of any Federally authorized programs, since “no immunity could be afforded from administrative, civil, or criminal penalties because granting such immunity would not be consistent with Federal law, which is one of the criteria for immunity.”

Therefore, EPA has determined that Virginia’s Privilege and Immunity statutes will not preclude the Commonwealth from enforcing its program consistent with the Federal requirements. In any event, because EPA has also determined that a state audit privilege and immunity law can affect only state enforcement and cannot have any impact on Federal enforcement authorities, EPA may at any time invoke its authority under the Clean Air Act, including, for example, sections 113, 167, 205, 211 or 213, to enforce the requirements or prohibitions

of the state plan, independently of any state enforcement effort. In addition, citizen enforcement under section 304 of the Clean Air Act is likewise unaffected by this, or any, state audit privilege or immunity law.

IV. Proposed Action

EPA’s review of this material indicates the revision will not cause or contribute to a violation the NAAQS. EPA is proposing to approve the Virginia SIP revision concerning the updating of the definition of “volatile organic compound”, which was submitted on January 12, 2006. EPA is soliciting public comments on the issues discussed in this document. These comments will be considered before taking final action.

V. Statutory and Executive Order Reviews

Under Executive Order 12866 (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993), this proposed action is not a “significant regulatory action” and therefore is not subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget. For this reason, this action is also not subject to Executive Order 13211, “Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use” (66 Fed. Reg. 28355 (May 22, 2001)). This action merely proposes to approve state law as meeting Federal requirements and imposes no additional requirements beyond those imposed by state law. Accordingly, the Administrator certifies that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). Because this rule proposes to approve pre-existing requirements under state law and does not impose any additional enforceable duty beyond that required by state law, it does not contain any unfunded mandate or significantly or uniquely affect small governments, as described in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–4). This proposed rule also does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, as specified by Executive Order 13175 (65 FR 67249, November 9, 2000), nor will it have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government, as specified in Executive Order 13132 (64 FR 43255,

August 10, 1999), because it merely proposes to approve a state rule implementing a Federal requirement, and does not alter the relationship or the distribution of power and responsibilities established in the Clean Air Act. This proposed rule also is not subject to Executive Order 13045 (62 FR 19885, April 23, 1997), because it is not economically significant.

In reviewing SIP submissions, EPA's role is to approve state choices, provided that they meet the criteria of the Clean Air Act. In this context, in the absence of a prior existing requirement for the State to use voluntary consensus standards (VCS), EPA has no authority to disapprove a SIP submission for failure to use VCS. It would thus be inconsistent with applicable law for EPA, when it reviews a SIP submission, to use VCS in place of a SIP submission that otherwise satisfies the provisions of the Clean Air Act. Thus, the requirements of section 12(d) of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (15 U.S.C. 272 note) do not apply. As required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 (61 FR 4729, February 7, 1996), in issuing this proposed rule, EPA has taken the necessary steps to eliminate drafting errors and ambiguity, minimize potential litigation, and provide a clear legal standard for affected conduct. EPA has complied with Executive Order 12630 (53 FR 8859, March 15, 1988) by examining the takings implications of the rule in accordance with the "Attorney General's Supplemental Guidelines for the Evaluation of Risk and Avoidance of Unanticipated Takings" issued under the executive order.

This proposed rule to approve revisions to the Virginia SIP that update the definition of "volatile organic compound" does not impose an information collection burden under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 52

Environmental protection, Air pollution control, Ozone, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Volatile organic compounds.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*

Dated: March 29, 2006.

Donald S. Welsh,

Regional Administrator, Region III.

[FR Doc. E6-4940 Filed 4-4-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

42 CFR Parts 405, 412, 422, and 489

[CMS-4105-P]

RIN 0938-AN85

Medicare Program; Notification Procedures for Hospital Discharges

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule sets forth new requirements for hospital discharge notices under both original Medicare and the Medicare Advantage program. This proposed rule would require hospitals to comply with a two-step notice process when discharging patients from the hospital level of care that is similar to the notice requirements regarding service terminations applicable to home health agencies, skilled nursing facilities, comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facilities, and hospices.

DATES: To be assured consideration, comments must be received at one of the addresses provided below, no later than 5 p.m. on June 5, 2006.

ADDRESSES: In commenting, please refer to file code CMS-4105-P. Because of staff and resource limitations, we cannot accept comments by facsimile (FAX) transmission.

You may submit comments in one of three ways (no duplicates, please):

1. *Electronically.* You may submit electronic comments on specific issues in this regulation to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/eRulemaking>. Click on the link "Submit electronic comments on CMS regulations with an open comment period." (Attachments should be in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Excel; however, we prefer Microsoft Word.)

2. *By regular mail.* You may mail written comments (one original and two copies) to the following address ONLY:

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-4105-P, P.O. Box 8010, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

Please allow sufficient time for mailed comments to be received before the close of the comment period.

3. *By express or overnight mail.* You may send written comments (one original and two copies) to the following address ONLY:

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-4105-P, Mail Stop C4-26-05, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

4. *By hand or courier.* If you prefer, you may deliver (by hand or courier) your written comments (one original and two copies) before the close of the comment period to one of the following addresses. If you intend to deliver your comments to the Baltimore address, please call telephone number (410) 786-9994 in advance to schedule your arrival with one of our staff members.

Room 445-G, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20201; or 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

(Because access to the interior of the HHH Building is not readily available to persons without Federal Government identification, commenters are encouraged to leave their comments in the CMS drop slots located in the main lobby of the building. A stamp-in clock is available for persons wishing to retain a proof of filing by stamping in and retaining an extra copy of the comments being filed.)

Comments mailed to the addresses indicated as appropriate for hand or courier delivery may be delayed and received after the comment period.

Submission of comments on paperwork requirements. You may submit comments on this document's paperwork requirements by mailing your comments to the addresses provided at the end of the "Collection of Information Requirements" section in this document.

For information on viewing public comments, see the beginning of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eileen Zerhusen, (410) 786-7803, (For issues related to Original Medicare).

Tim Roe, (410) 786-2006, (For issues related to Medicare Advantage).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Submitting Comments: We welcome comments from the public on all issues set forth in this rule to assist us in fully considering issues and developing policies. You can assist us by referencing the file code CMS-4105-P and the specific "issue identifier" that precedes the section on which you choose to comment.

Inspection of Public Comments: All comments received before the close of the comment period are available for viewing by the public, including any personally identifiable or confidential business information that is included in a comment. We post all comments