

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**Mine Safety and Health Administration****Proposed Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations; Slope and Shaft Sinking Plans****ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden conducts and preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) [44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)]. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed.

Currently, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of the information collection related to the Slope and Shaft Sinking Plans. MSHA is particularly interested in comments which:

- 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;
- 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;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- 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 submissions of responses.

A copy of the proposed information collection request can be obtained by contacting the employee listed below in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this notice.

DATES: Submit comments on or before August 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Patricia W. Silvey, Director, Office of Standards,

Regulations, and Variances, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Room 627, Arlington, VA 22203-1984. Commenters are encouraged to send their comments on a computer disk, or via E-mail to psilvey@msha.gov, along with an original printed copy. Ms. Silvey can be reached at (703) 235-1910 (voice) or (703) 235-5551 (facsimile).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Theresa M. O'Malley, Program Analysis Officer, Office of Program Evaluation and Information Resources, U.S. Department of Labor, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Room 715, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203-1984. Mrs. O'Malley can be reached at tomalley@msha.gov (Internet E-mail), (703) 235-8378 (voice), or (703) 235-1563 (facsimile).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background**

The standard 77.1900 was enacted in 1971 and was amended in 1982 and again in 1995. The standard requires coal mine operators to develop a prudent engineered design plan to develop a slope or shaft whenever an operator decides to open such a coal mine. The plan is required by the standard and is to be reviewed and approved by MSHA before the actual hazardous work begins.

II. Current Actions

The average 25 slope or shaft development plans that MSHA receives on an annual basis, are reviewed to ensure that the required work is performed in a safe manner, and it protects those miners performing the work. Prudent engineering design does evolve along with improved machinery to perform the work, but there has not been any revision to the requirements for such a plan.

Type of Review: Extension.

Agency: Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Title: Slope and Shaft Sinking Plans.

OMB Number: 1219-0019.

Agency Number: MSHA-208.

Recordkeeping: 3 years.

Agency Number: MSHA-208.

Recordkeeping: Records are normally required to be kept for 3 years.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Cite/Reference/Form/etc.: 30 CFR 77.1900.

Total Respondents: 1,700.

Frequency: Whenever an operator decides to develop a slope or shaft.

Total Responses: 25.

Average Time per Response: 40 hours.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 1,000.

Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): \$43,000.

Total Burden Cost (operating/maintaining): \$11,250.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 17, 1998.

Theresa M. O'Malley,

Acting Director, Program Evaluation and Information Resources.

[FR Doc. 98-16760 Filed 6-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-43-M

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**Mine Safety and Health Administration****Proposed Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations; Records of Results of Examinations of Self-Rescuers****ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) [44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)]. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed.

Currently, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension. MSHA is particularly interested in comments which:

- *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;
- *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;
- *enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- *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 submissions of responses.

A copy of the proposed information collection request can be obtained by contacting the employee listed below in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this notice.

DATES: Submit comments on or before August 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Patricia W. Silvery, Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Room 627, Arlington, VA 22203-1984. Commenters are encouraged to send their comments on a computer disk, or via E-mail to psilvey@msha.gov, along with an original printed copy. Ms. Silvey can be reached at (703) 235-1910 (voice) or (703) 235-5551 (facsimile).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Theresa M. O'Malley, Program Analysis Officer, Director, Office of Program Evaluation and Information Resources, U.S. Department of Labor, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Room 715, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203-1948. Mrs. O'Malley can be reached at tomalley@msha.vog (Internet E-mail), (703) 235-1470 (voice), or (703) 235-1563 (facsimile).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

I. Background

The Self-Rescue devices are subjected to harsh in-mine conditions that may result in damage to the device which could cause the device to malfunction or provide less than adequate protection. The 90-day examination of the device is necessary in order to provide for early detection of potential problems that would otherwise go undetected. Requiring the mine operator to certify the examination was made and to record any identified defects gives credibility to the program and decreases the likelihood of a person being required to use a device that may not function as designed. In addition, this information is useful in determining how durable a device may be when subjected to the harsh conditions that are encountered during in-mine use. This allows for early detection of design problems that may require the manufacturer to make changes to a device in order to assure the device will continue to function as designed and provide adequate protection in the event of an emergency.

II. Current Actions

In 1997, a large number of problems were identified with self-rescue devices that indicated either the 90-day examinations were not being conducted, or defective devices were not being removed from service. As a result of these problems, MSHA issued a Program Information Bulletin reminding the industry of the standard requiring the 90-day examination and certification of the self-rescue devices, and requiring devices that fail the 90-day examination to be removed from service. In addition, MSHA increased the inspection effort to include quarterly evaluation of the mine operators records as well as a physical examination of a representative number of self-rescue devices. However, due to the large number of devices in use in the mining industry (approximately 50,000 devices), it is essential that mine operators continue to certify that the 90-day examination was conducted on each device, and record the results for devices that failed the 90-day examination. Although MSHA has increased the enforcement effort, the large number of devices in use in the mining industry make it impractical for MSHA to be able to examine each of the devices quarterly.

Type of Review: Extension.

Agency: Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Title: Records of Results of Examinations of Self-Rescuers.

OMB Number: 1219-0044.

Agency Number: MSHA 243.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Cite/Reference/Form/Etc: 30 CFR 75.1714-3.

Total Respondents: 1,284.

Frequency: Quarterly.

Total Responses: 4,000.

Average Time per Response: 30 minutes.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 2,000 hours.

Estimated Total Burden Cost:

Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): 0.

Total Burden Cost (operating/maintaining): \$86,000).

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 19, 1998.

Theresa M. O'Malley,
Acting Director, Program Evaluation and Information Resources.

[FR Doc. 98-16805 Filed 6-23-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation; Proposed Extension/Reinstatement of Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (the Agencies), as part of their continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conduct a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and other federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA 95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data is provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. By this notice, the Agencies are soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension/reinstatement of approval of this collection of information—the Form 5500 Series, Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan—for the 1998 plan year. A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the office listed below in the addressee section of this notice. Although the 1998 Form 5500 Series is not yet available, it is not expected at this time to differ materially from the 1997 Form 5500 Series.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addressee section below on or before August 24, 1998. The Agencies are particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agencies, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agencies' estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;