for activities conducted for the EPA Training Verification Program or the Pesticide Worker Protection Standards because these activities are now covered under a separate ICR. In addition, information previously collected as a one time information collection to support amended labeling requirements for termiticide products, Pesticide Regulation Notice 96–7, is complete and no longer estimated in this information request.

In addition to the removal of these items, the Agency has also added to its basic registration information collection. The additional burden hours represent an estimated increase in the activities related to the implementation of the 1996 amendments to FIFRA and include the implementation of the Reduced-Risk Initiative (PR Notice 97–3, attachment C).

These changes account for a total burden hour decrease from the total burden of the last approved ICR, which was 218,938 hours, to 187,640 hours per year, for a total net reduction of 31,298 hours from 3 years ago. However, since EPA has already adjusted the total burden hours in OMB's inventory to reflect the majority of the decreases, the total burden hours in OMB's inventory, which is currently 190,505 hours, will decrease to 187,640, for a total net reduction of just 2,865 hours.

The total respondent costs have increased from approximately $6.0 million to $12 million per year, for a total net increase of $6 million. The reason for this increase in costs is due mainly to the update in the loaded labor hourly rates used to calculate the costs.

According to the procedures prescribed in 5 CFR 1320.12, EPA has submitted this ICR to OMB for review and approval. Any comments related to the renewal of this ICR should be submitted within 30 days of this document, as described above.

Dated: July 30, 1998.

Richard T. Westlund,

Acting Director, Regulatory Information Division.

[FR Doc. 98–21356 Filed 8–7–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–6140–9]

Request for Applications for Essential Use Exemptions to the Production and Import Phaseout of Ozone Depleting Substances Under the Montreal Protocol

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Through this notice, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is requesting applications for consideration at the Eleventh Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Protocol) to be held in September 1999, for exemptions to the production and import phaseout in 2000 and subsequent years for ozone-depleting substances (including halons 1211 and 1301, CFC–11, CFC–12, CFC–113, CFC–114, CFC–115, CFC–13, CFC–111, CFC–112, CFC–211, CFC–212, CFC–213, CFC–214, CFC–215, CFC–216, CFC–217, carbon tetrachloride, and methyl chloroform).

DATES: Applications for essential use exemptions must be submitted to EPA no later than September 24, 1998 in order for the United States (U.S.) government to complete its review and to submit nominations to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Protocol Parties in a timely manner.

ADDRESSES: Send three copies of application materials to: Chris O'Donnell, Stratospheric Protection Division (6205J), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Send one copy of application materials to: Air Docket A–93–39, 401 M Street, S.W. (6102), Room M1500, Washington, D.C. 20460.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Applications should not contain confidential or proprietary information. Such information should be submitted under separate cover and should be identified by placing on (or attaching to) the information, at the time it is submitted to EPA, a cover sheet, stamped or typed legend, or other suitable form of notice employing language such as ''trade secret,'' ''proprietary,'' or ''company confidential.'' Information covered by a claim of business confidentiality will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B (41 FR 36902). If no claim of confidentiality accompanies the information when it is received by EPA, the information may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the company (40 CFR 2.203).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chris O'Donnell at the above address or at (202) 564–9079 telephone, (202) 565–2095 fax, or odonnell.chris@epa.gov. General information may be obtained from the Stratospheric Ozone Hotline at 1–800–296–1996.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background—The Essential Use Nomination Process

As described in previous **Federal Register** (FR) notices (58 *FR* 29410, May 20, 1993; 59 *FR* 52544, October 18, 1994; 60 *FR* 54349, October 23, 1995; 61 *FR* 51110, September 30, 1996; and 62 *FR* 51655, October 2, 1997), the Parties to the Protocol agreed during the Fourth Meeting in Copenhagen on November 23–25, 1992, to accelerate the phaseout schedules for Class I ozone-depleting substances. Specifically, the Parties agreed to phase out the production of halons by January 1, 1994, and the production of other Class I substances, except methyl bromide, by January 1, 1996. The Parties also reached decisions and adopted resolutions on a variety of other matters, including the criteria to be used for allowing ''essential use'' exemptions from the phaseout of production and importation of controlled substances. Language regarding essential uses was added to the Protocol provisions in Article 2 governing the control measures. Decision IV/25 of the Fourth Meeting of the Parties details the specific criteria and review process for granting essential use exemptions.

At the Eighth Meeting of the Parties in 1996, the Parties modified the timetable for nomination of essential uses. Pursuant to Decision VIII/9, Parties may nominate a controlled substance for an exemption from the production phaseout by January 31 of each year. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) committees then review the nominations at their spring meetings and forward their recommendations for decision at the Meeting of the Parties later that year. The Parties may choose to grant the exemption for one or more of the nominated years, but each approved or pending application may be reconsidered and modified by the Parties at their annual meetings. Since the Parties in 1999 will be considering

nominations for the year 2000 and beyond, today's notice solicits requests for those years. Further detail on the essential use process is provided later in this section.

Decision IV/25 states that ''* * * a use of a controlled substance should qualify as ''essential'' only if: (i) it is necessary for the health, safety or is critical for the functioning of society (encompassing cultural and intellectual aspects); and (ii) there are no available technically and economically feasible alternatives or substitutes that are acceptable from the standpoint of environment and health''. In addition, the Parties agreed ''that production and consumption, if any, of a controlled substance, for essential uses should be permitted only if: (i) all economically feasible steps have been taken to minimize the essential use and any associated emission of the controlled substance; and (ii) the controlled substance is not available in sufficient quantity and quality from the existing stocks of banked or recycled controlled substances. * * *''

Section 614 (b) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (the Act) provides: ''In the case of conflict between any provision of this title [Title VI of the Act] and any provision of the Protocol, the more stringent provision shall govern.'' Thus, to the extent that an accelerated phaseout schedule has been adopted under the Protocol, EPA can legally provide exemptions for uses authorized by the Protocol but not otherwise specified in the Act as long as any additional production does not exceed the production reduction schedule contained in section 604(a).

The first step in the process to qualify a use as essential under the Protocol is for the user to ascertain whether the use of the controlled substance meets the Decision IV/25 criteria. The user should then notify EPA of the candidate use and provide information for U.S. government agencies and the Protocol Parties to evaluate that use according to the criteria under Decision IV/25. The UNEP Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) has issued a handbook entitled ''Handbook on Essential Use Nominations,'' (the handbook) available from EPA, to guide applicants. Applicants should follow the guidelines in the handbook when preparing their exemption requests. Applicants should note that the current TEAP handbook was revised in 1997 to reflect Decision VIII/10 of the Parties. Therefore applicants should use the handbook dated August 1997 when preparing their exemption requests.

Upon receipt of the exemption request, EPA reviews the application and works with other interested federal agencies to determine whether it meets the essential use criteria and as a result, warrants being nominated for an exemption. Applicants should be aware that recent essential use exemptions granted to the U.S. for 1999 were limited to chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) for metered dose inhalers (MDIs) to treat asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

In the case of multiple exemption requests for a single use, EPA aggregates exemption requests received from individual entities into a single U.S. request. An important part of the EPA review is to determine that the aggregate request for a particular out-year adequately reflects the market penetration potential and expected availability of CFC substitutes by that point in time. If the sum of individual requests does not incorporate such assumptions, the U.S. government may adjust the aggregate request to better reflect true market needs.

Nominations submitted to the Ozone Secretariat by the U.S. and other Parties are then forwarded to the UNEP TEAP and its Technical Options Committees (TOCs), which review the submissions and make recommendations to the Parties for exemptions. Those recommendations are then considered by the Parties at their annual meeting for final decision. If the Parties declare a specified use of a controlled substance as essential and issue the necessary exemptions from the production phaseout, EPA may propose regulatory changes to reflect the decisions by the Parties consistent with the Act.

The timing of the reviews is such that in any given year the Parties review nominations for exemption from the production phaseout intended for the following year and any subsequent years. This means that, if nominated, applications submitted in response to today's notice for CFC production in 2000 and beyond will be considered by the Parties in 1999 for final action at the Meeting of the Parties in September of that year.

II. Information Required for Essential Use Applications for Production or Importation of Class I Substances in 2000 and Subsequent Years

Through this notice, EPA requests applications for essential use exemptions for all Class I substances for 2000 and subsequent years. All requests for exemptions submitted to EPA must present the information relevant to the application as prescribed in the TEAP Handbook mentioned in the previous section. As noted earlier, the TEAP handbook was revised to incorporate Decision VIII/10 adopted by the Parties at their Eighth Meeting, in November 1996. Decision VIII/10 will require applicants to expand on information provided in previous nominations as well as provide new information. Since the U.S. government does not forward incomplete or inadequate nominations to the Ozone Secretariat, it is important for applicants to provide all information requested in the Handbook, including the information specified in the supplemental research and development form (page 43) and the accounting framework matrix (page 41). Applicants should also note that reformulation information is required from all drug sponsors, irrespective of whether they manufacture their own product or contract with a filler to produce their product.

The accounting framework matrix in the Handbook is titled, ''IV. Reporting Accounting Framework for Essential Uses Other Than Laboratory and Analytical Applications.'' The data requested in column H, On Hand Start of Year, is the total quantity of each controlled substance that an applicant has on hand as of January 1st of the year in question, whether the material is held for the applicant under contract or is on-site at the facility, and whether the material was produced prior to the phaseout or obtained after the phaseout. The data requested in column J, Used for Essential Use, is the gross total quantity of the controlled substance that was used in the essential-use process, including amounts emitted, used in cleaning equipment, recycled or destroyed. Parties have been asked to request this information from companies, and these forms will assist the EPA in preparing a complete and comprehensive nomination. In brief, the TEAP Handbook states that applicants must present information on:

- Role of use in society
- Alternatives to use, including education programs on alternatives
- Steps to minimize use, including development of CFC-free alternatives
- Steps to minimize emissions
- Amount of substance available through recycling and stockpiling
- Quantity of controlled substances requested by year.

EPA anticipates that the 1999 review by the Parties of MDI essential use requests will focus extensively on research efforts underway to develop alternatives to CFC MDIs, on education programs to inform patients and providers of the phaseout and the transition to alternatives, and on steps taken to minimize CFC use and emissions including efforts to recapture or reprocess the controlled substance.

Accordingly, applicants are strongly advised to present detailed information on these points, including the scope and cost of such efforts and the medical and patient organizations involved in the work. Applicants can strengthen their exemption requests by submitting a complete set of education materials and including copies of printed, electronic or audio-visual tools. Applicants are given notice that exemption requests without adequate information on research and education will not be considered complete.

Applicants should submit their exemption requests to EPA as noted in the **ADDRESSES** section at the beginning of today's notice.

Dated: August 3, 1998.

Robert Perciasepe,

Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation.

[FR Doc. 98–21346 Filed 8–7–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–6140–1]

Availability of FY 97 Grant Performance Reports for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of availability of grantee performance evaluation reports.

SUMMARY: EPA's grant regulations (40 CFR 35.150) require the Agency to evaluate the performance of agencies which receive grants. EPA's regulations for regional consistency (40 CFR 56.7) require that the Agency notify the public of the availability of the reports of such evaluations. EPA recently performed end-of-year evaluations of seven state air pollution control programs (Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, Mississippi Bureau of Pollution Control, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control), and 16 local programs (Knox County Department of Air Pollution Control, TN; Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau, TN; Memphis-Shelby County Health Department, TN; Nashville-Davidson County Metropolitan Health Department, TN; Jefferson County Air Pollution Control District, KY; Western North Carolina Regional Air Pollution Control Agency, NC; Mecklenburg County Department of Environmental Protection, NC; Forsyth County Environmental Affairs Department, NC; Palm Beach County Public Health Unit, FL; Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission, FL; Dade County Environmental Resources Management, FL; Jacksonville Air Quality Division, FL; Broward County Environmental Quality Control Board, FL; Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management, FL; City of Huntsville Department of Natural Resources, AL; Jefferson County Department of Health, AL). The 23 evaluations were conducted to assess the agencies' performance under the grants awarded by EPA under authority of section 105 of the Clean Air Act. EPA Region 4 has prepared reports for each agency identified above and these reports are now available for public inspection. The State of Tennessee's evaluation will be made available for public review at a later date.

ADDRESSES: The reports may be examined at the EPA's Region 4 office, 61 Forsyth Street, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303, in the Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Linda Thomas, (404) 562–9064, at the above Region 4 address, for information concerning the state agencies in Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Georgia, and the local agencies in those states. Vera Bowers, (404) 562–9053, at the above Region 4 address, for information concerning the state agencies in Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the local agencies in those states.

Dated: July 30, 1998.

Winston A. Smith,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region 4.

[FR Doc. 98–21342 Filed 8–7–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–6141–2]

Announcement of Stakeholder Forums on Perchlorate in Water

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of stakeholder forums.

SUMMARY: The Interagency Perchlorate Steering Committee (IPSC) will be holding two one-day stakeholder forums on August 25, 1998 in Salt Lake City, Utah, and on August 27, 1998 in Phoenix, Arizona. The IPSC, a working partnership of government agencies chartered to facilitate identification of the issues and coordinate the exchange of scientific information related to potential perchlorate contamination in the environment, includes representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Defense (DoD), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), Native American Tribes, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Utah Department of Health Laboratories, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission and California Department of Health Services. The purpose of these stakeholder forums is to disseminate information on the key scientific issues, to identify additional issues, and to hear stakeholder concerns. This meeting will be similar in content to the perchlorate stakeholders meeting the IPSC held in Henderson, Nevada on May 19–21, 1998. At the upcoming meeting, the IPSC is again seeking input from State and Tribal drinking water programs, the regulated community (public water systems), public health organizations, academia, environmental and public interest groups, engineering firms, and the public on a number of issues related to perchlorate contamination in the environment. The IPSC encourages the full participation of stakeholders at the forum.

DATES: The Salt Lake City, Utah forum will be held on Tuesday, August 25, 1998 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. MST. An additional public evening session will be held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. MST. The Phoenix, Arizona forum will be held on Thursday, August 27, 1998 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. MST.

ADDRESSES: The August 25, 1998 forum will be held at the Department of Enviromental Quality, 168 North, 1950 West, Building 2, Room 101. The August 27, 1998 forum will be held at Arizona State University, West Campus, UCB Building, La Sala Rm. B & C. To register, please contact the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline via e-mail at hotline-sdwa@epamail.epa.gov or by calling 1–800–426–4791 or 703–285–1093 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. EDT. Those registered by August 18, 1998, will receive a draft agenda, logistics information, and discussion papers prior to the forum. When registering, please indicate it is for the