

committees not filing monthly which support candidates in these elections shall file a 12-day Pre-General Report on February 11, 1999, with coverage dates from the close of the last report filed, or the day of the committee's first activity, whichever is later, through February 3, 1999; a Pre-Runoff Report on March 4, 1999, with coverage dates from February 4 through February 24, 1999; and a Post-Runoff Report on April 15, 1999, with coverage dates from February 25 through April 5, 1999.

All principal campaign committees of candidates in the Special General Election *only* and all other political committees not filing monthly which support candidates in the Special General Election shall file a 12-day Pre-General Report on February 11, with coverage dates from the close of the last report filed, or the date of the committee's first activity, whichever is later, through February 3, and a Post-General Report on March 25, with

coverage dates from February 4 through March 15, 1999.

All political committees not filing monthly which support candidates in the Special Runoff *only* shall file a 12-day Pre-Runoff Report on March 4, with coverage dates from the last report filed or the date of the committee's first activity, whichever is later, through February 24, and a Post-Runoff Report on April 15, with coverage dates from February 25 through April 5, 1999.

#### CALENDAR OF REPORTING DATES FOR GEORGIA SPECIAL ELECTION

Report	Close of books <sup>1</sup>	Reg./cert. mailing date <sup>2</sup>	Filing date
<b>If Only the Special General Is Held (02/23/99), Committees Must File:</b>			
Pre-General .....	02/03/99	02/08/99	02/11/99
Post-General .....	03/15/99	03/25/99	03/25/99
<b>If Two Elections Are Held, But a Committee Is Involved Only in the Special General (02/23/99)</b>			
Pre-General .....	02/03/99	02/08/99	02/11/99
Mid-Year .....	06/30/99	07/31/99	07/31/99
<b>Committees Involved in the Special General (02/23/99) and Special Runoff (03/16/99) Must File:</b>			
Pre-General .....	02/03/99	02/08/99	02/11/99
Pre-Runoff .....	02/24/99	03/01/99	03/04/99
Post-Runoff .....	04/05/99	04/15/99	04/15/99
<b>Committees Involved Only in the Special Runoff (03/16/99) Must File:</b>			
Pre-Runoff .....	02/24/99	03/01/99	03/04/99
Post-Runoff .....	04/05/99	04/15/99	04/15/99

<sup>1</sup> The period begins with the close of books of the last report filed by the committee. If the committee has filed no previous reports, the period begins with the date of the committee's first activity.

<sup>2</sup> Reports sent by registered or certified mail must be postmarked by the mailing date; otherwise, they must be received by the filing date.

Dated: January 14, 1999.

**Scott E. Thomas,**

*Chairman, Federal Election Commission.*

[FR Doc. 99-1270 Filed 1-20-99; 8:45 am]

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#### FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

##### Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 *et seq.*) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR Part 225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The application also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act. Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than February 12, 1999.

**A. Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City** (D. Michael Manies, Assistant Vice

President) 925 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri 64198-0001:

**1. Rae Valley Financial, Inc.,** Petersburg, Nebraska; to become a bank holding company by acquiring 100 percent of the voting shares of Petersburg State Bank, Petersburg, Nebraska.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, January 14, 1999.

**Robert deV. Frierson,**

*Associate Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 99-1319 Filed 1-20-99; 8:45 am]

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#### FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

##### Notice of Proposals to Engage in Permissible Nonbanking Activities or to Acquire Companies that are Engaged in Permissible Nonbanking Activities

The companies listed in this notice have given notice under section 4 of the

Bank Holding Company Act (12 U.S.C. 1843) (BHC Act) and Regulation Y, (12 CFR Part 225) to engage *de novo*, or to acquire or control voting securities or assets of a company, including the companies listed below, that engages either directly or through a subsidiary or other company, in a nonbanking activity that is listed in § 225.28 of Regulation Y (12 CFR 225.28) or that the Board has determined by Order to be closely related to banking and permissible for bank holding companies. Unless otherwise noted, these activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Each notice is available for inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The notice also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the question whether the proposal complies with the standards of section 4 of the BHC Act.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding the applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than February 12, 1999.

**A. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis**  
(Randall C. Sumner, Vice President) 411 Locust Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2034:

1. *Great Southern Bancorp, Inc.*, Springfield, Missouri; to acquire Guaranty Federal Bancshares, Inc., Springfield, Missouri, and thereby indirectly acquire Guaranty Federal Savings Bank, Springfield, Missouri, and thereby engage in the activity of operation of a savings association, pursuant to § 225.28(b)(4)(ii) of Regulation Y.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, January 14, 1999.

**Robert deV. Frierson,**

*Associate Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 99-1318 Filed 1-20-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. 98P-0504]

#### Performance Standard for *Vibrio Vulnificus*; Request for Comments

**AGENCY:** Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has received a petition from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) requesting that

the agency establish a performance standard of "nondetectable" for the marine bacterium *Vibrio vulnificus* in raw molluscan shellfish harvested from waters that have been linked to illnesses from this organism. FDA is requesting information and views from the general public on CSPI's request and on several specific questions relating to the petition.

**DATES:** Submit written comments by April 21, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to the Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Patricia S. Schwartz, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (HFS-401), Food and Drug Administration, 200 C St. SW., Washington, DC 20204, 202-418-3133.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Background

*V. vulnificus* is a marine bacterium that can cause infection in humans as a result of contact through cuts or wounds and consumption of food containing the organism. The association of foodborne illness with *V. vulnificus* is relatively recent; the first reported cases occurred in the 1970's. To date, the food almost exclusively associated with illness from *V. vulnificus* is raw oysters harvested from States bordering on the Gulf of Mexico. However, the bacterium is also found in marine waters and in shellfish outside the Gulf region, although raw oysters from waters outside the Gulf region have not been definitively implicated in any cases of illness.

While *V. vulnificus* can infrequently cause gastroenteritis in healthy individuals, it can cause much more serious, sometimes deadly, septicemia in certain compromised individuals. The conditions that FDA believes put consumers at risk for septicemia from *V. vulnificus* include alcoholic liver disease, diabetes, hemochromatosis, chronic hepatitis B and C, and depressed immune system function. However, the majority of cases of septicemia have occurred in consumers with alcoholic liver disease. FDA estimates that the at-risk population in the United States falls within a range of 12 to 30 million. The number of septicemia cases reported from *V. vulnificus* each year range from a low of 9 in 1990 and 1991 to a high of 33 in 1996. Septicemia in medically compromised individuals has proven fatal in about 50 percent of reported cases. The agency's policy since 1993 has been that at-risk individuals should

only consume molluscan shellfish that have been adequately cooked, as thorough cooking kills *V. vulnificus*.

FDA is supporting ongoing research directed toward answering several questions about *V. vulnificus*, including research: (1) To identify the characteristics of those strains of *V. vulnificus* that are pathogenic to humans, (2) to describe the effect of environmental conditions on the occurrence of these strains in water and in shellfish, (3) to determine whether there is an infectious dose or doses of the organism in susceptible humans, (4) to determine whether there are other factors or conditions that may put consumers at risk of septicemia; and (5) research on other matters. To date, FDA has cosponsored two national scientific workshops on *V. vulnificus* to determine what is known and what needs to be learned about this organism.

In addition, since 1993, the agency has expended considerable effort on education directed toward at-risk populations to warn them to avoid raw shellfish. Recently, the agency has supported point-of-purchase advisories directed toward at-risk individuals.

FDA has also worked with the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC), a cooperative entity (whose members include FDA, the States, and the shellfish industry) dedicated to the production of safe and sanitary molluscan shellfish, to address issues related to *V. vulnificus*. The agency participated with the ISSC in developing the post-harvest refrigeration requirements that were established by the ISSC for *V. vulnificus* in oysters. Together with the ISSC, FDA is currently studying the levels of these organisms in oysters to which consumers are exposed at retail.

FDA recognizes that innovative post-harvest technologies may also reduce or eliminate *V. vulnificus* from raw oysters. To foster this approach, the agency has provided labeling advice to a company that is marketing oysters that have been subject to a post-harvest treatment involving low temperature pasteurization (see the following paragraphs). The agency hopes that companies pursuing other potential post-harvest technologies will also seek FDA's labeling assistance.

##### II. The Citizen's Petition

On June 29, 1998, CSPI filed a citizen petition that requests that FDA issue regulations under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or Public Health Service Act requiring nondetectable levels of *V. vulnificus* in raw molluscan shellfish harvested from waters that have been linked to illnesses or deaths