

June 6, 2002

FACT SHEET

AMENDMENT TO FINAL RULE TO REDUCE TOXIC AIR EMISSIONS FROM PHOSPHORIC ACID MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND PHOSPHATE FERTILIZERS PRODUCTION PLANTS

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is amending its toxic air pollutant rule for phosphoric acid manufacturing plants. In response to issues raised by The Fertilizer Institute, EPA and The Fertilizer Institute entered into a settlement agreement. In response to the agreement, EPA published a direct final rule and parallel proposed rule on December 17, 2001 that would revise the limit on emissions of toxic air pollutants for existing facilities known as phosphate rock calciners. These actions also made other revisions.
- ! EPA received an adverse comment on the proposal to revise the emission limit and will now consider this comment under the parallel proposed rule prior to promulgating a final emission limit. Today's amendment removes the revised emission limit for phosphate rock calciners that was included in the direct final rule. In addition, EPA is reinstating the limit on toxic air emissions that was in place prior to the effective date of the December 2001 direct final rule.
- ! Toxic air pollutants, also known as air toxics, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health or environmental effects.
- ! Most of the phosphoric acid produced by phosphoric acid manufacturing plants is used in the production of phosphate-based fertilizers that are used for agricultural purposes. Several toxic metals are emitted during the manufacture of phosphoric acid. Exposure to those compounds has been demonstrated to cause health problems.
- ! Today's amendment would not change the health and environmental benefits of the final rules for phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants that were published on June 10, 1999.

BACKGROUND

- ! The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require EPA to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed

toxic pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of listed pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures known as maximum achievable control technology. EPA identified phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants as industrial sources emitting one or more toxic air pollutants.

- ! EPA issued its final air toxics rules for phosphoric acid manufacturing plants and phosphate fertilizers production plants on June 10, 1999. Those final rules required the application of maximum achievable control technology for approximately 21 facilities manufacturing phosphoric acid and phosphate fertilizers.

- ! The final rules are expected to reduce air toxics emissions, primarily hydrogen fluoride, by approximately 345 tons annually -- a 57 percent reduction from current emissions. The final rules also will reduce emissions of total fluorides, which are known to have adverse effects on the environment, including damage to vegetation. In addition, the final rules will yield reductions in emissions of heavy metals, including chromium and lead, and will reduce emissions of the volatile organic compound methyl isobutyl ketone.

WHAT THE AMENDMENT WOULD DO

- ! Today's amendment to the final rules would remove the revised emission limit for phosphate rock calciners, and reinstate the previous emission limit. EPA will promulgate a final emission limit after considering the adverse comment received on its December 17, 2001 proposal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ! To download the amendments from EPA's page on the World Wide Web, go to <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For additional information, contact Tanya Medley of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5422 or by e-mail at medley.tanya@epa.gov.

- ! The EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>.