

December 15, 1999

PROPOSED AIR TOXICS RULE FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF AMINO/PHENOLIC RESINS

FACT SHEET

TODAY'S ACTION

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a final rule to reduce the emission of air toxics from the manufacture of amino/phenolic resins. Air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems.
- Amino/phenolic resins are used in the manufacture of plywood, particle board, adhesives, wood furniture and plastic parts.
- In addition to formaldehyde and phenol, industry uses other chemicals, such as methanol, xylene and toluene, to produce amino/phenolic resins. Air toxics are emitted during several phases of the resin manufacturing process.
- Today's action will reduce emissions of a number of air toxics, including formaldehyde, phenol, methanol, xylene, and toluene by 361 tons per year, representing a 51 percent reduction from 1992 levels.
- Formaldehyde, for example, is a probable human carcinogen, and short-term and long-term exposure to significant levels of formaldehyde may cause irritation of the eye, nose, throat, and, at higher levels, the respiratory tract in humans.
- The rule affects new and existing amino/phenolic resin manufacturing facilities. EPA has identified 100 facilities engaged in the manufacture of amino/phenolic resins. EPA estimates 40 of these facilities to be major sources of air toxics.
- The rule establishes emission limits or control efficiency requirements for the following operations: reactor batch process vents; non-reactor batch process vents; continuous process vents; storage tanks; equipment leaks (pumps, compressors, agitators, pressure relief devices, sampling connection systems, open-ended valves or lines, valves, connectors and instrumentation systems); and heat exchange systems.
- EPA estimates the total capital cost of this rule to be about \$2.3 million. EPA estimates the total annual cost to be about \$1.9 million for existing sources.

BACKGROUND

- The Clean Air Act requires EPA to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. For major sources (those with the potential to emit 10 tons annually or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons or more of a combination of pollutants), the law requires EPA to develop standards requiring the application of stringent air pollution controls. Those standards are known as “MACT standards,” because they require the application of maximum achievable control technology, or MACT.
- On December 14, 1998, EPA issued a proposed rule to reduce the emission of air toxics from the manufacture of amino/phenolic resins.
- This notice will finalize the combination of the amino resins production source category and the phenolic resins production source category into a single source category known as amino/phenolic resins production.

HOW THE FINAL RULE DIFFERS FROM THE PROPOSAL

- Today’s rule contains changes to encourage the use of pollution prevention measures to meet control requirements. The rule now encourages sources to use condensers to recover and reuse solvents and product. Another change allows the use of categories of control technology rather than specific control devices, in order to encourage the use of alternative pollution prevention measures .
- EPA removed several control requirements that were in the proposed rule (based on revised data submitted by industry). Existing storage tanks and new source wastewater no longer require control. And EPA has revised the control requirements for batch process vents and new continuous process vents.
- The final rule also allows the use of an alternative emission standard for meeting the batch reactor vent requirements. A facility can meet the alternative emissions requirement by either installation of controls, pollution prevention measure, or a combination of both.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To download the rule from EPA's World Wide Web site, to <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/ramain.html> . For more information about today’s rule, contact John Schaefer of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-0296.
- EPA's Office of Air and Radiation’s web page contains additional information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The address is <http://www.epa.gov/oar>.