

failure investigations are conducted for each "incident" as defined under 49 CFR 191.3 during the 30-day incident reporting period, a failure investigation into the cause of a leak under normal gas distribution system operating conditions is usually determined by the operator's field technician. Therefore, instructions should help clarify which leak category the field technician must focus on for the purposes of the annual report.

CPUC suggests that the data collection and reporting using the proposed form should coincide with a full calendar year of leak repair data to ensure meaningful data reporting and analysis. Partial calendar year or "Unknown" data classification will result in inconsistent data collection and questionable conclusions.

RSPA/OPS Response: The data collection for the natural gas distribution annual report has historically been, and will remain, per calendar year for the preceding calendar year. As stated above, we request the revised forms to be filed annually beginning March 15, 2005, for calendar year 2004.

Combining Categories

Southwest questions combining equipment leaks and operation leaks into one category. As explained in the instructions for the annual report, equipment leaks are leaks resulting from malfunctioning valves, regulators, couplings, etc. Operation leaks are leaks resulting from inadequate procedures or safety practices, failure to follow correct procedures, or other operator errors. These categories are distinct and justify separation into their own category. Southwest believes that separating these into distinct categories will better enable RSPA/OPS to perform a proper analysis of the data.

RSPA/OPS Response: RSPA/OPS agrees that the categories are distinct and justify separation into their own category. Accordingly, the form and instructions are changed to separate Equipment leaks and Operation leaks.

Abstract of Proposed Information Collection and Request for Comments

The forms to be revised are two of the four gas pipeline reporting forms authorized by Information Collection OMB 2137-0522, Incident and Annual

Reports for Gas Pipeline Operators. The proposed revisions represent the final phase of an ongoing process to revise all incident and annual reports. RSPA/OPS revised the natural gas transmission operator annual report forms in 2001 for collection beginning in 2002.

Title of Information Collection: Incident and Annual Reports for Gas Pipeline Operators—Revision of Natural Gas Distribution Incident Report (RSPA F 7100.1) and the Annual Report Form for Gas Distribution Systems (RSPA F 7100.1-1)

OMB Number: 2137-0522.

Respondents: Natural Gas Distribution Pipeline Operators.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,200.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 30,240 hours.

Comments are invited on:

(a) The need for the proposed collection of information for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(b) 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;

(c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 24, 2003.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

Office of Hazardous Materials Safety; Notice of Applications for Modification of Exemption

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT.

ACTION: List of applications for modification of exemption.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the procedures governing the application for, and the processing of, exemptions from the Department of Transportation's Hazardous Material Regulations (49 CFR part 107, subpart B), notice is hereby given that the Office of Hazardous Materials Safety has received the application described herein. This notice is abbreviated to expedite docketing and public notice. Because the sections affected, modes of transportation, and the nature of application have been shown in earlier Federal Register publication, they are not repeated here. Request of modifications of exemptions (e.g. to provide for additional hazardous materials, packaging design changes, additional mode of transportation, etc.) are described in footnotes to the application number. Application numbers with the suffix "M" denote a modification request. These applications have been separated from the new application for exemption to facilitate processing.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 15, 2004.

ADDRESS COMMENTS TO: Record Center, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, DC 20590.

Comments should refer to the application number and be submitted in triplicate. If Confirmation of receipt of comments is desired, include a self-addressed stamped postcard showing the exemption number.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Copies of the applications are available for inspection in the Records Center, Nassif Building, 400 7th Street SW, Washington DC or at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

This notice of receipt of applications for modification of exemption is published in accordance with part 107 of the Federal hazardous materials transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5117(b); 49 CFR 1.53(b)).

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 24, 2003.

Ryan Posten,

Exemptions Program Officer, Office of Hazardous Materials Exemptions & Approvals.