written comments was May 1, 1995. On April 5, 1995 the Coast Guard published a second notice in the Federal Register (60 FR 17287) announcing a series of regional public meetings to be held on the same topics. The deadline for written comments in this notice was June 5, 1995.

At the April 20, 1995 public meeting and in written comments to the docket, several commentors requested an extension of the May 1, 1995 comment period. The issues discussed in the notice and at the public meeting are important and require careful thought and evaluation. Since the regulatory reform initiative is an ongoing process, a longer comment period can be accommodated. In addition to receiving comments on the regulatory policy announced in this notice, comments on the issues raised in the two prior notices may be submitted. To provide maximum value on this notice, comments should be received by December 8, 1995. However, late comments may be accepted and evaluated to the extent practicable.

In response to the Federal Register notice and public meetings, the Coast Guard has received and is still receiving comments suggesting specific regulations for review and identifying reasons why those regulations should be either amended or eliminated. The Coast Guard will fully evaluate each suggestion and may initiate appropriate rulemaking projects at a later date. However, the Coast Guard has already made a preliminary determination to proceed immediately with at least two regulatory reinvention initiatives. The first is to purge the Code of Federal Regulations of obsolete and out-of-date regulations. A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposing a wide range of rescissions was published in the Federal Register of May 9, 1995 (60 FR 24748). This first set of obsolete and out-of-date regulations has minimal impact on the public and no controversy or objection is expected. Additional obsolete and out-of-date regulations will be proposed for elimination or revision in later rulemaking documents.

Second, the Coast Guard has established a goal of eliminating any Coast Guard induced differential between requirements that apply to U.S. vessels in international trade and those that apply to similar vessels in international trade that fly the flag of responsible foreign nations. The Coast Guard will carefully evaluate every existing and newly proposed regulation. To the maximum extent possible, the Coast Guard will eliminate an unwarranted differential between U.S. and responsible international standards will be eliminated. There are several new rulemaking projects under development that reflect this new Coast Guard policy.

The U.S. maritime industry conducted several studies, some of which indicated that industry competitiveness has been adversely impacted by the cost differential between building a vessel to U.S. standards and building it to some foreign standards. The industry reported that differential was from 0% to 15% of the total construction cost. However, all of these industry studies were conducted prior to implementation of the 1981 and 1983 amendments to the 1974 Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention. The Convention and its amendments have greatly reduced the gap between U.S. and international standards.

The U.S. has sometimes unilaterally adopted more stringent standards than the international regulations promulgated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a specialized agency of the United Nations. A Maritime Administration sponsored study conducted in 1979 reported that the portion of the total construction cost differential directly attributable to discretionary requirements imposed by the Coast Guard was less than one-half of one percent. However, even a one-half of one percent differential in construction costs should be avoided if it does not result in needed additional safety or environmental protection.

In the past, international standards were in large part inadequate or nonexistent which required the United States to adopt high quality standards of its own. This situation has changed in recent years. Great strides have been taken by the responsible members of the international community to adopt standards that provide levels of safety and environmental protection that are generally equivalent to U.S. standards. The IMO has adopted a wide range of safety and environmental protection requirements that parallel many of the standards that apply to U.S. vessels. However, the IMO requirements are in some cases general in nature and need amplifying national regulations. In addition, IMO requirements do not constitute a complete ship construction standard. They must be used together with classification society standards and flag state requirements. Responsible foreign flag states and classification societies now have standards that are equivalent to U.S. standards. Because the responsible flag states and classification societies now assure high levels of protection, it is no longer desirable for the United States to apply different requirements to U.S. vessels. Accordingly, in cooperation with the American Bureau of Shipping, the Coast Guard has identified various U.S. regulations that differ from the best international standards. The Coast Guard is now carefully evaluating each of those regulations to determine if it makes necessary additional safety or environmental protection contributions. Those regulations that do not provide necessary added levels of protection will be proposed for elimination.

Because of the global nature of maritime commerce, it is seldom effective for an individual nation to require substantially different standards for its vessels engaged in international trade. Ships of every nationality call at ports all over the world. Substandard performers pose a risk to their host nations everywhere. For this reason, IMO recently formed the Flag State Implementation Subcommittee (FSI) to develop strong international standards for nations that fly vessels’ flag states and for nations that host vessels (port states). By working closely with the FSI, the Coast Guard will assure both a high and a level playing field for U.S. flag vessels in international trade.

The Coast Guard invites comment on this initial regulatory policy.


J.C. Card,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Chief, Office of Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Parts 52 and 81

[MN–36–1–6752b; FRL–5020–2]

Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Area for Air Quality Planning Purposes: Minnesota

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The USEPA proposes to approve the request for redesignation to attainment for particulate matter (PM) in Olmsted County and sulfur dioxide (SO2) in the Air Quality Control Region (AQCR) 131 Twin Cities and Pine Bend areas (excluding the St. Paul Park area). In addition, USEPA proposes to approve a State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision to the administrative order for PM for Rochester Public Utilities,
located in Rochester, Minnesota. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) submitted the proposed SIP revision and redesignation requests on September 7, 1994. In the final rules section of this Federal Register, USEPA is approving the SIP revision and requests to redesignate as a direct final rule because the Agency views this as noncontroversial and anticipates no adverse comments. A detailed rationale for the approval is set forth in the direct final rule. If no adverse comments are received in response to that direct final rule no further activity is contemplated in relation to this proposed rule. If USEPA receives adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. The USEPA will not institute a second comment period on this notice.

DATES: Comments on this proposed rule must be received on or before June 30, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be mailed to: William L. MacDowell, Chief, Regulation Development Section, Air Enforcement Branch (AE-17), United States Environmental Protection Agency, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

Copies of the State submittal and USEPA’s analysis are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the following address: United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5, Air and Radiation Division, 77 West Jackson Boulevard (AR-17), Chicago, Illinois 60604.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For additional information see the direct final rule published in the rules section of the Federal Register.


Valdas V. Adamkus, Regional Administrator.

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