

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

7 CFR Part 1755

RUS Specification for Aerial Service Wires

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.
ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) proposes to amend its regulations on Telecommunications Standards and Specifications for Materials, Equipment and Construction, by codifying the RUS Specification for Aerial Service Wires. The new specification sets forth the engineering and technical standards that are required by RUS in outside plant environments.

DATES: Comments concerning this proposed rule must be received by RUS or postmarked no later than January 29, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be mailed to the Orren E. Cameron III, Director, Telecommunications Standards Division, Rural Utilities Service, room 2835, AG Box 1598, South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-1598. RUS requests an original and three copies of all comments (7 CFR part 1700). All comments received will be made available for public inspection at room 2835, South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-1598 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (7 CFR 1.27(b)).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chief, Outside Plant Branch, Telecommunications Standards Division, Rural Utilities Service, room 2844, AG Box 1598, South Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-1598, telephone number (202) 720-0667.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Order 12866

This proposed rule has been determined to be not significant and

therefore has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

Executive Order 12778

This proposed rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12778, Civil Justice Reform. If adopted, this proposed rule will not:

- (1) Preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies;
- (2) Have any retroactive effect; and
- (3) Require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit challenging the provisions of this rule.

Regulatory Flexibility Act Certification

The Administrator of RUS has determined that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). This proposed rule involves standards and specifications, which may increase the direct short-term costs to RUS borrowers. However, the long-term direct economic costs are reduced through greater durability and lower maintenance cost over time.

Information Collection and Recordkeeping Requirements

The reporting and recordkeeping requirements contained in the proposed rule were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended) under control number of 0572-0059.

Send questions or comments regarding this burden or any other aspect of these collections of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Deputy Director, Program Support Staff, Rural Utilities Service, Ag Box 1522, Washington, DC 20250-1522.

National Environmental Policy Act Certification

The Administrator of RUS has determined that this proposed rule will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) Therefore, this action does not require an environmental impact statement or assessment.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

The program described by this proposed rule is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance programs under No. 10.851, Rural Telephone Loans and Loan Guarantees; and No. 10.852, Rural Telephone Bank Loans. This catalog is available on a subscription basis from the Superintendent of Documents, the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Executive Order 12372

This proposed rule is excluded from the scope of Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Consultation, which may require consultation with State and local officials. A Notice of Final rule titled Department Programs and Activities Excluded from Executive Order 12372 (50 FR 47034) exempts RUS and RTB loans and loan guarantees, and RTB bank loans, to governmental and nongovernmental entities from coverage under this Order.

Background

RUS issues publications titled "Bulletin" which serve to guide borrowers regarding already codified policy, procedures, and requirements needed to manage loans, loan guarantee programs, and the security instruments which provide for and secure RUS financing. RUS issues standards and specifications for the construction of telephone facilities financed with RUS loan funds. RUS Bulletin 345-36, "RUS Specification for Parallel Conductor Drop Wire," PE-7, dated January 25, 1983 presently contains the engineering and technical requirements for aerial service wires that are considered necessary for satisfactory performance in outside plant environments. Because of the technological advancements made in aerial service wire designs over the past eleven years, RUS proposes to incorporate and update the information contained in RUS Bulletin 345-36 into 7 CFR 1755.700 through 7 CFR 1755.704, RUS Specification for Aerial Service Wires, and to rescind RUS Bulletin 345-36 upon the effective date of 7 CFR 1755.700 through 7 CFR 1755.704.

The specification allows aerial service wire designs consisting of one pair through six pairs. The specification also allows aerial service wire designs

containing copper coated steel and nonmetallic reinforcing members.

The specification contains mechanical, electrical, and environmental requirements, and test methods for evaluation of these aerial service wire designs.

This action establishes RUS requirements for a wider range of aerial service wires without affecting current designs or manufacturing techniques. This wider selection of aerial service wires will afford RUS telephone borrowers the opportunity to increase subscriber services in an economical and efficient manner through enhanced wire designs brought about by

technological advancements made during the past eleven years.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 1755

Loan programs-communications, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Rural areas, Telephone.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, RUS proposes to amend Chapter XVII of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations as follows:

PART 1755—TELECOMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION.

1. The authority citation for part 1755 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, 1921 *et seq.*, Pub. L. 103-354, 108 Stat. 3178 (7 U.S.C. 6941 *et seq.*).

2. Section 1755.98 is amended by adding a new entry to the table in numerical order to read as follows:

§ 1755.98 List of telephone standards and specifications included in other 7 CFR parts.

* * * * *

Section	Issue date	Title
1755.700 through 1755.704	[Effective date of final rule]	RUS Specification for Aerial Service Wires.
*	*	*

3. Sections 1755.700 through 1755.704 are added to read as follows:

§ 1755.700 RUS specification for aerial service wires.

§§ 1755.701 through 1755.704 cover the requirements for aerial service wires.

§ 1755.701 Scope.

(a) This section covers the requirements for aerial service wires intended for aerial subscriber drops.

(1) The aerial service wires can be either copper coated steel reinforced or nonmetallic reinforced designs.

(2) For the copper coated steel reinforced design, the reinforcing members are the conductors.

(i) The conductors are solid copper-covered steel wires.

(ii) The wire structure is completed by insulating the conductors with an overall extruded plastic insulating compound.

(3) For the nonmetallic reinforced design, the conductors are solid copper individually insulated with an extruded solid insulating compound.

(i) The insulated conductors are either layed parallel (two conductor design only) or twisted into pairs (a star-quad configuration is permitted for two pair wires).

(ii) The wire structure is completed by the application of nonmetallic reinforcing members and an overall plastic jacket.

(4) All wires sold to RUS borrowers for projects involving RUS loan funds under §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704 must be accepted by RUS Technical Standards Committee "A" (Telecommunications). For wires

manufactured to the specification of §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704, all design changes to an accepted design must be submitted for acceptance. RUS will be the sole authority on what constitutes a design change.

(5) Materials, manufacturing techniques, or wire designs not specifically addressed by §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704 may be allowed if accepted by RUS. Justification for acceptance of modified materials, manufacturing techniques, or wire designs must be provided to substantiate product utility and long term stability and endurance.

(b) The American National Standard Institute/Insulated Cable Engineers Association, Inc. (ANSI/ICEA) S-89-648-1993 Standard For Telecommunications Aerial Service Wire, Technical Requirements referenced throughout §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704 is incorporated by reference by RUS. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993 are available for inspection during normal business hours at RUS, room 2845, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-1500 or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC. Copies are available from ICEA, P. O. Box 440, South Yarmouth, MA 02664, telephone number (508) 394-4424.

§ 1755.702 Copper coated steel reinforced (CCSR) aerial service wire.

(a) *Conductors.* (1) Each conductor shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 2.1 through 2.1.5.

(2) Factory joints in conductors shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 2.1.6.

(b) *Conductor insulation.* (1) The raw materials used for the conductor insulation shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.1.1.

(2) The raw materials shall be accepted by RUS prior to their use.

(3) The finished conductor insulation shall be free from holes, splits, blisters, or other imperfections and shall be as smooth as is consistent with best commercial practice.

(4) The finished conductor insulation shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 3.1.5 through 3.1.5.4.

(5) The insulation shall have a minimum spot thickness of not less than 0.9 millimeters (mm) (0.03 inches (in.)) at any point.

(c) *Wire assembly.* (1) The two conductors shall be insulated in parallel to form an integral configuration.

(2) The finished wire assembly shall be either a flat or a notched oval. Other finished wire assemblies may be used provided that they are accepted by RUS prior to their use.

(3) The overall dimensions of the finished wire assembly shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

Diameter	Dimensions			
	Minimum		Maximum	
	mm	in.	mm	in.
Major	5.5	0.22	8.0	0.31
Minor	3.0	0.12	5.0	0.19

(d) *Conductor marking.* The insulated conductors of a finished wire shall be marked in accordance with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.1.4.

(e) *Electrical requirements.* (1) *Conductor resistance.* The direct current (dc) resistance of each conductor in a completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.2.

(2) *Wet mutual capacitance.* The wet mutual capacitance of the completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.3.

(3) *Wet attenuation.* The wet attenuation of the completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.4.

(4) *Wet insulation resistance.* The wet insulation resistance of the completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.5.

(5) *Dielectric strength.* (i) The wet dielectric strength between conductors and between each conductor of the completed CCSR aerial service wire and the surrounding water shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.6.

(ii) The dry dielectric strength between conductors of the completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.7.

(6) *Fusing coordination.* The completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the fusing coordination requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.8.

(7) *Insulation imperfections.* Each length of completed CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.1.9.

(f) *Mechanical requirements.* (1) *Impact test.* (i) All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the unaged impact test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.2.

(ii) All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the aged impact test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.3.

(2) *Abrasion resistance test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the abrasion resistance test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.4.

(3) *Static load test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the static load test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.5.

(4) *Plasticizer compatibility test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the plasticizer compatibility test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.8.

(g) *Environmental requirements.* (1) *Cold temperature handling test.* (i) All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the unaged cold temperature handling test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.2.1.

(ii) All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the aged cold temperature handling test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.2.2.

(2) *Light absorption test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the light absorption test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.2.3.

(3) *Low temperature separation test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the low temperature separation test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.2.4.

(4) *Flammability test.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the flammability test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.3.

(5) *Wire listing.* All CCSR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the listing requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.4.

(h) *Identification marker.* Each length of CCSR aerial service wire shall be identified in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 9.1.4. When surface marking is employed, the color of the initial marking shall be either white or silver.

(i) *Length marking (optional).* (1) Sequentially numbered length marking of the completed CCSR aerial service wire may be used at the option of the

manufacturer unless specified by the end user.

(2) When sequentially numbered length markings are used, the length markings shall be in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 9.1.5. The color of the initial marking shall be either white or silver.

(j) *Durability of marking.* The durability of the marking of the CCSR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 9.1.6.

§ 1755.703 Nonmetallic reinforced (NMR) aerial service wire.

(a) *Conductors.* (1) Each conductor shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 2.2 and 2.2.1.

(2) Factory joints made in the conductors during the manufacturing process shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 2.2.2.

(b) *Conductor insulation.* (1) The raw materials used for the conductor insulation shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 3.2 through 3.2.2.

(2) The finished conductor insulation shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.2.3.

(3) The dimensions of the insulated conductors shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.2.3.1.

(4) The colors of the insulation shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.2.3.2.

(5) A permissible overall performance level of faults in conductor insulation shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.2.4.6. The length count and number of faults shall be recorded. The information shall be retained for a period of 6 months and be available for review by RUS when requested.

(6) Repairs to the conductor insulation during manufacture are permissible. The method of repair shall be accepted by RUS prior to its use. The repaired insulation shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 3.2.3.3.

(7) All repaired sections of insulation shall be retested in the same manner as originally tested for compliance with paragraph (b)(5) of this section.

(8) The colored insulating material removed from or tested on the conductor, from a finished wire shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 3.2.4 through 3.2.4.5.

(c) *Identification of pairs and layup of pairs.* (1) The insulation shall be colored coded to identify:

(i) The tip and ring conductor of each pair; and

(ii) Each pair in the completed wire.

(2) The colors to be used in the pairs together with the pair numbers shall be in accordance with the table specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 4.1.1.

(3) The insulated conductors shall be either layed parallel (two conductor design only) or twisted into pairs.

(4) When using parallel conductors for the two conductor design, the parallel conductors shall be designed to enable the wire to meet the electrical requirements specified in paragraphs (g) introductory text through (g)(9)(ii) of this section.

(5) When twisted pairs are used, the following requirements shall be met:

(i) The pair twists shall be designed to enable the wire to meet the electrical requirements specified in paragraphs (g) introductory text through (g)(9)(ii) of this section; and

(ii) The average length of pair twists in any pair in the finished wire, when measured on any 3 meter (10 foot) length, shall not exceed the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 4.1.

(6) An alternative method of forming the two-pair wire is the use of a star-quad configuration.

(i) The assembly of the star-quad shall be such as to enable the wire to meet the electrical requirements specified in paragraphs (g) introductory text through (g)(9)(ii) of this section.

(ii) The star-quad configuration shall be assembled in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 4.1.2.

(iii) The average length of twist for the star-quad in the finished wire, when measured on any 3 meter (10 foot) length, shall not exceed the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 4.1.

(iv) The color scheme used to provide identification of the tip and ring conductors of each pair in the star-quad shall comply with the table specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 4.1.2.

(d) *Strength members.* The strength members shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 6.1 and 6.1.1.

(e) *Wire jacket.* (1) The jacket shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 5.1 and 5.1.1.

(2) The jacket raw materials shall be accepted by RUS prior to their use.

(f) *Wire assembly.* The finished wire assembly shall be in accordance with

ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 5.1.3 and Figure 5-1.

(g) *Electrical requirements.* (1) *Conductor resistance.* The dc resistance of each conductor in a completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.2.

(2) *Resistance unbalance.* (i) The dc resistance unbalance between the two conductors of any pair in a completed NMR aerial service wire and the average resistance unbalance of all pairs in a Quality Control Lot shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.3.

(ii) The resistance unbalance between tip and ring conductors shall be random with respect to the direction of unbalance. That is, the resistance of the tip conductors shall not be consistently higher with respect to the ring conductors and vice versa.

(3) *Dry mutual capacitance.* The dry mutual capacitance of the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.4, Type 1.

(4) *Pair-to-pair capacitance unbalance.* The pair-to-pair capacitance unbalance as measured on the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.5.

(5) *Attenuation.* (i) The dry attenuation of the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.7.

(ii) The wet attenuation of the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.8.

(6) *Insulation resistance.* (i) The dry insulation resistance of the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.9.

(ii) The wet insulation resistance of the completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.10.

(7) *Wet Dielectric strength.* The wet dielectric strength between conductors and between each conductor of the completed NMR aerial service wire and the surrounding water shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.11.

(8) *Fusing coordination.* The completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the fusing coordination requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.13.

(9) *Crosstalk loss.* (i) The output-to-output far-end crosstalk loss (FEXT) for any pair of completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.14.

(ii) The input-to-input near-end crosstalk loss (NEXT) for any pair of completed NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 7.2.14.

(h) *Mechanical requirements.* (1) *Impact test.* (i) All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the unaged impact test specified in § 1755.702(f)(1)(i).

(ii) All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the aged impact test specified in § 1755.702(f)(1)(ii).

(2) *Abrasion resistance test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the abrasion resistance test specified in § 1755.702(f)(2).

(3) *Static load test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the static load test specified in § 1755.702(f)(3).

(4) *Elongation test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the elongation test specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.7.

(5) *Plasticizer compatibility test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the plasticizer compatibility test specified in § 1755.702(f)(4).

(i) *Environmental requirements.* (1) *Cold temperature handling test.* (i) All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the unaged cold temperature handling test specified in § 1755.702(g)(1)(i).

(ii) All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the aged cold temperature handling test specified in § 1755.702(g)(1)(ii).

(2) *Light absorption test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the light absorption test specified in § 1755.702(g)(2).

(3) *Flammability test.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in accordance with this section shall comply with the flammability test specified in § 1755.702(g)(4).

(4) *Wire listing.* All NMR aerial service wires manufactured in

accordance with this section shall comply with the listing requirements specified in § 1755.702(g)(5).

(j) *Ripcord (optional)*. (1) A ripcord may be used in the NMR aerial service wire structure at the option of the manufacturer unless specified by the end user.

(2) When a ripcord is used it shall comply with the requirements specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 4.2 through 4.2.3.

(k) *Identification marker*. Each length of NMR aerial service wire shall be identified in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 9.1 through 9.1.4. When surface marking is employed, the color of the initial marking shall be either white or silver.

(l) *Length marking (optional)*. (1) Sequentially numbered length marking of the completed NMR aerial service wire may be used at the option of the manufacturer unless specified by the end user.

(2) When sequentially numbered length markings are used, the length markings shall be in accordance with § 1755.702(i)(2).

(m) *Durability of marking*. The durability of the marking of the NMR aerial service wire shall comply with the requirements specified in § 1755.702(j).

§ 1755.704 Requirements applicable to both CCSR and NMR aerial service wires.

(a) *Acceptance testing*. (1) The tests described in §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704 are intended for acceptance of wire designs and major modifications of accepted designs. What constitutes a major modification is at the discretion of RUS. These tests are intended to show the inherent capability of the manufacturer to produce wire products having long life and stability.

(2) For initial acceptance, the manufacturer shall:

(i) Certify that the product fully complies with each paragraph in §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704;

(ii) Agree to periodic plant inspections by RUS;

(iii) Certify whether the product complies with the domestic origin manufacturing provisions of the "Buy American" requirements of the Rural Electrification Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 903 note), as amended (the "REA Buy-American provision");

(iv) Submit at least three written user testimonials concerning field performance of the product; and

(v) Provide any other nonproprietary data deemed necessary by the Chief, Outside Plant Branch (Telecommunications).

(3) In order for RUS to consider a manufacturer's request that a product be

requalified, the manufacturer shall certify not later than June 30 of the year in which requalification is required, that the product:

(i) Fully complies with each paragraph in 7 CFR §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704; and

(ii) Does or does not comply with the domestic origin manufacturing provisions of the REA Buy American provisions. The required certifications shall be dated within 90 days of the submission.

(4) Initial and requalification acceptance requests should be addresses to: Chairman, Technical Standards Committee "A" (Telecommunications), Telecommunications Standards Division, Rural Utilities Service, AG Box 1598, Washington, DC 20250-1598.

(b) *Extent of testing*. (1) *Tests on 100 percent of completed wire*. (i) Each conductor in the completed CCSR and NMR aerial service wire shall be tested for continuity in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 7.1.1 and 7.2.1, respectively;

(ii) Each conductor in the completed CCSR and NMR aerial service wire shall be tested for shorts in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraphs 7.1.1 and 7.2.1, respectively; and

(iii) Each length of completed CCSR and NMR aerial service wire shall be tested for insulation imperfections in accordance with § 1755.702, paragraph (e)(7) and § 1755.703, paragraph (b)(5), respectively.

(2) *Capability tests*. Tests on a quality assurance basis shall be made as frequently as is required for each manufacturer to determine and maintain compliance with:

(i) Performance of the conductors;

(ii) Performance of the conductor insulation and jacket material;

(iii) Sequential marking and lettering;

(iv) Mutual capacitance, capacitance unbalance, attenuation, and crosstalk;

(v) Conductor resistance, resistance unbalance, and insulation resistance;

(vi) Dielectric strength and fusing coordination;

(vii) Impact, abrasion, static load, elongation, and plasticizer compatibility tests; and

(viii) Cold temperature handling, light absorption, low temperature separation, and flammability tests.

(c) *Summary of records of electrical and physical tests*.

(1) Each manufacturer shall maintain suitable summary records for a period of at least 3 years of all electrical and physical tests required on completed wire as set forth in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section. The test data for a particular lot of aerial service wire shall be in a form such that it may be readily

available to the purchaser or to RUS upon request.

(2) Measurements and computed values shall be rounded off to the number of places or figures specified for the requirement according to ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 1.3.

(d) *Manufacturing irregularities*. (1) Repairs to the insulation of CCSR aerial service wires are not permitted in wires supplied to end users under §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704.

(2) Repairs to the jacket of NMR aerial service wires are not permitted in wires supplied to end users under §§ 1755.700 through 1755.704.

(e) *Splicing*. Splicing of completed CCSR and NMR aerial service wires shall comply with the requirement specified in ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 8.1.1.

(f) *Preparation for shipment*. (1) CCSR and NMR aerial service wire shall be shipped either in coils or on reels.

(2) When CCSR and NMR aerial service wires are shipped on reels the following provisions shall apply:

(i) The diameter of the drum shall be large enough to prevent damage to the wire from reeling or unreeling. The reels shall be substantial and so constructed as to prevent damage to the wire during shipment and handling;

(ii) A waterproof corrugated board or other suitable means of protection accepted by RUS prior to its use may be applied to the reel. If the waterproof corrugated board or other suitable material is used for protection, it shall be suitably secured in place to prevent damage to the wire during storage and handling. The use of the waterproof corrugated board or other suitable means of protection shall be at the option of the manufacturer unless specified by the end user;

(iii) The outer end of the wire shall be securely fastened to the reel head so as to prevent the wire from becoming loose in transit. The inner end of the wire shall be securely fastened in such a way as to make it readily available if required for electrical testing. Spikes, staples, or other fastening devices which penetrate the conductor insulation of the CCSR aerial service wire and the jacket of the NMR aerial service wire shall not be used. The method of fastening the wire ends shall be accepted by RUS prior to their use.

(iv) Each length of wire shall be wound on a separate reel;

(v) Each reel shall be plainly marked to indicate the direction in which it should be rolled to prevent loosening of the wire on the reel; and

(vi) Each reel shall be stenciled or labeled on either one or both sides with the following information:

- (A) Customer order number;
- (B) Manufacturer's name and product code;
- (C) Factory reel number and year of manufacture;
- (D) Gauge of conductors and pair size of wire;

(E) Length of wire; and

(F) RUS designation letter "K."

(3) When CCSR and NMR aerial service wires are shipped in coils the following provisions shall apply:

(i) The diameter of the coil shall be large enough to prevent damage to the wire from coiling or uncoiling;

(ii) The nominal length of the wire in a coil shall be 305 meters (1,000 feet). No coil shall be less than 290 meters (950 feet) long or more than 460 meters (1,500 feet) long; however, 25 percent of the total number of coils may be less than 305 meters (1,000 feet);

(iii) The coils of wire shall be wound securely with strong tape in four separate evenly spaced places;

(iv) The coils may be protected from damage by wrapping the coil with heavy paper, burlap, or other suitable material accepted by RUS prior to its use. The use of the heavy paper, burlap, or other suitable means of protection shall be at the option of the manufacturer unless specified by the end user; and

(v) Each coil shall be tagged with the following information:

(A) Customer order number;

(B) Manufacturer's name and product code;

(C) Year of manufacture;

(D) Gauge of conductors and pair size of wire;

(E) Length of wire; and

(F) RUS designation letter "K."

(4) In lieu of wrapping the coil with heavy paper, burlap, or other suitable material, the coil may be packaged in a moisture resistant carton.

(5) When the coils are shipped in moisture resistant cartons, each carton shall be marked with the information specified in paragraphs (f)(3)(v)(A) through (f)(3)(v)(F) of this section.

(6) Other methods of shipment may be used if accepted by RUS prior to their use.

(7) When NMR aerial service wire is shipped, the ends of the wire shall be sealed in accordance with ANSI/ICEA S-89-648-1993, paragraph 9.2.

Dated: December 19, 1995.

Jill Long Thompson,

Under Secretary, Rural Economic and Community Development.

[FR Doc. 95-31453 Filed 12-28-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Part 888

[Docket No. 95N-0176]

Orthopedic Devices: Classification, Reclassification, and Codification of Pedicle Screw Spinal Systems; Extension of Comment Period

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Proposed rule; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is extending to March 4, 1996, the comment period for the proposed rule that published in the Federal Register of October 4, 1995 (60 FR 51946). The document proposed to classify certain unclassified preamendments pedicle screw spinal systems into class II (special controls), and to reclassify certain postamendments pedicle screw spinal systems from class III (premarket approval) to class II. FDA is taking this action in response to several requests for an extension to assure adequate time for preparation of comments.

DATES: Written comments by March 4, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to the Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 12420 Parklawn Dr., rm. 1-23, Rockville, MD 20857.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark N. Melkerson, Center for Devices and Radiological Health (HFZ-410), Food and Drug Administration, 9200 Corporate Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850, 301-594-2036.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the Federal Register of October 4, 1995 (60 FR 51946), FDA published a proposed rule to classify certain unclassified preamendments pedicle screw spinal systems into class II (special controls), and to reclassify certain postamendments pedicle screw spinal systems from class III (premarket approval) to class II. FDA is proposing to place certain pedicle screw spinal systems in class II because the agency believes that sufficient information exists to establish special controls to provide reasonable assurance of its safety and effectiveness.

Interested persons were invited to comment by January 2, 1996. FDA received several requests to extend the comment period, including a request from a United States District Court

Judge presiding over product liability actions concerning orthopedic bone screw products. The court requested that FDA allow a 60-day extension because court orders relating to the disclosure of certain information about pedicle screws may make it difficult for parties involved in the litigation to submit relevant information to FDA by January 2, 1996.

Because FDA wants to provide adequate time for the submission of all relevant information related to these important public health issues, FDA is extending the comment period for 60 days. Accordingly, FDA finds under section 520(d) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360j(d)) that there is good cause for such an extension.

Interested persons may, on or before March 4, 1996, submit to Dockets Management Branch (address above) written comments regarding this proposal. Two copies of any comments are to be submitted, except that individuals may submit one copy. Comments are to be identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Received comments may be seen in the office above between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Dated: December 21, 1995.

Joseph A. Levitt,

Deputy Director for Regulations Policy, Center for Devices and Radiological Health.

[FR Doc. 95-31460 Filed 12-28-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160-01-F

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

33 CFR Parts 62 and 66

[CGD 94-091]

RIN 2115-AF14

Conformance of Uniform State Waterways Marking System and Western Rivers Marking System with the United States Aids to Navigation System and the Maritime Buoyage System of the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is considering changes that would bring the Uniform State Waterways Marking System (USWMS) and the Western Rivers Marking System (WRMS) more into conformance with the U.S. Aids to Navigation System (USATONS) and the