

will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. EPA will not institute a second comment period on this action. Any parties interested in commenting on this action should do so at this time.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing by April 10, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on this action should be addressed to Makeba A. Morris, Chief, Technical Assessment Section, Mailcode 3AP22, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 841 Chestnut Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107. Copies of the documents relevant to this action are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Air Protection Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, 841 Chestnut Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107; Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, 629 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Denis M. Lohman, (215) 566-2192, at the EPA Region III address above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: See the information provided in the Direct Final action of the same title which is located in the Rules and Regulations Section of this **Federal Register**.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*

Dated: February 26, 1998.

Thomas C. Voltaggio,

Deputy Regional Administrator, Region III.

[FR Doc. 98-6278 Filed 3-10-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Parts 52 and 81

[IL145-2b, IL152-2b; FRL-5958-4]

Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plan; Illinois Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Illinois

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: On November 14, 1995, May 9, 1996, June 14, 1996, February 3, 1997, and, October 16, 1997, the State of Illinois submitted State Implementation Plan (SIP) revision requests to meet commitments related to the conditional approval of Illinois' May 15, 1992, SIP submittal for the Lake Calumet (SE Chicago), McCook, and Granite City, Illinois, Particulate Matter (PM) nonattainment areas. The EPA proposes

to approve the portion of the SIP revision requests that applies to the Granite City area. The SIP revision requests correct, for the Granite City PM nonattainment area, all of the deficiencies of the May 15, 1992, submittal (as discussed in the November 18, 1994, conditional approval notice). No action is being taken on the submitted plan revisions for the Lake Calumet and McCook areas at this time. They will be addressed in separate rulemaking actions. On March 19, 1996, and October 15, 1996, Illinois submitted requests to redesignate the Granite City PM nonattainment area to attainment status for the PM National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The EPA is proposing to approve this request, as well as the maintenance plan for the Granite City area which was submitted with the redesignation request to ensure continued attainment of the NAAQS. In the final rules section of this **Federal Register**, the EPA is approving this action as a direct final rule without prior proposal because EPA views this as a noncontroversial action and anticipates no adverse comments. A detailed rationale for the approval is set forth in the direct final rule. If no written adverse comments are received in response to that direct final rule, no further activity is contemplated in relation to this proposed rule. If EPA receives written adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn and all written public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on the proposed rule. EPA will not institute a second comment period on this action. Any parties interested in commenting on this document should do so at this time.

DATES: Written comments on this proposed rule must be received on or before April 10, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be mailed to: J. Elmer Bortzer, Chief, Regulation Development Section, Air Programs Branch (AR-18J), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

Copies of the State submittal and EPA's analysis of it are available for inspection at: Regulation Development Section, Air Programs Branch (AR-18J), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Pohlman, Regulation Development Section, Air Programs Branch (AR-18J), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60604, (312) 886-3299.

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

Dated: January 16, 1998.

David A. Ullrich,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region 5.

[FR Doc. 98-6092 Filed 3-10-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

48 CFR Part 806

RIN 2900-A199

VA Acquisition Regulations: Sealed Bidding and Competitive Proposals

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This document proposes to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulations (VAAR) at 48 CFR 806.401 to delete the provisions which currently state that contracting officers must solicit sealed bids for contracts expected to exceed the small purchase limitation. The term "small purchase limitation" has been superseded in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) with the term "simplified acquisition threshold." Also, the monetary limits for determining when sealed bids are required have been changed in the FAR. The FAR now allows the use of the simplified acquisition procedures of FAR Part 13 for acquisitions of non-commercial items not exceeding \$100,000 and for acquisitions of commercial items not exceeding \$5,000,000. With respect to the proposed changes, there appears to be no reason for having a VAAR threshold requiring sealed bids for contracts at lower monetary amounts than the FAR provides. Under the proposal, the FAR provisions would apply instead of the removed VAAR provisions. The authority to issue solicitations for commercial items under the provisions in the FAR at 48 CFR 13.601 and 13.602 is scheduled to expire January 1, 2000. If the solicitation authority under these provisions expires, the remaining provisions of the FAR would apply.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 11, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Mail or hand deliver written comments to: Director, Office of Regulations Management (O2D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Room 1154, Washington, DC 20420. Comments should indicate that they are submitted