

Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule does not contain information collection requirements that require approval by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507 *et seq.*).

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Department of the Interior has determined that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The submittal which is the subject of this rule is based upon corresponding Federal regulations for which an economic analysis was prepared and certification made that such regulations would not have a significant economic effect upon a substantial number of small entities. Accordingly, this rule will ensure that existing requirements previously promulgated by OSM will be implemented. In making the determination as to whether this rule would have a significant economic impact, the Department relied upon the data and assumptions in the analyses for the corresponding Federal regulations.

Unfunded Mandates

This rule will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on any governmental entity or the private sector.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 916

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.

Dated: March 27, 1998

Brent Wahlquist,

Regional Director, Mid-Continent Regional Coordinating Center.

[FR Doc. 98-8891 Filed 4-3-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-05-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement****30 CFR Part 920**

[MD-041-FOR]

Maryland Regulatory Program

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; reopening of public comment period.

SUMMARY: OSM is reopening the public comment period on a proposed amendment to the Maryland regulatory program (hereinafter the "Maryland program" under the Surface Mining

Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). The proposed amendment consists of changes to provisions of the Maryland regulations pertaining to bonding. The amendment is intended to revise the Maryland program to be consistent with the corresponding Federal regulations and SMCRA.

DATES: Written comments must be received by 4:00 p.m. E.S.T. April 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and requests to speak at the hearing should be mailed or hand delivered to George Rieger, Program Manager, at the address listed below.

Copies of the Maryland program, the proposed amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings, and all written comments received in response to this document will be available for public review at the addresses listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Each requester may receive one free copy of the proposed amendment by contracting OSM's Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.

George Rieger, Program Manager, OSM, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, 3 Parkway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15220, Telephone: (412) 937-2153
Maryland Bureau of Mines, 160 South Water Street, Frostburg, Maryland 21532, Telephone: (301) 689-4136

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Rieger, Program Manager, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, at (412) 937-2153.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background on the Maryland Program**

On December 1, 1980, the Secretary of the Interior conditionally approved the Maryland program. Background information on the Maryland program, including the Secretary's findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval can be found in the December 1, 1980, **Federal Register** (45 FR 79449). Subsequent actions concerning the conditions of approval and program amendments can be found at 30 CFR 920.12, 920.15, and 920.16.

II. Description of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated March 6, 1997 (Administrative Record No. MD-552.18), Maryland submitted a proposed amendment to its program pursuant to SMCRA in response to required amendments at 30 CFR 920.16 (h), (i), (j), and (n). Maryland is revising the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) at section 26.20.14.01B—Performance

Bonds and is formally submitting an actuarial study which reviews the adequacy of its alternative bonding system. Specifically, Maryland proposes to require that a performance bond be conditioned upon the permittee faithfully performing every requirement of Subtitle 5 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the Regulatory Program, the permit, and the reclamation plan. The proposed amendment was announced in the March 25, 1997, **Federal Register** (62 FR 14079). The notice did not clarify that Maryland's alternative bonding system was originally submitted with the understanding that it would cover acid mine drainage. Maryland has since adopted a policy that will limit the liability of the alternative bonding system by increasing the permittee's individual bond amount where unanticipated acid mine drainage develops on a site.

Further, Maryland has now submitted proposed changes to its program found at the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.20.14.05.03 and 26.20.14.05.04. In 1991, OSM approved changes to former COMAR 08.13.09.15C and 08.13.09.15D (56 FR 63649, December 5, 1991). (Since 1991, Maryland has restructured its regulations and former COMAR 08.13.09.15C is now COMAR 26.20.14.05.03 and former COMAR 08.13.09.15D is now COMAR 26.20.14.05.04). However, Maryland subsequently chose not to promulgate these approved changes. Instead, it now proposes to readopt the language now found at COMAR 26.20.14.05.03 and COMAR 26.20.14.05.04. Section .03 provides that the amount of performance bond be based upon the estimated cost to perform the reclamation required to achieve compliance with the regulatory program and the requirements of the permit in the event of a forfeiture. In addition, the proposed rule establishes a separate bond for revegetation in the amount of \$600 per acre of affected land and a general bond in the amount of \$1500 per acre for the approved open acre limit.

COMAR 26.20.14.05.04 requires that the amount of the performance bond be adjusted as acreage in the permit are revised, methods of mining operation change, standards of reclamation change, or when the cost of reclamation or restoration work changes.

III. Public Comment Procedures

In accordance with the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), OSM is seeking comments on whether the proposed amendment satisfies the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If the amendment is deemed

adequate, it will become part of the Maryland program.

Written Comments

Written comments should be specific, pertain only to the issues proposed in this rulemaking, and include explanations in support of the commenter's recommendations. Comments received after the time indicated under **DATES** or at locations other than the Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center will not necessarily be considered in the final rulemaking or included in the Administrative Record.

IV. Procedural Determinations

Executive Order 12866

This rule is exempted from review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review).

Executive Order 12988

The Department of the Interior has conducted the reviews required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform) and has determined that, to the extent allowed by law, this rule meets the applicable standards of subsections (a) and (b) of that section. However, these standards are not applicable to the actual language of State regulatory programs and program amendments since each such program is drafted and promulgated by a specific State, not by OSM. Under sections 503 and 505 of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1253 and 1255) and 30 CFR 730.11, 732.15, and 732.17(h)(10), decisions on proposed State regulatory programs and program amendments submitted by the States must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

National Environmental Policy Act

No environmental impact statement is required for this rule since section 702(d) of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1292(d)) provides that agency decisions on proposed State regulatory program provisions do not constitute major Federal actions within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

Paperwork Reduction Act

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Regulatory Flexibility Act

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Unfunded mandates

This rule will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on any governmental entity or the private sector.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 920

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.

Dated: March 26, 1998.

Allen D. Klein,

Regional Director, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.

[FR Doc. 98-8894 Filed 4-3-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 20

46 CFR Part 5

[USCG-98-3472]

RIN 2115-AF59

Rules of Practice, Procedure, and Evidence for Administrative Proceedings of the Coast Guard

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard seeks to improve its adjudication process. This improvement would also affect certain actions involving merchant mariners. First, the proposed rule would consolidate all Coast Guard adjudicative procedures to include the following: the suspension and revocation (S&R) of merchant mariners' licenses, certificates of registry, and documents and the

procedures involving class II civil penalties. Second, the proposed rule would eliminate unnecessary procedures from S&R proceedings. The Coast Guard expects the proposed rule to facilitate the efficient use of administrative resources relating to Coast Guard adjudication. It would save time, effort, and money for all parties who are or may become involved in Coast Guard actions.

DATES: Comments must reach the Coast Guard on or before May 6, 1998.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments to the Docket Management Facility, [USCG-98-3472], U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, or deliver them to room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this rulemaking. Comments, and documents as indicated in this preamble, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also electronically access the public docket for this rulemaking on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the public docket, contact Carol Kelley, Coast Guard Dockets Team Leader or Paulette Twine, Chief, Documentary Services Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329; for information concerning the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) provisions, contact George J. Jordan, Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Chief Administrative Law Judge, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. His telephone number is 202-267-0006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

The Coast Guard encourages interested persons to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written data, views, or arguments. Persons submitting comments should include their names and addresses, identify this rulemaking [USCG-98-3472] and the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit one copy of all comments and attachments