reasonable opportunity to obtain the same service.[6]

INGAA contends the Commission has established a new procedural requirement for pipeline filings and seeks clarification of the advance notice requirement. INGAA maintains that the Commission introduced this new procedure without seeking industry comment. It further argues that the new procedure is unworkable because it may require pipelines to provide special notice to GISB prior to making a filing under section 4 of the Natural Gas Act (NGA). INGAA maintains that providing advance notice only to some customers could be discriminatory. INGAA requests clarification that pipelines should provide notice to GISB within a reasonable time after they file a notice of a new service with the Commission under section 4 of the NGA. In the alternative, INGAA requests rehearing of the advance notice requirement.

Discussion

In Order No. 587-I, the Commission's goal was to provide shippers with the ability to choose the communication methodology that best fits their business needs. The Commission, therefore, required pipelines to permit shippers to conduct transactions either through on-line transactions via the pipelines' proprietary interactive web site or by using computer-to-computer standardized EDI file transfers. To ensure that both types of shippers are treated without discrimination, the Commission required that all transactions conducted on the pipelines' interactive web site must, whenever feasible, also be available through EDI file transfers. As described in Order No. 587-I, the Commission and GISB already have started a process to ensure that all current transactions that are conducted on pipeline web sites can be accomplished, when feasible, through interactive file transfers.[7]

But that leaves the procedure to be followed when pipelines, in the future, develop new electronic transactions to be conducted on their interactive web sites. The Commission's policy, as articulated in Order No. 587-I, is that whenever pipelines begin to develop new interactive transactions, they must at the same time develop a method by which the transactions can be accomplished using EDI file transfer so that shippers using EDI are given a comparable opportunity to accomplish the transactions electronically. Moreover, in order to ensure consistency in the standardized EDI file transfers, pipelines must keep GISB informed of the pipelines' proposed EDI solutions during the course of development, so that GISB can review the pipelines' proposed approaches to ensure that they are consistent with GISB's standards.

In Order No. 587–I, the Commission stated that the pipelines should file, pursuant to section 4 of the Natural Gas Act, whenever they propose to implement a new electronic transaction. Upon reconsideration, however, the Commission has determined that it is not necessary for pipelines to make a section 4 filing to effectuate the Commission's policy. Instead, pipelines must post on their interactive web sites a notice of the new transaction along with the method of accomplishing that transaction using EDI file transfer. Pipelines also must make an informational filing with the Commission when they implement the new transaction and should, in that filing, detail the efforts they have made to develop an acceptable EDI file transfer capability, including the amount of advance notice they have provided to GISB of the file transfer capability they have proposed.

The Commission can use this informational filing to monitor the pipelines' compliance with Commission policy to determine whether the policy is working or whether further Commission action is necessary. In addition, shippers who are unable to use, or are having difficulty with, pipeline EDI file transfers can make use of the Commission's Enforcement Hotline or the complaint process to bring these to the Commission's attention.

In its rehearing request, INGAA contends that providing GISB with notice of a pipeline's electronic transactions before the pipeline makes its section 4 filing is improper because it would prematurely disclose to certain parties the contents of the section 4 filing. Since the Commission is no longer requiring pipelines to make section 4 filings to implement new electronic transactions, INGAA's concern about premature disclosure of a pipeline's section 4 filing is no longer material.

INGAA further contends that GISB, not the pipelines, should be responsible for developing EDI file transfers. The Commission disagrees. Pipelines must be actively involved in developing file transfer capability and cannot leave that process solely in GISB's hands. When a pipeline is developing a new transaction for its Internet web site, it is responsible for reviewing the current file transfer datasets and determining how its proposed transaction can best be handled through EDI file transfer. The pipeline is the most familiar with its new electronic offering and, therefore, is in the best position to develop a file transfer approach to handling that transaction. The pipeline would then inform GISB of its proposed solution so that GISB can review the pipeline's approach to ensure the approach is the most effective means of integrating the transaction into the standardized datasets.[8]

The Commission Orders

Rehearing is granted and clarification is provided as discussed in the body of the order.

By the Commission.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99–2528 Filed 2–2–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

[6] Order No. 587–I, 63 FR at 53571, III FERC Stats. & Regs. Regulations Preambles ¶ 31,067 at 30,740.

[7] Order No. 587–I, 63 FR at 53570–71, III FERC Stats. & Regs. Regulations Preambles ¶ 31,067 at 30,738, 30,740.

[8] This is similar to the process under GISB standard 1.2.2, where the pipeline and a shipper mutually agreed to datasets which they then submit to GISB for review and implementation. 18 CFR 284.10(b)(1)(i), Nominations Related Standards 1.2.2.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Parts 556 and 558

New Animal Drugs for Use in Animal Feeds; Monensin

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is amending the animal drug regulations to reflect approval of a supplemental new animal drug application (NADA) filed by Elanco Animal Health, Division of Eli Lilly & Co. The supplemental NADA provides for use of monensin Type A medicated articles to make Type B and C medicated cattle feeds to be fed at 0.14 to 0.42 milligram per pound (mg/lb) of body weight per day, to revise feeding directions, to provide added uses for monensin Type C medicated feeds for prevention and control of coccidiosis, and to amend the residue tolerances for monensin residues.

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 3, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Estella Z. Jones, Center for Veterinary Medicine (HFV–135), Food and Drug

Administration, 7500 Standish Pl., Rockville, MD 20855, 301–827–7575.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Elanco Animal Health, Division of Eli Lilly & Co., Lilly Corporate Center, Indianapolis, IN 46285, filed supplemental NADA 95–735 that provides for using Rumensin® (20, 30, 45, 60, 80, and 90.7 grams per pound (g/lb) monensin sodium) Type A medicated articles to make monensin Type B and C medicated cattle feeds. The monensin Type B and C medicated feeds are fed to cattle at 0.14 to 0.42 mg/lb of body weight per day, for feedlot cattle at a maximum of 360 mg/head/day for prevention and control of coccidiosis, for pasture cattle at 50 to 200 mg/head/day for increased rate of weight gain, for mature reproducing beef cattle at 50 to 200 mg/head/day for improved feed efficiency, and for nonveal calves at 50 to 200 mg/head/day for prevention and control of coccidiosis. The supplemental NADA is approved as of December 16, 1998, and the regulations are amended in 21 CFR 558.355(d)(7)(ii), (f)(3)(iii), (f)(3)(vi), and (f)(3)(vii), and by adding (f)(3)(xi), to reflect the approval.

In addition, an acceptable daily intake (ADI) for residues of monensin in edible tissues of cattle has not been previously established, therefore, 21 CFR 556.420 is amended to provide an ADI for monensin residues.

In accordance with the freedom of information provisions of 21 CFR part 20 and 514.11(e)(2)(ii), a summary of safety and effectiveness data and information submitted to support approval of this application may be seen in the Dockets Management Branch (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Under 21 U.S.C. 360b(c)(2)(F)(iii), this supplemental approval for food-producing animals qualifies for 3 years of marketing exclusivity beginning December 16, 1998, because the supplement contains substantial evidence of the effectiveness of the drug involved, any studies of animal safety or, for food-producing animals, human food safety studies (other than bioequivalence or residue studies) required for approval of the supplement and conducted or sponsored by the applicant. The 3 years of marketing exclusivity applies only to use for prevention and control of coccidiosis in pasture cattle, mature reproducing beef cows, and nonveal calves.

The agency has determined under 21 CFR 25.33(a)(1) that this action is of a type that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

List of Subjects

21 CFR Part 556

Animal drugs, Foods.

21 CFR Part 558

Animal drugs, Animal feeds.

Therefore, under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and under authority delegated to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs and redelegated to the Center for Veterinary Medicine, 21 CFR parts 556 and 558 are amended as follows:

PART 556—TOLERANCES FOR RESIDUES OF NEW ANIMAL DRUGS IN FOOD

1. The authority citation for 21 CFR part 556 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 21 U.S.C. 342, 360b, 371.

2. Section 556.420 is revised to read as follows:

§ 556.420 Monensin.

(a) *Acceptable daily intake (ADI).* The ADI for total residues of monensin is 12.5 micrograms per kilogram of body weight per day.

(b) *Tolerances*—(1) *Cattle and goats.* A tolerance of 0.05 part per million is established for negligible residues of monensin in edible tissues of cattle and goats.

(2) *Chickens, turkeys, and quail.* A tolerance for residues of monensin in chickens, turkeys, and quail is not needed.

PART 558—NEW ANIMAL DRUGS FOR USE IN ANIMAL FEEDS

3. The authority citation for 21 CFR part 558 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 21 U.S.C. 360b, 371.

4. Section 558.355 is amended by revising paragraphs (d)(7)(ii), (f)(3)(iii)(*a*) and (f)(3)(iii)(*b*), (f)(3)(vi)(*a*) and (f)(3)(vi)(*b*), (f)(3)(vii)(*a*) and (f)(3)(vii)(*b*), and by adding paragraph (f)(3)(xi) to read as follows:

§ 558.355 Monensin.

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(7) * * *

(ii) Feeding undiluted or mixing errors resulting in high concentrations of monensin has been fatal to cattle.

* * * * *

(f) * * *

(3) * * *

(iii) * * *

(*a*) *Indications for use.* For increased rate of weight gain; for prevention and control of coccidiosis due to *Eimeria bovis* and *E. zuernii.*

(*b*) *Limitations.* Feed to pasture cattle (slaughter, stocker, feeder, and dairy and beef replacement heifers). For increased rate of weight gain, feed at a rate of 50 to 200 milligrams monensin per head per day in not less than 1 pound of feed or, after the 5th day, feed at a rate of 400 milligrams per head per day every other day in not less than 2 pounds of feed. For prevention and control of coccidiosis, feed at a rate of 0.14 to 0.42 milligram per pound of body weight per day, depending on severity of challenge, up to 200 milligrams per head per day. During first 5 days of feeding, cattle should receive no more than 100 milligrams per day in not less than 1 pound of feed.

* * * * *

(vi) * * *

(*a*) *Indications for use.* For improved feed efficiency; for prevention and control of coccidiosis due to *E. bovis* and *E. zuernii.*

(*b*) *Limitations.* Feed to mature reproducing beef cows. Feed as supplemental feed, either hand-fed in a minimum of 1 pound of feed or mixed in a total ration. For improved feed efficiency, feed continuously at a rate of 50 to 200 milligrams monensin per head per day. For prevention and control of coccidiosis, feed at a rate of 0.14 to 0.42 milligram per pound of body weight per day, depending upon severity of challenge, up to a maximum of 200 milligrams per head per day. During first 5 days of feeding, cattle should receive no more than 100 milligrams per head per day.

(vii) * * *

(*a*) *Indications for use.* For improved feed efficiency; for prevention and control of coccidiosis due to *E. bovis* and *E. zuernii.*

(*b*) *Limitations.* For feedlot cattle, feed continuously to provide 50 to 360 milligrams monensin per head per day. For prevention and control of coccidiosis, feed at a rate of 0.14 to 0.42 milligram per pound of body weight per day, depending upon the severity of challenge, up to maximum of 360 milligrams per head per day.

* * * * *

(xi) *Amount per ton.* Monensin, 10 to 200 grams.

(*a*) *Indications for use.* For prevention and control of coccidiosis due to *E. bovis* and *E. zuernii.*

(*b*) *Limitations.* For calves excluding veal calves. Feed at a rate of 0.14 to 1.0

milligram monensin per pound of body weight per day, depending upon the severity of challenge, up to maximum of 200 milligrams per head per day.

* * * * *

Dated: January 13, 1999.

Andrew J. Beaulieu,

Acting Director, Office of New Animal Drug Evaluation, Center for Veterinary Medicine.

[FR Doc. 99–2507 Filed 2–2–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160–01–F

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

26 CFR Parts 54 and 602

[TD 8812]

RIN 1545–AI93

Continuation Coverage Requirements Applicable to Group Health Plans

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) added health care continuation requirements that apply to group health plans. Coverage required to be provided under those requirements is referred to as COBRA continuation coverage. Proposed regulations interpreting the COBRA continuation coverage requirements were published in the **Federal Register** of June 15, 1987 and of January 7, 1998. This document contains final regulations based on these two sets of proposed regulations. The final regulations also reflect statutory amendments to the COBRA continuation coverage requirements since COBRA was enacted. A new set of proposed regulations addressing additional issues under the COBRA continuation coverage provisions is being published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register.** The regulations will generally affect sponsors of and participants in group health plans, and they provide plan sponsors and plan administrators with guidance necessary to comply with the law.

DATES: *Effective Date:* These regulations are effective February 3, 1999.

Applicability Dates: Sections 54.4980B–1 through 54.4980B–8 apply to group health plans with respect to qualifying events occurring in plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2000. See the *Effective Date* portion of this preamble and Q&A–2 of § 54.4980B–1.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Yurlinda Mathis, 202–622–4695. This is not a toll-free number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Paperwork Reduction Act

The collections of information contained in these final regulations have been reviewed and approved by the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3507) under control number 1545–1581. Responses to these collections of information are mandatory in some cases and required in order to obtain a benefit in other cases. Group health plans are required to provide certain individuals a notice of their COBRA continuation coverage rights when certain qualifying events occur and are required to inform health care providers who contact the plan to confirm the coverage of certain individuals of the individuals' complete rights to coverage. To obtain COBRA continuation coverage or extended coverage, certain individuals are required to notify the plan administrator of certain events or that they are electing COBRA continuation coverage, and plans are required to notify certain individuals of insignificant underpayments if the plan wishes to require the individuals to pay the deficiency. This information will be used to advise employers and plan administrators of their obligation to offer COBRA continuation coverage, or an extended period of such coverage; to advise qualified beneficiaries of their right to elect COBRA continuation coverage and of insignificant errors in payment; and to inform health care providers of individuals' rights to COBRA continuation coverage.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a valid control number.

The estimated average annual burden per respondent varies from 30 seconds to 330 hours, depending on individual circumstances, with an estimated average of 14 minutes.

Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and suggestions for reducing this burden should be sent to the Internal Revenue Service, Attn: IRS Reports Clearance Officer, OP:FS:FP, Washington, DC 20224, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Attn: Desk Officer for the Department of the Treasury, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Washington, DC 20503.

Books or records relating to these collections of information must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Generally, tax returns and tax return information are confidential, as required by 26 U.S.C. 6103.

Background

On June 15, 1987, proposed regulations (EE–143–86) relating to continuation coverage requirements applicable to group health plans were published in the **Federal Register** (52 FR 22716). A public hearing was held on November 4, 1987. Written comments were also received. A supplemental set of proposed regulations (REG–209485–86) was published in the **Federal Register** of January 7, 1998 (63 FR 708). No public hearing was requested or held after the publication of the supplemental proposed regulations; written comments were received. After consideration of these comments, after review of the reported court decisions under the parallel COBRA continuation coverage provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and the Public Health Service Act, and based on the experience of the IRS in administering the COBRA continuation coverage requirements, a portion of the regulations proposed by EE–143–86 and REG–209485–86 is adopted as revised by this Treasury decision. The revisions are summarized in the explanation below. Also being published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register** is a new set of proposed regulations, which addresses additional issues.

Explanation of Provisions

Overview

The regulations are intended to provide clear, administrable rules regarding COBRA continuation coverage. The regulations give comprehensive guidance on many questions under COBRA, with a view to enhancing the certainty and reliance available to all parties—including employees, qualified beneficiaries, employers, employee organizations, and group health plans—in determining their COBRA rights and obligations. The guidance is designed to further the protective purposes of COBRA without undue administrative burdens or costs on employers, employee organizations, or group health plans.

For example, the regulations:

- Prevent group health plans from terminating COBRA continuation coverage on the basis of other coverage that a qualified beneficiary had prior to electing COBRA continuation coverage, in accordance with the Supreme Court's