

scientific information on the effects of airborne particulate matter (PM) on the public health and welfare for use in EPA's current review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM.

**DATES:** Comments on the draft chapters must be submitted in writing no later than January 31, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Send the written comments to the Project Manager for Particulate Matter, National Center for Environmental Assessment—RTP (B243-01), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711.

A copy of the revised Chapters 7 and 8 of the *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter* will be available on CD-ROM from NCEA—RTP. Contact Ms. Diane Ray by phone (919-541-3637), fax (919-541-1818), or e-mail ([ray.diane@epa.gov](mailto:ray.diane@epa.gov)) to request these chapters. Please provide the document's title, *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter*, and the EPA numbers for each of the two revised chapters (EPA/600/P-99/002aE, EPA/600/P-99/002bE), as well as your name and address, to properly process your request. Internet users will be able to download a copy from the NCEA home page. The URL is <http://www.epa.gov/ncea/>. Hard copies of the revised chapters can also be made available upon request.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Robert Elias, National Center for Environmental Assessment—RTP (B243-01), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711; telephone: 919-541-4167; fax: 919-541-1818; e-mail: [elias.robert@epa.gov](mailto:elias.robert@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** EPA is in the process of updating and revising, where appropriate, its *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter* as issued in 1996 (usually referred to as the "Criteria Document"). Sections 108 and 109 of the Clean Air Act require that EPA carry out a periodic review and revision, where appropriate, of the air quality criteria (embodied in the Criteria Document) and national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for "criteria" air pollutants such as PM. Details of EPA's plans for the review of the NAAQS for PM were initially announced in a previous **Federal Register** notice (62 FR 55201, October 23, 1997). EPA made a First External Review Draft of the updated *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter* available for review by the Clean Air Act Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) and members of the public in October 1999 (64 FR 57884, October 27, 1999). Following that public review period and

a meeting of the CASAC in December 1999 (64 FR 61875, November 15, 1999), EPA revised the document as appropriate to incorporate CASAC and public comments, as well as to reflect many new studies on the effects of PM that were not available in time for discussion in the First External Review Draft.

EPA then made a Second External Review Draft of the *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter* available for CASAC and public review in April 2001 (66 FR 18929, April 12, 2001).

Following that public review period and a second CASAC meeting in July 2001 (66 FR 34924, July 2, 2001), EPA again revised the document as appropriate to incorporate changes in response to CASAC and public comments and also made further revisions reflecting new studies on effects of particulate matter that had become available between issuance of the First and Second External Review Drafts.

EPA then made a Third External Review Draft of the *Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter* available for CASAC and public review in May 2002 (67 FR 31303, May 9, 2002). Following that public review period and a third CASAC meeting in July 2002 (67 FR 41723, June 19, 2002), EPA again revised the document as appropriate to incorporate revisions in response to CASAC and public comments and also made further revisions reflecting new studies on effects of particulate matter that had become available between issuance of the Second and Third External Review Drafts, as well as reanalyses of certain existing studies occasioned after discovery of problems with applications of statistical software.

EPA made a Fourth External review Draft available for CASAC and public review in June 2003 (68 FR 36985). A public meeting with CASAC was held August 25-26, 2003, during which CASAC reached closure on Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, with only relatively minor final revisions to be made. No further public review is requested on these chapters. However, CASAC did not reach closure on Chapters 7 (toxicology), 8 (human health), and 9 (integrative synthesis), each of which are to be more extensively revised or, in the case of chapter 9, to be significantly restructured.

EPA is now making revised drafts of Chapters 7 and 8 available for CASAC and public review. These two revised draft chapters will be reviewed by CASAC via a publicly accessible teleconference call in late January, 2004 (date and time to be announced in a subsequent **Federal Register** notice). Following that CASAC teleconference,

Chapter 9 will be released for CASAC and public review at a public meeting in early March (date and site to be announced in a later **Federal Register** notice).

Dated: December 22, 2003.

**Peter W. Preuss,**

*Director, National Center for Environmental Assessment.*

[FR Doc. 03-32054 Filed 12-29-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560-50-M**

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7604-4]

### Neurotoxicity of Tetrachloroethylene (Perchloroethylene): Discussion Paper

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of discussion document and plans for conducting a consultation workshop on the Neurotoxicity of Tetrachloroethylene.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the availability of an External Review Draft entitled, "Neurotoxicity of Tetrachloroethylene (Perchloroethylene): Discussion Paper" (EPA/600/P-03/005A). EPA will accept public comments on the paper within 60 days of the date of this notice. The document was prepared by the EPA's National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) within the Office of Research and Development.

This document serves as background material for an EPA-sponsored workshop designed to consult with neurotoxicologists about the potential adverse effects of perchloroethylene. Versar, Inc., an EPA contractor, will convene a panel of experts and conduct a one-day meeting to discuss the available information and related issues in evaluating the neurotoxic potential of perchloroethylene to humans under environmental exposure conditions. Details of the expert consultation meeting will be announced at a later date.

NCEA will consider the opinions of the individual consultants as well as the submitted written public comments in preparing an Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) Toxicological Review of Tetrachloroethylene. The IRIS document, which will evaluate all health effects and will estimate population risks, will be peer-reviewed at a subsequent time.

**DATES:** The sixty-day public comment period begins December 30, 2003, and

ends March 1, 2004. Technical comments must be postmarked by March 1, 2004. An announcement of the date of the consultation meeting will be made in a forthcoming **Federal Register** (FR) notice.

**ADDRESSES:** The draft document is available primarily via the Internet on the National Center for Environmental Assessment's home page at <http://www.epa.gov/ncea> under the What's New and Publications menus. A limited number of paper copies are available from the Technical Information Staff, NCEA; telephone: 202-564-3261; facsimile: 202-565-0050. If you are requesting a paper copy, please provide your name, mailing address, and the document title. Copies are not available from the contractor.

Comments may be submitted electronically, by mail, by facsimile, or by hand delivery/courier. Please follow the detailed instructions as provided in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information on the public comment period, contact the Technical Information Staff, National Center for Environmental Assessment; telephone: 202-564-3261; facsimile: 202-565-0050.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. How To Get a Copy of the Document and Submit Technical Comments**

EPA has established an official public docket for this action under Docket ID No. ORD-2003-0014. The official public docket consists of the documents specifically referenced in this action, any public comments received, and other information related to this action. Although a part of the official docket, the public docket does not include Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. The official public docket is the collection of materials that is available for public viewing at the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket in the Headquarters EPA Docket Center, (EPA/DC) EPA West Building, Room B102, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is (202) 566-1744, and the telephone number for the OEI Docket is (202) 566-1752.

An electronic version of the public docket is available through EPA's electronic public docket and comment system, EPA Dockets. You may use EPA Dockets at <http://www.epa.gov/edocket/> to submit or view public comments,

access the index listing of the contents of the official public docket, and to access those documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once in the system, select "search," then key in the appropriate docket identification number.

Certain types of information will not be placed in the EPA Dockets. Information claimed as CBI and other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute, which is not included in the official public docket, will not be available for public viewing in EPA's electronic public docket. EPA's policy is that copyrighted material will not be placed in EPA's electronic public docket but will be available only in printed, paper form in the official public docket.

For public commenters, it is important to note that EPA's policy is that public comments, whether submitted electronically or in paper, will be made available for public viewing in EPA's electronic public docket as EPA receives them and without change, unless the comment contains copyrighted material, CBI, or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. When EPA identifies a comment containing copyrighted material, EPA will provide a reference to that material in the version of the comment that is placed in EPA's electronic public docket. The entire printed comment, including the copyrighted material, will be available in the public docket.

Public comments submitted on computer disks that are mailed or delivered to the docket will be transferred to EPA's electronic public docket. Public comments that are mailed or delivered to the Docket will be scanned and placed in EPA's electronic public docket. Where practical, physical objects will be photographed, and the photograph will be placed in EPA's electronic public docket along with a brief description written by the docket staff.

You may submit comments electronically, by mail, by facsimile, or by hand delivery/courier. To ensure proper receipt by EPA, identify the appropriate docket identification number in the subject line on the first page of your comment. Please ensure that your comments are submitted within the specified comment period. Comments received after the close of the comment period will be marked "late." Late comments may be considered if time permits.

If you submit an electronic comment as prescribed below, EPA recommends that you include your name, mailing address, and an e-mail address or other

contact information in the body of your comment. Also include this contact information on the outside of any disk or CD ROM you submit, and in any cover letter accompanying the disk or CD ROM. This ensures that you can be identified as the submitter of the comment and allows EPA to contact you in case EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties or needs further information on the substance of your comment. EPA's policy is that EPA will not edit your comment, and any identifying or contact information provided in the body of a comment will be included as part of the comment that is placed in the official public docket, and made available in EPA's electronic public docket. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment.

Your use of EPA's electronic public docket to submit comments to EPA electronically is EPA's preferred method for receiving comments. Go directly to EPA Dockets at <http://www.epa.gov/edocket>, and follow the online instructions for submitting comments. To access EPA's electronic public docket from the EPA Internet Home Page, select "Information Sources," "Dockets," and "EPA Dockets." Once in the system, select "search," and then key in Docket ID No. ORD-2003-0014. The system is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity, e-mail address, or other contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment.

Comments may be sent by electronic mail (e-mail) to [ORDocket@epa.gov](mailto:ORDocket@epa.gov), Attention: Docket ID No. ORD-2003-0014. In contrast to EPA's electronic public docket, EPA's e-mail system is not an "anonymous access" system. If you send an e-mail comment directly to the Docket without going through EPA's electronic public docket, EPA's e-mail system automatically captures your e-mail address. E-mail addresses that are automatically captured by EPA's e-mail system are included as part of the comment that is placed in the official public docket, and made available in EPA's electronic public docket.

You may submit comments on a disk or CD ROM that you mail to the OEI Docket mailing address. These electronic submissions will be accepted in WordPerfect, Word, or ASCII file format. Avoid the use of special characters and any form of encryption.

If you provide comments in writing, please submit one unbound original with pages numbered consecutively, and three copies of the comments. For attachments, provide an index, number

pages consecutively with the comments, and submit an unbound original and three copies.

In addition to submitting written comments on the discussion paper, you will also have an opportunity at the consultation workshop to ask the experts their opinions and/or clarification of each issue to be discussed at the workshop. Details of the workshop will be announced in a forthcoming **Federal Register** Notice.

## II. Information on the Document

This discussion document and the consultation workshop of neurotoxicology experts are part of the preparation of an IRIS Toxicological Review of Tetrachloroethylene (Perchloroethylene, or perc) by NCEA. In a review of the published literature, NCEA has found that impairment of visual information processing and other adverse neurobehavioral effects have been observed in several studies of employees working in dry cleaning and metal degreasing facilities using perc. Two studies of people living near dry cleaning facilities have also shown neurological effects, and their exposures have been at lower concentrations than the occupationally exposed workers. The discussion document reviews the published reports of neurotoxic effects of perc in humans and animals and discusses the strengths and limitations of the evidence of neurotoxicity. NCEA decided to seek consultation of experts in neurotoxicology to get their opinions about whether these findings for perc and similar findings for other agents imply that perc exposure to the general population results in an appreciable risk of deleterious neurological effects.

Dated: December 22, 2003.

**Peter W. Preuss,**

*Director, National Center for Environmental Assessment.*

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## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[CC Docket No. 96-45; DA 03-3105]

### NPCR, Inc. d/b/a Nextel Partners Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Tennessee

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice; solicitation of comments.

**SUMMARY:** In this document, the Wireline Competition Bureau sought

comment on the Nextel Partners Tennessee (Nextel Partners TN) petition. Nextel Partners TN seeks designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) to receive federal universal service support for service offered in non-rural wire centers currently served by BellSouth and portions of the rural study area served by United Inter MT-TN (United).

**DATES:** Comments are due on or before January 9, 2004. Reply comments are due on or before January 23, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, 445 Twelfth Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554. See Supplementary Information for further filing instructions.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Karen Franklin, Attorney, Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, (202) 418-7400, TTY (202) 418-0494.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a summary of the Commission's public notice, CC Docket No. 96-45, released October 7, 2003. On June 12, 2003, NPCR, Inc. d/b/a Nextel Partners (Nextel Partners TN) filed with the Commission a petition under section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. In particular, Nextel Partners TN seeks designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) to receive federal universal service support for service offered in those portions of Nextel Partners TN's licensed service area located in rural study areas in Tennessee currently served by BellSouth and United Inter MT-TN (United).

Nextel Partners TN contends that the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) does not regulate Commercial Mobile Radio Service and presents a letter from TRA acknowledging its lack of jurisdiction. Hence, according to Nextel Partners TN, the Commission has jurisdiction under section 214(e)(6) to consider and grant its petition. Nextel Partners TN also maintains that it satisfies all the statutory and regulatory prerequisites for ETC designation, and that designating Nextel Partners TN as an ETC will serve the public interest.

In accordance with § 54.207(c) of the Commission's rules, Nextel Partners TN requests that the Commission designate Nextel as an ETC in a service area defined along boundaries that differ from the incumbent rural local exchange carrier's study area boundaries. The service area requested by Nextel Partners TN for ETC designation partially covers United's study area. Nextel Partners TN requests a redefinition of United's rural service

area so each wire center in United's study area is a separate service area. Nextel Partners TN intends to serve each proposed wire center in its entirety. Nextel Partners TN maintains that the proposed redefinition of service areas for ETC purposes is consistent with the factors to be considered when redefining a rural telephone company service area, as enumerated by the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service. (Joint Board). The Wireline Competition Bureau seeks comment on the Nextel Partners TN Petition.

The petitioner must provide copies of its petition to the TRA. The Commission will also send a copy of this public notice to the TRA by overnight express mail to ensure that the TRA is notified of the notice and comment period.

Pursuant to §§ 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments as follows: comments are due January 9, 2004 and reply comments are due January 23, 2004. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) or by filing paper copies. See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121, May 1, 1998.

Comments filed through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>. Generally, only one copy of an electronic submission must be filed. If multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, however, commenters must transmit one electronic copy of the comments to each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions for e-mail comments, commenters should send an e-mail to [ecfs@fcc.gov](mailto:ecfs@fcc.gov), and should include the following words in the body of the message, "get form <your e-mail address>." A sample form and directions will be sent in reply.

Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, commenters must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). The Commission's contractor,