

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Rural Utilities Service****Information Collection Activity;
Comment Request****AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by May 31, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard C. Annan, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-0784. Fax: (202) 720-4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB as a revision to an existing collection. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Richard C. Annan, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1522, Room 5168, 1400 Independence Ave., SW.,

Washington, DC 20250-1522. Fax: (202) 720-4120.

Title: Accounting Requirements for Electric and Telecommunications Borrowers.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0003.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The Agency believes that this is the minimum record retention requirements needed to carry out its due diligence responsibilities in loan underwriting and maintaining loan security. RUS borrowers should understand that they may be subject to additional record retention requirements imposed by other regulatory authorities such as FERC, FCC, State commissions and IRS.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents and Recordkeepers: 1,660.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Number of Hours per Recordkeeper: 36 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 3,320 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Recordkeepers: 29,653 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from MaryPat Daskal, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720-7853, Fax: (202) 720-4120.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 23, 2005.

Curtis M. Anderson,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 05-6136 Filed 3-28-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

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DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by May 31, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Richard Annan, Acting Director, Program Development & Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 5168 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-0784. Fax: (202) 720-4120.

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Comments are invited on (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumption used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques on other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Dawn Wolfgang, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 5166-South, STOP 1522, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Fax: (202) 720-4120. E-mail: dawn.wolfgang@usda.gov.

Title: 7 CFR 1726, Electric System Construction Policies and Procedures.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0107.

Type of Request: Extension of a previously approved collection.

Abstract: In order to facilitate the programmatic interest of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.* (RE Act), and, in order to assure that loans made or guaranteed by RUS are adequately secured, RUS, as a secured lender, has established certain standards and specifications for materials, equipment, and construction of electric systems. The use of standard forms, construction contracts, and procurement procedures helps assure RUS that appropriate standards and