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PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P11-17

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SUBJECT: Reissue of P09-41 - Voluntary Program to Evaluate New or Novel Fire Suppression Agents and Devices Used for Manual Fire Fighting Purposes

**Who should know about this new program?**

Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel, equipment manufacturers, underground mine operators, and miners' representatives should know about the program.

**Why is MSHA issuing this Program Information Bulletin (PIB)?**

MSHA has established a program called the Voluntary Fire Suppression Agent Suitability Program. The program is applicable to fire suppression agents and devices used for manual fire fighting purposes, and is designed to consolidate requests to evaluate "new or novel" fire suppression agents or devices through MSHA's Approval and Certification Center (A&CC).

"New or novel" fire fighting agents would be those products that have been recently introduced into the market place and would not include the well known "traditional" agents such as water; dry chemicals such as monoammonium phosphate (ABC classified multipurpose dry chemical); or aqueous foams such as protein, flouroprotein, AFFF, FFFP, and medium or high expansion

types. New agents may be unique wetting or heat extracting agents or agents that are considered environmentally friendly such as replacements for Halon 1301, Halon 1211, or other fluorocarbon products. "New or novel" devices may contain a combination of both liquid and dry fire suppression agents.

**What will this program do?**

The Voluntary Fire Suppression Suitability Program will enhance the safety of miners in the following ways:

1. It will serve as a central clearinghouse to provide guidance to manufacturers on procedures for the evaluation of "new or novel" fire suppression agents or devices used for manual fire fighting purposes within the mining industry.
2. Initially, it will provide a means for manufacturers to obtain a suitability determination of such "new or novel" fire suppression agents for mine use.

Guidelines have been developed for manufacturers to obtain a suitability determination of fire suppression agents and devices. It identifies to mine operators, miners' representatives, equipment manufacturers, and MSHA enforcement personnel "new or novel" fire suppression agents and devices suitable for mine use.

**Who may participate in this program?**

Manufacturers of "new or novel" fire suppression agents and devices intended for use in manual fire fighting are encouraged to participate.

**What are the benefits of participating?**

For the initial program, manufacturers of "new or novel" fire suppression agents used for manual fire fighting purposes will be able to have their product evaluated to determine suitability for use in mining operations. Subsequently, manufacturers of fire suppression devices used during manual fire fighting efforts will be able to have their product evaluated to determine suitability for use in mining operations. Manufacturers would have a central location for guidance and evaluation. Products that are found to be suitable for mine use may be advertised by a manufacturer as such.

**What are the details of the program?**

The initial program will cover "new and novel" manual fire fighting agents and devices only. The program is not currently applicable to portable fire extinguishers, which are specifically addressed within the current standards. MSHA is currently exploring the development of an evaluation program that will address both manual and automatic fixed fire suppression systems for use in underground fire protection that would utilize new or novel agents.

An application procedure, ASAP 3025 - Guidelines for the Suitability Evaluation of New or Novel Mine Fire Fighting Agents, is available on MSHA's home page at [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov) under Technical Assistance, Product Approval. The application

procedure may also be obtained by calling one of the contact persons referenced in this Program Bulletin. The program is voluntary and a fee is charged for testing the products for suitability. The fire suppression agent for the evaluation must be "new or novel." The manufacturer would need to submit an application containing certain technical, test, and user information, including information intended to substantiate the new or novel nature of the agent.

**How will manufacturers or interested parties know if a "new or novel" fire fighting agent is suitable for mine use?**

A&CC will maintain a list of suitable "new or novel" fire suppression agents used for manual fire fighting purposes. The list will be posted and periodically updated on MSHA's home page at [www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov) under Technical Assistance, Approved Products. A copy of the list may also be obtained by calling one of the contact persons.

**What is the authority for this program?**

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, as amended; 30 C.F.R §§ 75.1107-13; 77.1108-1(b)(1) and (2); 77.1109(e); 56.4200(b)(1); 56.4600(a)(1) and (2); 57.4230(c); 57.4260(c); 57.4263; and 57.4600(a)(1) and (2).

**Who should I contact if I want to participate?**

Technical Support, Approval and Certification Center  
Derrick Tjernlund, (304) 547-2301  
E-mail: [tjernlund.derrick@dol.gov](mailto:tjernlund.derrick@dol.gov)

Michael Hockenberry, (304) 547-2075  
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Coal Mine Safety and Health, Division of Safety  
Charles Carpenter, (202) 693-9532  
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Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health  
Marvin Lichtenfels, (202) 693-9600  
E-mail: [lichtenfels.marvin@dol.gov](mailto:lichtenfels.marvin@dol.gov)

**Is this PIB available on the internet?**

This PIB may be viewed by accessing MSHA's home page ([www.msha.gov](http://www.msha.gov)) and choosing "Compliance Info" and then "Program Information Bulletins."

**Who will receive this PIB?**

Program Policy Manual Holders

Underground Mine Operators

Surface Mine Operators

Miners' Representatives

Mining Product Manufacturers