

September 7, 2001

## FACT SHEET

### PROPOSED RULE TO REDUCE TOXIC AIR EMISSION FROM HYDROCHLORIC ACID PRODUCTION

#### TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a proposed rule to control emissions of toxic air pollutants during hydrochloric acid (HCl) production. Toxic air pollutants, also known as air toxics, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems.
  
- ! Hydrochloric acid is used in a variety of industrial processes including:
  - refining ore for the production of tin and tantalum,
  - pickling and cleaning of metal products,
  - electroplating,
  - cleaning boilers,
  - neutralizing chemically basic systems,
  - manufacturing fertilizers, dyes, textiles and rubber, and
  - preparing various food products.HCl is also used as a laboratory reagent.
  
- ! The proposed rule would affect new, reconstructed, and existing HCl production facilities located or built at a facility considered a major source of air toxics under the Clean Air Act. The rule will only apply to HCl production facilities that produce, store, and transfer for shipping, liquid HCl at a concentration of 10 percent by weight or greater.
  
- ! The proposed rule would limit toxic air emissions from process vents (HCl and chlorine), storage tanks (HCl), and transfer operations (HCl). Owners/operators of equipment with toxic air emissions from leaking equipment in HCl service would be required to prepare and operate according to an equipment leak detection and repair plan.
  
- ! EPA worked with major stakeholders, including representatives from industry and state and local air pollution control agencies in developing the proposal.
  
- ! EPA will take public comment for 60 days starting on publication in the *Federal Register*. EPA will hold a public hearing, if requested, within 30 days of *Register* publication. After carefully considering the comments received, EPA will issue a final rule.

#### BACKGROUND

- ! The Clean Air Act requires EPA to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. For major sources, those with the potential to emit 10 tons or more annually of a listed pollutant or 25 tons or more of a combination of listed pollutants, these rules require the application of strict controls known as maximum achievable control technology.
- ! In 1992, EPA developed a list of industrial categories that will be subject to air toxic emission controls. EPA included HCl production and fume silica production on that list. Fumed silica is a fine white powder used as a thickener, or reinforcing agent in inks, resins, rubber, paints, and cosmetics.

**HEALTH/ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

- ! This proposed rule will protect human health and the environment by reducing air toxic emissions approximately 52 percent. The EPA estimates total annual air toxic reductions of 1,790 tons per year when the rules are fully implemented. The main air toxics reduced are:

<u>Pollutant</u>	<u>Emissions Reductions</u>
HCl	1,200 tons
Chlorine	590 tons

- ! Exposure to HCl and chlorine may produce a wide variety of human health effects including irritation of the lungs, skin, and mucous membranes; dysfunction of the central nervous system; digestive and respiratory problems; and skin irritation.

**COST**

- ! EPA expects that the estimated capital cost associated with the proposed rule is approximately \$10 million. The total annual cost of the proposed rule is approximately \$6 million, which includes an estimate of the annualized costs of controls and monitoring equipment, other operation and maintenance, and the annual labor to comply with the reporting and recordkeeping requirements of the proposed rule once the sources are in compliance.
- ! EPA’s economic analysis shows that the estimated costs associated with the proposed rule are no more than 1.0 percent of the revenues for any of the affected firms. It is likely that the expected reduction in affected HCl output is no more than 0.01 percent or less from the industry. Therefore, the Agency expects no adverse impact to HCl producers as a result of the proposed rule.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- ! To download the proposed rule from EPA's web site, go to "Recent Actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>.
- ! For further information about the proposed rule, contact Mr. Bill Maxwell at EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Rules at 919-541-5430.
- ! Send any comments on the proposed rulemaking (in duplicate if possible) to: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center (6102), Attention: Docket No. A-99-41, Room M-1500, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460. You may also submit comments and data by electronic mail (e-mail) to: [A-and-R-Docket@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:A-and-R-Docket@epamail.epa.gov). Submit electronic comments as an ASCII file to avoid the use of special characters and encryption problems or in WordPerfect® version 5.1, 6.1, or Corel® 8 file format. Electronic comments and data must note the docket number. You may file electronic comments online at many Federal Depository Libraries. Do not submit confidential business information (CBI) by e-mail. See the *Federal Register* notice for more information on how to handle the submittal of CBI.
- ! EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar>.