FACT SHEET

Proposed Amendments to the Air Toxics Standards for Polyether Polyol Production

- On December 10, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed amendments to the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for the Polyether Polyols Production industry (referred to as the PEPO NESHAP).
- This proposed rule, if finalized, would protect public health by significantly reducing the number of people with elevated cancer risks related to emissions of toxic air pollutants from PEPO production facilities.
- These proposed amendments are projected to:
 - reduce ethylene oxide (EtO) emissions by approximately 14 tons per year (tpy);
 - reduce emissions of hazardous air pollutants (HAP) from PEPO production facilities by 157 tpy;
 - reduce excess emissions of HAP from flares by an additional 75 tpy.
- EPA estimates that after the proposed standards are implemented there will be no populations exposed to elevated lifetime cancer risks from these facilities, particularly in communities historically overburdened by air pollution.

BACKGROUND

- PEPO are chemical products used to make lubricants, adhesives, sealants, cosmetics, soaps, and polyurethane foams.
- Hazardous air pollutants (HAP), which are known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health effects, can be emitted at several points in the PEPO production process. In particular, many PEPO facilities emit EtO, which is highly carcinogenic to humans.
- EPA is proposing to strengthen the emission standards for EtO emissions after considering the results of a risk assessment for the PEPO NESHAP.
- This action also proposes more stringent emission standards for all hazardous air pollutants emitted from certain points in the PEPO production process, considering developments in technology since the last review of the NESHAP.
- EPA is proposing to require PEPO facilities that use EtO to monitor the concentrations of EtO at the facility fenceline every five days.
 - If the annual average concentrations are higher than an action level at the fenceline, owners and operators would have to find the source and make repairs.
 - EPA would make fenceline monitoring data public through its WebFIRE database tool.
- Additionally, this action proposes improvements to operational, monitoring and reporting requirements.

• The EPA estimates that complying with these proposed amendments would cost (in 2022 dollars) \$31.0 million in total capital costs and \$18.7 million per year in total annualized costs (including product recovery) nationwide.

RESIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT

- The Clean Air Act (CAA) directs EPA to assess the remaining health risks from each source category to determine whether the standards protect public health with an ample margin of safety and protect against adverse environmental effects.
- EPA conducted a residual risk review of the PEPO Production source category in 2014 and found the standards were health protective. However, our understanding of the toxicity of ethylene oxide (EtO) has changed since 2014, so EPA conducted a second residual risk review in this action.
- Based on our completed risk assessment and available health information, the EPA determined that risks from the PEPO Production source category are unacceptable, primarily driven by EtO emissions.
- This action will address these risks and, as a result, EPA estimates that if the proposed standards are implemented there will be no populations exposed to excess cancer risks.

TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

- The CAA requires that, every eight years, the EPA review and revise the standards, if necessary, to account for improvements in air pollution controls and/or prevention. EPA last conducted this technology review in 2014.
- The CAA requires EPA to assess, review and revise air toxics standards as necessary, taking into account developments in practices, processes and control technologies.
- The technology review identified cost-effective developments in practices, processes and control technologies for process vents, storage vessels, heat exchange systems, and equipment leaks, and we are proposing amendments under the technology review to control these emission sources further.

HOW TO COMMENT

- The EPA will accept comments for 60 days after the proposal is published in the *Federal Register*.
- Comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2023-0282 may be submitted via one of the following methods:
 - Go to <u>https://www.regulations.gov/</u> and follow the online instructions for submitting a comment.
 - Send comments by email to: *a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov*, Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2023-0282.
 - Fax your comments to 202-566-9744, Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2023-0282.
 - Mail your comments to: EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency,

Mail Code: 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460, Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2023-0282.

 Deliver comments in person to: EPA Docket Center, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW, Room 3334, Washington, DC.
Note: In-person deliveries (including courier deliveries) are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation. Special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Interested parties can download a copy of the proposal from the EPA's website at the following address: <u>https://www.epa.gov/stationary-sources-air-pollution/polyether-polyols-production-national-emission-standards-hazardous</u>.
- This action and other background information are also available online at https://www.regulations.gov/, the EPA's electronic public docket and comment system, or in hardcopy at the EPA Docket Center's Public Reading Room. Materials for this proposed action can be accessed using Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2023-0282.