United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Solid Waste and
Emergency Response (OS-305)
Washington, DC 20460

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Office of Solid Waste

EPA

Environmental Fact Sheet

EPA PROPOSES MODIFICATIONS TO THE DEFINITION OF "WASTEWATER TREATMENT UNIT"

BACKGROUND

The wastewater treatment unit exclusion (45 FR 76074, November 17, 1980) exempts these units from both the standards for hazardous waste management facilities and the permitting requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Since the promulgation of this exclusion, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received numerous requests to determine if certain thermal treatment devices meet the definition of "wastewater treatment unit" and, therefore, currently do not require a RCRA permit.

ACTION

EPA is proposing to modify the definition of "wastewater treatment unit" to clarify which devices are eligible for the exclusion. The revised definition would specifically exclude devices using thermal treatment processes (such as incinerators), with the exception of sludge dryers. Sludge dryers have different purposes than other thermal treatment sludge incinerators in that they are used to evaporate water rather than to destroy waste. Under this proposed action, sludge dryers treating hazardous waste must meet the definition of wastewater treatment unit in order to be exempt from regulation. EPA is also proposing a definition for sludge dryers that will clearly distinguish them from other types of thermal treatment units. The revised definition would maintain EPA's long-standing policy that thermal treatment units, with the exception of sludge dryers, must be individually permitted under RCRA.

PUBLIC COMMENT

EPA is requesting public comment on this proposed rule. Comments should be submitted to EPA within 60 days of the *Federal Register* notice publication date. For instructions on submitting written comments, please see the *Federal Register* notice. It is available for free by calling the RCRA Hotline or by going to EPA's RCRA Docket in Washington, DC.

CONTACT

For further information, or to order a copy of the *Federal Register* notice, please call the RCRA Hotline Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., EST. The national toll-free number is (800) 424-9346; for the hearing impaired, it is (TDD) (800) 553-7672. In Washington, D.C., the number is (202) 382-3000 or TDD (202) 475-9652. Or write to the RCRA Information Center (OS-305), U.S. EPA, 401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460.