

# **EPA** citizens' bulletin

U S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

## **Noise Limits Set for Interstate Trucks**

Starting next October all heavy duty trucks in interstate commerce will have to meet federal standards for noise.

The rules are the first to be formally adopted by EPA under the Noise Control Act of 1972. About 70,000 vehicles would have to have mufflers or tires replaced, or both, to meet the new limits, EPA officials estimated.

Heavy interstate trucks are mostly diesels. Their main sources of noise are faulty exhaust systems and tires with "pocket tread" patterns, in which enclosed cavities contact the road surface.

EPA has proposed noise control standards for all new medium and heavy-duty trucks, starting with the 1977 model year; and for portable air compressors. Agency experts are working on airport noise control standards and expect to have them in the proposal stage next summer.

## **Chlorine Suspected in Drinking Water Impurities**

Minute quantities of potentially dangerous organic chemicals in New Orleans drinking water were found recently by EPA scientists after a three-month study made at the city's request.

Administrator Russell E. Train promptly announced a nationwide survey of municipal water supplies to determine if other cities had the same problem, what the dangers are, and how to forestall them.

Chlorine gas, widely used to disinfect water, is suspected of being a causative factor. The chlorine kills bacteria, preventing the transmission of disease,

but it may also combine with trace chemicals usually present in surface water to form the hazardous compounds. One of these is chloroform, composed of carbon, hydrogen, and chlorine.

Methods of analysis have only recently become sensitive enough to detect, much less measure, the 66 organic chemicals which EPA found in New Orleans water, Train said. "Undoubtedly these compounds have been present for many years."

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He said there is no immediate danger to New Orleans, which gets its water from the Mississippi River and filters and treats it (including chlorination) until it meets Public Health Service standards. The nationwide study is designed to find the sources of such trace chemicals, to evaluate their health effects, and to study techniques for preventing their formation or removing them from city water systems.

"Should our analysis of other cities' water supplies indicate that there is a significant public health problem, all work toward finding new treatment technology will be accelerated," he said.

## **12-Year Decline Found in Some Air Pollutants**

Significant declines over a 12-year period in certain kinds of air pollution throughout the country were reported last month by EPA. The report was based on air monitoring records going back to 1960.

The pollutants measured were benzene-soluble organics (BSO), which make up only a small fraction of total particulate matter--smoke, dust, and mists--for which EPA has set air quality limits to protect health and welfare. Some BSO compounds can cause cancer in laboratory animals.

BSO compounds are produced primarily by the burning of coal, coal refuse, and wood; the production of coke; and motor vehicle exhausts. The decline in BSO particulates is believed to reflect the phasing out of coal-fired home furnaces and better control of open burning in dumps and coal refuse piles. The decline is expected to continue, and perhaps accelerate, as industrial sources--particularly coke ovens--make process changes and install equipment to reduce the emission of particulates.

The declines were observed in 30 of 32 cities in data gathered from 1960 to 1970 by an EPA predecessor agency, the National Air Pollution Control Administration. These trends were supported by further monitoring done by EPA in 1971 and 1972.

Because BSO pollution is dropping and is expected to drop further, EPA has decided not to set separate standards for these particulates or to try to regulate them separately, apart from all other particulates.

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## **New Rules Would Strengthen Unleaded Gas Enforcement**

New rules to strengthen the enforcement of EPA's requirements concerning unleaded gasoline were proposed by the Agency last month. After a 30-day period for public comment, the regulations are expected to be adopted early next year. They would provide:

- That EPA inspectors make periodic field tests to make sure that fuel from tanks and pumps labeled "unleaded" is really unleaded.
- Prohibition of further sale of "unleaded" fuel found to be contaminated with lead. This ban would apply at once after the inspector's field test.
- Procedures for dealers to protest such test findings and bans and to challenge EPA's assessment of liabilities and penalties. Judgments would be reached in administrative hearings rather than in the courts.
- That fuel dealers supply EPA with reports and records needed to settle the facts in each case.

Gasoline having less than .05 grams of lead per gallon is necessary for cars that have catalytic converters, chemical devices to reduce air polluting emissions in the car's exhaust. Ordinary leaded gasoline soon makes the converters useless.

Converter-equipped 1975 cars have narrow filler pipes on their gas tanks and cannot be filled from standard pumps. Since July, all large gas stations in the country have had to offer unleaded gas, dispensed through small nozzles that fit the narrow filler pipes.

## **Cost of Air Pollution Estimated at \$12.3 Billion Yearly**

Air pollution cost the people of the United States \$12.3 billion in 1970, according to a recent EPA study. This included \$5.8 billion for declines in property values, \$4.6 billion for health costs, and \$1.7 billion and \$200 million for damage to materials and vegetation, respectively.

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The study, made by scientists in the Agency's National Environmental Research Center in North Carolina, gives a range of estimates for the economic effects of different kinds and sources of pollutants. Sum of the "low" estimates is \$6.1 billion and the "high" estimates \$18.5 billion; \$12.3 billion is the mid-range "best estimate."

The total is down from the \$16.1 billion figure for a similar study based on 1968 data. The difference is attributed to having more reliable information for 1970 and to generally lower levels of air pollution. "The Economic Damages of Air Pollution" is available from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402, for \$1.95 a copy.

## **Train Urges Conserving Materials, Recycling Wastes**

Recycling of wastes is a "matter of the highest national priority," EPA Administrator Russell E. Train told an industry group last month.

"Our national practices (in waste reduction and utilization) are primitive," he declared in a speech at the Third National Congress on Waste Management and Resource Recovery in San Francisco. "We must improve them from the point when materials are first extracted from the earth...to the way the final, unreclaimable residues are placed in the ground."

He urged industry to commit its capital and managerial skill in three broad categories: 1) reducing waste at the materials' source, 2) revising traditional throw-away habits, and 3) correcting waste disposal methods that degrade the environment and endanger public health.

Train said that in 1971 packaging accounted for nearly half of all the paper produced in the United States, three-fourths of the glass, 29 percent of the plastic, 14 percent of the aluminum, and 8 percent of the steel. Such packaging cost \$19.5 billion and produced between 40 and 50 million tons of solid waste that year.

"I think industry ought to take a new look at...the reusable or refillable package" and other packaging alternatives, he said. The recycling of all mixed wastes in the nation's large urban areas would be equivalent to 400,000 barrels of oil daily, nearly a third of the Alaskan pipeline's projected flow, he declared.

"To be an energy saver is not only to be an inflation fighter, but a pollution fighter as well."

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## **Briefly Noted**

**WIND TUNNEL**--A wind tunnel for studying how air pollutants spread and dissipate (and sometimes become concentrated) under differing conditions of weather, terrain, tall buildings and city streets was dedicated last month at EPA's research center in North Carolina. Air pollution problems can be studied in the tunnel, using simulated emissions of smoke or gaseous pollutants; scale models of hills, valleys, and buildings; and a controllable, artificial wind.

**THERMAL STANDARDS**--Cooling water discharge requirements for nuclear power plants will be established before construction is started, under a proposed agreement between EPA and the Atomic Energy Commission. Such standards have hitherto been set when the plant is about ready to operate, five or six years after construction begins. The agreement would avoid some costly rebuilding.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JOBS**--Environmental protection creates many more jobs than are lost by the closing of marginally profitable plants because of air and water pollution regulations. About 55,000 persons now work in EPA-financed construction, and that number is expected to rise to 125,000 by mid-1977, according to Russell Train, EPA administrator.

**SST STANDARDS**--Although development of commercial supersonic aircraft has been halted in the United States, EPA last July proposed emission standards for supersonic transports (SSTs), as required by the Clean Air Act of 1970. Hearings on the proposed standards were held last month in Boston. The standards, which would apply to any SST landing in or passing over the U.S., would limit emissions of all such aircraft manufactured after Jan. 1, 1979, and more restrictive controls would apply to aircraft certified after Jan. 1, 1981.

## EPA Enforcement Actions - Pesticides

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- \* Region III, Philadelphia, assessed civil penalties of \$3,200 and \$2,300 against Alben Daniels Chemical Corp., Washington, D. C., for shipping two misbranded and non-registered products for algae control.
  - \* Region IV, Atlanta, issued stop sale orders to four firms for products that were unregistered, misbranded, or both. They were Munsey Products Co., Rock Hill, S. C., and Farmers Hardware, Athens, Ga., both for Guardseal Creosote Wood Preservative (Dark); Southeastern Sanitary Supply Co., Montgomery, Ala., Sessco Brand All-in-One Germicidal Cleaner; and Bionomical Chemicals & Services Inc., Chattanooga, Tenn., Formula 76 Disinfectant Cleaner.
  - \* Region V, Chicago, issued stop sale orders to Chaska Chemical Co., Savage, Minn., for an inadequately labeled Glo-Bol bowl and urinal cleaner; Cenol Co. Libertyville, Ill., for a rodenticide, Cenol Poisoned Wheat, which would not be effective against mice, as claimed on the label; and Amsco Division of Union Oil Co. of California, Minneapolis, Minn., for a product, Union Amsco Barcosote wood preservative, having label recommendations for cancelled uses.
  - \* Region VI, Dallas, assessed civil penalties on two firms: Uddo Co., New Orleans, La., \$3,400 for distributing three unregistered and misbranded products, Sure-Pine Pine Oil, Sure-Mint Disinfectant, and Sure-Klean Bleach; and Scientific Research Corp., Alba, Okla., \$2,000 for shipping an unregistered and misbranded product, Fen-All Concentrate.
  - \* Region VII, Kansas City, ordered a halt to the sale of six 55-gallon drums of an unlabeled weedkiller called WDK, shipped by Construction Chemical Specialty and found at Century Laboratories, Kansas City, Kansas.
  - \* Region VII, Kansas City, assessed a \$1,800 civil penalty on Bonewitz Chemical Co., Burlington, Iowa, for distributing the misbranded and adulterated product, Bonechem Bonsan 353.
  - \* Region IX, San Francisco, assessed Ball Industries, Los Angeles, a civil penalty of \$1,000 for distributing the misbranded Ball Formula 8-13.

## EPA Actions in the Federal Register

Official actions of all Federal agencies appear in the Federal Register, published each weekday by the Government

Printing Office and available at most libraries. Single copies are sold by GPO (Washington, D. C. 20402) for 75 cents each; annual subscriptions are \$45. Below are listed some of 130 EPA actions published from Oct. 21 through Nov. 22.

- Oct. 21--Air pollution emissions standards proposed for steel production in electric arc furnaces (pp. 37465-8) and ferroalloy facilities (pp. 37469-72), procedures for preparing environmental impact statements (pp. 37419-22). 7
- Oct. 22--Regulations adopted for controlling pollution from light-duty diesel trucks (pp. 37609-28); proposed emission standards for the phosphate fertilizer industry (pp. 37601-7).
- Oct. 23--List of 42 applicants for pesticide registration who claim priority in filing supportive data on safety and efficacy (pp. 37669-70); proposed emission standards for primary aluminum plants (pp. 37729-41).
- Oct. 24--Proposed emission standards for coal preparation plants (pp. 37921-4).
- Oct. 25--Proposed amendments to national emission standards for the hazardous air pollutants, asbestos and mercury (pp. 38063-73).
- Oct. 29--Noise standards adopted for interstate motor carriers (pp. 38207-16); proposed noise standards for new, portable air compressors (pp. 38185-206); proposed revisions to air quality implementation plans for Nevada (pp. 38104-12).
- Oct. 30--Proposed noise standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks (pp. 38337-62).
- Oct. 31-- Tolerance limits proposed for residues of the pesticide paraquat on raw fruits and vegetables (p. 38394).
- Nov. 5--Listing of environmental impact statements by Federal agencies, 41 in draft and 14 final, with EPA comments (pp. 39085-8); 21 pesticide registration applicants claiming priority in filing supportive data (pp. 39088-9).
- Nov. 6--Proposed rule change in DDT tolerance permitted in apple pomace fed to livestock (pp. 39295-6); permission granted for temporary use of spring-loaded cyanide traps to control coyotes in 28 counties of Nebraska (pp. 39315-6).
- Nov. 11--Proposed changes in ocean dumping rules to permit burials at sea and the sinking of target ships by the U.S. Navy (pp. 39739-40).

Nov. 12--Revised standards adopted for opacity of emissions from Portland cement plants (pp. 39872-5); proposed rules for enforcing unleaded gasoline requirements (pp.39981-89) and procedures for challenging assessment of liabilities and penalties (39992-40001).

Nov. 14--Proposed effluent guidelines for timber products processing (pp. 40235-42); proposed guidelines for voluntary self-certification by manufacturers of auto parts that affect automotive emissions (pp. 40192-4); limited permission granted to use cyanide traps to control coyotes in central and western Kansas (pp. 40194-6).

Nov. 15--Proposed revisions of New Jersey's air pollution control plans to require retrofit of control devices on heavy-duty gasoline-powered trucks (pp. 40306-8) and new requirements for organic solvents (40408-10); waste treatment management plans approved for Denver, Chattanooga, Oklahoma City, and Nashville areas (p. 40325).

Nov. 18--Time extended for public comment on proposed emission standards for coal preparation, ferroalloy production, phosphate fertilizer, aluminum, and electric arc furnace plants (pp. 40511-2).

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