

May 23, 2002

## **FACT SHEET**

### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULE REDUCING TOXIC AIR EMISSIONS FROM CHROMIUM ELECTROPLATING AND CHROMIUM ANODIZING TANKS**

#### **TODAY'S ACTION**

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing amendments to its national emission standards for chromium emissions from hard and decorative chromium electroplating and chromium anodizing tanks. These emission standards were put into place to reduce air emissions of toxic air pollutants. The purpose of this amendment is to allow for new equipment and control techniques that have been developed since the promulgation of the standard.
- Toxic air pollutants, or air toxics, are known to cause cancer and other serious health effects.
- EPA will accept comment on the proposal for 60 days after publication of the proposed amendment in the *Federal Register*. After reviewing and carefully considering all comments, the Agency anticipates issuing the final rule in 2002.

#### **BACKGROUND**

- EPA worked with major stakeholders, including representatives from the industry, in developing this proposal. This action implements a recommendation from the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) Metal Finishing subcommittee. The CSI was established by former Administrator Browner to bring together a broad spectrum of stakeholders to advise, consult with and make recommendations on matters pertaining to improving the nation's pollution prevention and control programs. The CSI participants included independent experts selected from among the national and local environmental interest groups, industry, State and local governments, and other stakeholders such as labor organizations, environmental justice organizations, and the Federal government.
- The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, require EPA to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics.
- For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures known as maximum achievable control technology.

- EPA identified chromium electroplating as one of the industrial sources emitting one or more toxic air pollutants.
- Hard chromium electroplating processes deposit a relatively thick layer of chromium directly onto a base metal (usually steel) to provide characteristics such as hardness, wear and corrosion resistance. In decorative chromium electroplating, a thinner layer of chromium is plated onto the base metal to provide a bright surface with wear and tarnish resistance. In the chromium anodizing process, an oxide layer is coated onto aluminum to provide corrosion resistance.
- Chromium air emissions from electroplating and anodizing processes are suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects in humans.
- EPA issued national emission standards for chromium emissions from hard and decorative chromium electroplating and chromium anodizing tanks were issued in 1995.

### **BENEFITS AND COST**

- The proposed rule amendments will not result in any measurable change in emission reductions, but will provide owners and operators alternatives to existing requirements. The existing alternatives will still be available for those owners and operators that choose to use them. These changes will provide more flexibility to many affected small businesses.

### **WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED RULE AMENDMENTS**

- The proposed rule amendments include two changes which may apply to hard chromium electroplating facilities. The first would add new requirements that accommodate the use of fume suppressants (fume suppressants are compounds which are added to the electroplating solution to reduce misting) for controlling chromium emissions from hard chromium electroplating tanks. The second would add an alternative standard to the existing limit for air emissions of chromium for hard chromium electroplating tanks equipped with enclosing hoods which completely cover the surface of the plating tank.
- This action also proposes to change the definitions of chromium electroplating tank and chromium anodizing tank to include all ancillary equipment necessary to accomplish electroplating or anodizing. EPA is proposing this change to maintain reductions in chromium air emissions while preventing existing electroplaters and anodizers from unnecessary regulatory requirements.
- This action also proposes to amend the monitoring requirements for composite mesh pads by expanding the acceptable pressure drop range. EPA is also proposing to make several

editorial changes which either correct or clarify rule language. These editorial changes would not effect the rule's applicability or requirements.

- The recordkeeping and reporting requirements in the proposed rule are similar to those required for other EPA air toxics regulations.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- To download a copy of the proposed rule, go to EPA's World Wide Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/>.
- For further information about the proposed rule amendments, contact Mr. Phil Mulrine of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5289 or [mulrine.phil@epa.gov](mailto:mulrine.phil@epa.gov).
- Send any comments on the proposed rulemaking (in duplicate if possible) to: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center (6102), Attention: Docket No. A-88-02, 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 (Docket No. A-88-02). You may file electronic comments online at many Federal Depository Libraries. *Do not submit confidential business information by e-mail. See the Federal Register notice for more information on how to handle the submittal of confidential business information.*
- 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/>.