

FACT SHEET

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

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! On July 8, 2004 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing final rule amendments to its national emission standards to control chromium emissions from hard and decorative chromium electroplating and chromium anodizing tanks.
- ! The emission standards were put into place to reduce emissions of toxic air pollutants. The purpose of the amendments is to allow for new equipment and control techniques that have been developed since the promulgation of the standards. Toxic air pollutants, or air toxics, are known to cause cancer and other serious health effects.
- ! These amendments include two changes which may apply to hard chromium electroplating facilities. The first adds 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 adds 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 changes the definitions of chromium electroplating tank and chromium anodizing tank to include all ancillary equipment necessary to accomplish electroplating or anodizing. EPA is making this change to maintain reductions in chromium air emissions while preventing existing electroplaters and anodizers from unnecessary regulatory requirements.
- ! This action also amends the monitoring requirements for composite mesh pads by expanding the acceptable pressure drop range. EPA is also making several editorial changes which either correct or clarify rule language. These editorial changes do not effect the rule's applicability or requirements.

BACKGROUND

- ! EPA worked with major stakeholders, including representatives from the industry, in developing the rule amendments. This action implements a recommendation from the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) subcommittee on metal finishing. EPA established the CSI 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 requires 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 those air toxics. EPA identified chromium electroplating and anodizing as one of the industrial sources emitting toxic air pollutants.
- ! 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 in 1995.
- ! 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.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND COST

- ! The 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. The changes will provide more flexibility to many affected small businesses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ! To download a copy of the rule amendments, go to EPA's World Wide Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/> under newly proposed or issued rules.
- ! For further information about the 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.
- ! 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/>.