

March 6, 2003

## FACT SHEET

### NATIONAL EMISSION STANDARDS FOR HAZARDOUS AIR POLLUTANTS: PRIMARY ALUMINUM REDUCTION PLANTS

#### TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to amend the final rule that controls emissions of air toxics from primary aluminum reduction plants. The rule is based on the maximum achievable level of control technology commonly known as MACT (Maximum Achievable Control Technology). Air toxics, also called hazardous air pollutants, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems in humans.
  
- ! Primary aluminum reduction plants produce molten aluminum metal (virgin aluminum) from alumina ore. Other types of manufacturing facilities, such as secondary aluminum plants, use aluminum metal to make a variety of products such as cans, aircraft and automotive products, and construction materials.
  
- ! Today's proposed amendments would:
  - c revise the emission limits for one pollutant from one subcategory of emissions sources,
  - c revise the compliance provisions for new and reconstructed affected sources and for startup of certain equipment that has been idled, and
  - c resolve compliance issues that have arisen since the final rule was issued.
  
- ! EPA will accept public comment on the proposed amendments through 60 days after publication in the Federal Register.

#### HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- ! The existing regulation reduces emissions of polycyclic organic matter (POM) and total fluoride, a more easily measured substitute or surrogate for hydrogen fluoride. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (included in POM) can cause carcinogenic, reproductive, and developmental effects. Long-term inhalation exposure to low levels of hydrogen fluoride has been reported to cause irritation and congestion of the nose, throat, and lungs. Higher levels of fluorides can result in more severe human health and environmental damage.
  
- ! The MACT level of control is currently in place at the one plant affected by this action; consequently, there would be no change in emissions or health risk as a result of the proposed amendments.

## **WHAT THE AMENDMENTS REQUIRE**

- ! This amendment applies to several subcategories of sources at primary aluminum reduction facilities: potlines, anode bake furnaces, and pitch storage tanks.
- ! A potline is a group of 100 to 200 cells or "pots" that are connected in electrical series to produce molten aluminum by electrolysis of alumina ore. An anode bake furnace is used to heat or bake a mixture of petroleum coke and coal tar pitch to make the carbon anode that is used in each reduction cell. The pitch storage tank stores the heated coal tar pitch prior to mixing with coke to form anodes.
- ! The POM emission limits for vertical stud Soderberg potlines would be revised. Only one plant, located in Montana, would be affected. The proposed amendments include dates for conducting performance tests to demonstrate initial compliance. For a new or reconstructed source the proposed amendments would provide up to 180 days after startup for a potline, 45 days for an anode bake furnace, and 30 days for a pitch storage tank.
- ! For startup of existing potlines and anode bake furnaces that have been shut down, plants would have up to 180 days after startup to demonstrate compliance for potlines and 45 days for anode bake furnaces. The proposed amendments also would require plants to notify their regulatory authority at least 30 days before restarting an affected source that has been shutdown.

## **COST OF THE PROPOSED RULE**

- ! No additional costs are associated with the proposed amendments.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- ! To download a copy of the proposed amendments, go to the "Recent Actions" page on EPA's Worldwide Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/>.
- ! For further information about the proposal, contact Steve Fruh in EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-2837 or [fruh.steve@epa.gov](mailto:fruh.steve@epa.gov).
- ! By U.S. Postal Service, send comments on the proposed amendments (in duplicate, if possible) to: Primary Aluminum NESHAP Docket, EPA Docket Center (Air Docket), U.S. EPA West, Mailcode 6102T, Room B-108, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460, Attention Docket ID OAR-2002-0031. Deliver comments in person or by courier (in duplicate, if possible) to: EPA Docket Center, Room B-108, U.S. EPA West, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004, Attention Docket ID OAR-2002-0031.

You may also submit comments and data by electronic mail (e-mail) to: *air-and-r-docket@epa.gov*. Submit electronic comments in WordPerfect® file format. Electronic comments and data must note the docket number (Docket ID OAR-2002-0031). You may file electronic comments online at many Federal Depository Libraries. Do not submit confidential business information (CBI) by e-mail. See the Federal Register notice for more information on how to handle CBI.

- ! EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page at <http://www.epa.gov/oar> contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues.