

not result in any adverse impact, the action will be considered as being categorically excluded for the purpose of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508.

(c)(1) If adverse environmental impacts, either direct or indirect, are identified, an environmental assessment will be completed in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA to the extent required by law.

(2) The environmental assessment will be used to develop an action that results in no significant environmental impact on the human environment or cultural resources.

(3) No action will be approved that has been determined to have significant impacts on the human environment or cultural resources.

(d)(1) In order to minimize the exposure to environmental liabilities from the presence of contamination on real estate collateral, an evaluation will be made of the economic and environmental risks to the real estate collateral posed by the presence of hazardous substances and petroleum products.

(2) If the evaluation made under paragraph (d)(1) of this section reveals that the collateral is or may be contaminated, then the applicant will be notified and given an option of offering as collateral other real estate that is free from contamination or remediating the contamination on the original site offered as collateral.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on May 8, 2000.

Keith Kelly,

Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

16 CFR Part 305

Rule Concerning Disclosures Regarding Energy Consumption and Water Use of Certain Home Appliances and Other Products Required Under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act ("Appliance Labeling Rule")

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: Federal Trade Commission amends its Appliance Labeling Rule by publishing new ranges of comparability to be used on required labels for clothes washers. These ranges of comparability

supersede the ranges published on March 27, 2000, 65 FR 16132, which become effective July 14, 2000; however, manufacturers are not required to use those March 27, 2000 ranges.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 18, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James Mills, Attorney, Division of Enforcement, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D.C. 20580 (202-326-3035).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Appliance Labeling Rule ("Rule") was issued by the Commission in 1979, 44 FR 66466 (Nov. 19, 1979), in response to a directive in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975.¹ The Rule covers eight categories of major household appliances. Clothes washers are among those categories. The Rule also covers pool heaters, 59 FR 49556 (Sept. 28, 1994), and contains requirements that pertain to fluorescent lamp ballasts, 54 FR 28031 (July 5, 1989), certain plumbing products, 58 FR 54955 (Oct. 25, 1993), and certain lighting products, 59 FR 25176 (May 13, 1994, eff. May 15, 1995).

The Rule requires manufacturers of all covered appliances and pool heaters to disclose specific energy consumption or efficiency information (derived from the DOE test procedures) at the point of sale in the form of an "EnergyGuide" label and in catalogs. It also requires manufacturers of furnaces, central air conditioners, and heat pumps either to provide fact sheets showing additional cost information, or to be listed in an industry directory showing the cost information for their products. The Rule requires manufacturers to include, on labels and fact sheets, an energy consumption or efficiency figure and a "range of comparability." This range shows the highest and lowest energy consumption or efficiencies for all comparable appliance models so consumers can compare the energy consumption or efficiency of other models (perhaps competing brands) similar to the labeled model. The Rule also requires manufacturers to include, on labels for some products, a secondary energy usage disclosure in the form of an estimated annual operating cost based on a specified DOE national average cost for the fuel the appliance uses.

Section 305.8(b) of the Rule requires manufacturers, after filing an initial

report, to report certain information annually to the Commission by specified dates for each product type.² These reports, which are to assist the Commission in preparing the ranges of comparability, contain the estimated annual energy consumption or energy efficiency ratings for the appliances derived from tests performed pursuant to the DOE test procedures. Because manufacturers regularly add new models to their lines, improve existing models, and drop others, the data base from which the ranges of comparability are calculated is constantly changing. To keep the required information consistent with these changes, under Section 305.10 of the Rule the Commission will publish new ranges if an analysis of the new information indicates that the upper or lower limits of the ranges have changed by more than 15%. Otherwise, the Commission will publish a statement that the prior ranges remain in effect for the next year.

Manufacturers of clothes washers have made the required 2000 submissions of data for this product category. In analyzing the data, the Commission has grouped the figures in accordance with the revisions to Appendix F (Clothes Washers) published on March 27, 2000, 65 FR 16132, which eliminated the top-loading and front-loading categories for clothes washers.

Accordingly, the Commission is publishing these new 2000 ranges of comparability in the format of the revised Appendix for the clothes washer category. Today's ranges of comparability supersede the ranges (which were based on 1999 submissions) that were published along with the March 27, 2000 amendment eliminating the top-loading and front-loading categories, which have an effective date of July 14, 2000; however, manufacturers are not required to use those ranges.

In consideration of the foregoing, the Commission revises Appendix F of its Appliance Labeling Rule by publishing the following ranges of comparability for use in required disclosures (including labeling) for clothes washers manufactured on or after September 18, 2000. In addition, as of September 18, 2000, manufactured must base the disclosures of estimated annual operating cost required at the bottom of the EnergyGuide for clothes washers on the 2000 Representative Average Unit Costs of Energy for electricity (8.03 cents per kilo Watt-hour) and natural gas (68.8 cents per therm) that were published by DOE on February 7, 2000

¹ 42 U.S.C. 6294. The statute also requires the Department of Energy ("DOE") to develop test procedures that measure how much energy the appliances use, and to determine the representative average cost a consumer pays for the different types of energy available.

² Reports for clothes washers are due March 1.

(65 FR 5860), and by the Commission on April 17, 2000, 65 FR 20352.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act relating to a Regulatory Flexibility Act analysis (5 U.S.C. 603–604) are not applicable to this proceeding because the amendments do not impose any new obligations on entities regulated by the Appliance Labeling Rule. Thus, the amendments will not have a “significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities” (5 U.S.C. 605). The Commission has concluded, therefore, that a regulatory flexibility analysis is not necessary, and certifies, under Section 605 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605(b)), that the amendments announced today will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act (“PRA”), 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*, requires government agencies, before promulgating rules or other regulations that require “collections of information” (*i.e.*, recordkeeping, reporting, or third-party disclosure requirements), to obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”), 44 U.S.C. 3502. The Commission currently has OMB clearance for the Rule’s information collection requirements (OMB No. 3084–0069). The amendment will not impose any new information collection requirements. Instead, it will provide manufacturers with revised ranges of comparability to use on the EnergyGuide labels already required by the Rule.

List of Subjects in 16 CFR Part 305

Advertising, Energy conservation, Household appliances, Labeling, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Accordingly, 16 CFR Part 305 is amended as follows:

PART 305—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 305 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 6294.

2. Appendix F to Part 305 is revised to read as follows:

Appendix F to Part 305—Clothes Washers

Range Information

“Compact” includes all household clothes washers with a tub capacity of less than 1.6 cu. ft. or 13 gallons of water.

“Standard” includes all household clothes washers with a tub capacity of 1.6 cu. ft. or 13 gallons of water or more.

| Capacity | Range of estimated annual energy consumption (kWh/yr.) | |
|-------------|--|------|
| | Low | High |
| Compact .. | 576 | 607 |
| Standard .. | 177 | 1298 |

Cost Information

When the above ranges of comparability are used on EnergyGuide labels for clothes washers, the estimated annual operating cost disclosures appearing in the box at the bottom of the labels must be derived using the 2000 Representative Average Unit Costs for electricity (8.03¢ per kilo Watt-hour) and natural gas (68.8¢ per therm), and the text below the box must identify the costs as such.

Donald S. Clark,

Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Part 25

[Docket No. 00N–0085]

National Environmental Policy Act; Food Contact Substance Notification System

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Direct final rule.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is amending its regulations on environmental impact considerations as part of the agency’s implementation of the FDA Modernization Act (FDAMA) of 1997. FDAMA amended the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the act) to establish a notification process for food contact substances (FCS); this process will be the primary method for authorizing new uses of food additives that are FCS, and it will largely replace the existing food additive petition process for such substances. The regulations will expand the existing categorical exclusions to include allowing a notification submitted under the act to become effective and will amend the list of those actions that require an environmental assessment (EA) to add allowing a notification under the act to become effective in

cases where a categorical exclusion doesn’t apply. This will allow notifiers of FCS to claim the categorical exclusions now available to sponsors of other requests for authorization of FCS. Elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**, FDA is publishing a companion proposed rule, under FDA’s usual procedures for notice and comment to provide a procedural framework to finalize the rule in the event the agency receives any significant adverse comment and withdraws the direct final rule.

DATES: This rule is effective August 24, 2000. Submit written comments by July 25, 2000. If FDA receives no significant adverse comments within the specified comment period, the agency intends to publish a document confirming the effective date of the final rule in the **Federal Register** within 30 days after the comment period on this direct final rule ends. If timely significant adverse comments are received, the agency will publish a document in the **Federal Register** withdrawing this direct final rule before its effective date.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the direct final rule to the Dockets Management Branch (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mitchell A. Cheeseman, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (HFS–215), Food and Drug Administration, 200 C St. SW., Washington, DC 20204, 202–418–3083.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

In 1958, Congress amended the act to require premarket approval of food additives (sections 201(s), 402(a)(2)(C), and 409 (21 U.S.C. 321(s), 342(a)(2)(C), and 348)). “Food additive” is defined in section 201(s) of the act as “any substance the intended use of which results or may reasonably be expected to result, directly or indirectly, in its becoming a component or otherwise affecting the characteristics of any food,” unless, among other reasons, such substance is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) by qualified experts or is prior sanctioned for its intended use. Under section 409 of the act as originally established, food additives require premarket approval by FDA and publication of a regulation authorizing their intended use. Subsequently, in 1995, FDA codified a process, the “threshold of regulation” process (21 CFR 170.39), by which certain food additives may be exempted from the requirement of a listing regulation if the