

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED RULE TO EXCLUDE HFE-7300 FROM CONTROL AS A VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUND (VOC)

ACTION

On February 3, 2006, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to exempt 1,1,1,2,2,3,4,5,5,5-decafluoro-3-methoxy-4-trifluoromethyl-pentane (HFE-7300) in its nonazeotropic form as a volatile organic compound (VOC). VOCs contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone (smog)

HFE-7300 is used as a heat transfer fluid and for other heat transfer applications. It also may be used as an alternative to chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), perfluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons, and perfluoropolyethers which are being phased out of production because of their detrimental ability to deplete stratospheric ozone.

Scientific evidence shows that this compound is negligibly reactive, meaning it contributes little or nothing to the formation of ozone.

Areas with ozone pollution levels that exceed national air quality standards must develop plans, known as state implementation plans, or SIPs, that include strategies for reducing ground-level ozone. These plans may include VOC emission limits for industrial facilities and VOC content requirements for the manufacture of products such as paints.

This proposed rule would allow, but does not require, states to remove emissions controls on HFE-7300 if it is part of the state's plans to meet the national air quality standards for ground-level ozone. This would allow states to focus on controlling emissions of more reactive compounds.

The presence of this chemical compound in the ambient air does not appear to negatively impact human health or the environment.

EPA will take comment on this proposed exemption for 60 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

BACKGROUND

A compound may be excluded as a VOC as a result of public petitions and new scientific data that demonstrate its negligible effect on the formation of smog.

On August 30, 2004, the Performance Chemicals and Fluid Division of the 3M Company submitted to EPA a petition requesting that the compound HFE-7300 in its nonazeotropic form be added to the list of compounds which are considered to be negligibly reactive VOCs.

Since 1977, EPA has removed 53 specific compounds or classes of compounds from the list of VOCs that contribute to smog formation.

EPA's policy on VOCs was codified on February 3, 1992 in a revised regulation, "Requirements for Preparation, Adoption, and Submittal of State Implementation Plans.

EPA is currently in the process of assessing its VOC policy in general. The Agency intends to publish a future notice inviting public comment on the VOC exemption policy and the concept of negligible reactivity as part of a broader review of overall policy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Interested parties can download the proposal from EPA's web site on the Internet under "recent actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For further information about the rule, contact David Sanders at EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-3356.