

Provisions are made for sealing expansion joints in concrete slab floors and at the juncture of floor and wall. The foil may be provided in multiple layers to provide a mechanical bond via the concrete or mortar oozing through perforation or along pleats in each of the top and bottom layers of the multi-layer foil, while providing at least one solid layer through which a fluid will not pass, at least in one direction.

Serial No: 10/715,430.

Date: 11/19/2003.

Richard L. Frenette,

Counsel.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Information Management Case Services Team, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of the Chief Information Officer, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 25, 2005.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Information Management Case Services Team, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6)

Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: November 18, 2004.

Angela C. Arrington,

Leader, Information Management Case Services Team, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Federal Student Aid

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: Lender's Application for Payment of Insurance Claim, ED Form 1207.

Frequency: On occasion.

Affected Public: State, local, or tribal gov't, SEAs or LEAs; Businesses or other for-profit.

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden: Responses: 4,086. Burden Hours: 858.

Abstract: The ED Form 1207—Lender's Application for Payment of Insurance Claim is completed for each borrower for whom the lender is filing a Federal claim. Lenders must file for payment within 90 days of the default, depending on the type of claim filed.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>, by selecting the "Browse Pending Collections" link and by clicking on link number 2623. When you access the information collection, click on "Download Attachments" to view. Written requests for information should be addressed to U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20202-4700. Requests may also be electronically mailed to the Internet address OCIO_RIMG@ed.gov or faxed to 202-245-6621. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request.

Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Sheila Carey at her e-mail address Sheila.Carey@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information

Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

[FR Doc. 04-26231 Filed 11-24-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1820 ZA40

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research—Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program—Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of proposed priorities.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services proposes three funding priorities for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research's (NIDRR) Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program, Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC) program. Each of these priorities may be used for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2005 and later years. We take this action to focus research attention on areas of national need. We intend these priorities to improve rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

DATES: We must receive your comments on or before December 27, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments about these proposed priorities to Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 6030, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20204-2700. If you prefer to send your comments through the Internet, use the following address: donna.nangle@ed.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Donna Nangle. Telephone: (202) 245-7462.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Invitation To Comment

We invite you to submit comments regarding these proposed priorities. To

ensure that your comments have maximum effect in developing the notice of final priorities, we urge you to identify clearly the specific proposed priority that each comment addresses.

We invite you to assist us in complying with the specific requirements of Executive Order 12866 and its overall requirement of reducing regulatory burden that might result from these proposed priorities. Please let us know of any further opportunities we should take to reduce potential costs or increase potential benefits while preserving the effective and efficient administration of the program.

During and after the comment period, you may inspect all public comments about these priorities in Room 6030, 550 12th Street SW., Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities in Reviewing the Rulemaking Record

On request, we will supply an appropriate aid, such as a reader or print magnifier, to an individual with a disability who needs assistance to review the comments or other documents in the public rulemaking record for these proposed priorities. If you want to schedule an appointment for this type of aid, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

We will announce the final priorities in a notice in the **Federal Register**. We will determine the final priorities after considering responses to this notice and other information available to the Department. This notice does not preclude us from proposing or funding additional priorities, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice does *not* solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use one or more of these proposed priorities, we invite applications through a notice published in the **Federal Register**. When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows.

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Note: NIDRR supports the goals of President Bush's New Freedom Initiative (NFI). The NFI can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/newfreedom/>.

The proposed priorities are in concert with NIDRR's Long-Range Plan (Plan). The Plan is comprehensive and integrates many issues relating to disability and rehabilitation research topics. While applicants will find many sections throughout the Plan that support potential research to be conducted under the proposed priorities, a specific reference is included for each of the priorities presented in this notice. The Plan can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/index.html>.

Through the implementation of the NFI and the Plan, NIDRR seeks to: (1) Improve the quality and utility of disability and rehabilitation research; (2) foster an exchange of expertise, information, and training to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the unique needs of traditionally underserved populations; (3) determine best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations; (4) identify research gaps; (5) identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) disseminate findings.

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers Program

We may make awards under this program for up to 60 months through grants or cooperative agreements to public and private agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations, to conduct research, demonstration, and training activities regarding rehabilitation technology in order to enhance opportunities for meeting the needs of, and addressing the barriers confronted by, individuals with disabilities in all aspects of their lives. Each RERC must be operated by or in collaboration with an institution of higher education or a nonprofit organization. Additional information on the RERC program can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/index.html>.

General Requirements of Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers

RERCs shall carry out research or demonstration activities in support of

the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by—

- Developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievement, and psychological and social knowledge to (1) solve rehabilitation problems and remove environmental barriers and (2) study and evaluate new or emerging technologies, products, or environments and their effectiveness and benefits; or
- Demonstrating and disseminating (1) innovative models for the delivery of cost-effective rehabilitation technology services to rural and urban areas and (2) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; or
- Facilitating service delivery systems change through (1) the development, evaluation, and dissemination of consumer-responsive and individual and family-centered innovative models for the delivery to both rural and urban areas of innovative cost-effective rehabilitation technology services and (2) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independence needs of individuals with severe disabilities.

Each RERC must provide training opportunities, in conjunction with institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations, to assist individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become rehabilitation technology researchers and practitioners.

The Department is particularly interested in ensuring that the expenditure of public funds is justified by the execution of intended activities and the advancement of knowledge and, thus, has built this accountability into the selection criteria. During the funding cycle of any RERC, NIDRR will conduct one or more reviews of the activities and achievements of the RERC. In accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 75.253(a), continued funding depends at all times on satisfactory performance and accomplishment.

Priorities

Background

Technology plays a vital role in the lives of millions of disabled and older Americans. Advances in assistive technology and adoption of principles of universal design have significantly improved the quality of life for these individuals. Individuals with significant disabilities regularly use products developed as the result of rehabilitation and biomedical research to achieve and

maintain maximum physical function, live independently, study and learn, and attain gainful employment. The range of engineering research has broadened to encompass not only assistive technology but also technology at the systems level (*i.e.*, the built environment, information and communication technologies, transportation, etc.) and technology that interfaces between the individual and systems technology and is basic to community integration.

The NIDRR RERC program has been a major force in the development of technology to enhance independent function for individuals with disabilities. The RERCs are recognized as national centers of excellence in their respective areas and collectively represent the largest federally supported program responsible for advancing rehabilitation engineering research. For example, the RERC program was an early pioneer in the development of augmentative communication and has been at the forefront of prosthetics and orthotics research for both children and adults. RERCs have played a major role in the development of voluntary standards that industry uses when developing wheelchairs, wheelchair restraint systems, information technologies, and the World Wide Web. The RERC on Low Vision and Blindness helped develop talking sign technologies that are currently being used in major cities in both the United States and Japan to help blind and visually impaired individuals navigate city streets and subways. RERCs have been a driving force in the development of universal design principles that can be applied to the built environment, information technology and telecommunications, transportation, and consumer products. RERC research activities also contributed to the clinical use of electromyography, gait analysis, and functional electrical stimulation.

Advancements in basic biomedical science and technology have resulted in new opportunities to enhance further the lives of people with disabilities. Recent advances in biomaterials research, composite technologies, information and telecommunication technologies, nanotechnologies, micro electro mechanical systems (MEMS), sensor technologies, and the neurosciences provide a wealth of opportunities for individuals with disabilities and should be incorporated into research focused on disability and rehabilitation.

Proposed Priorities

The Assistant Secretary proposes to fund RERCs, each of which must focus

on one of the following priorities: (a) Technologies for Children with Orthopedic Disabilities, (b) Low Vision and Blindness, or (c) Universal Design and the Built Environment.

(a) *Technologies for Children with Orthopedic Disabilities*: This RERC must research and develop technologies that will help children with orthopedic disabilities overcome functional deficits and that will support their ability to learn, play, and interact socially. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 5, Technology for Access and Function: Research to Enhance Mobility, and Research to Improve Manipulation Ability.

(b) *Low Vision and Blindness*: This RERC must research and develop technologies that will improve assessment of vision impairments and promote independence for individuals with low vision and blindness, including those who are deaf/blind. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 5, Technology for Access and Function: Research to Improve or Substitute for Sensory Functioning.

(c) *Universal Design and the Built Environment*: This RERC must research, develop, and evaluate strategies and devices that will advance the field of universal design and assist designers, builders, and manufacturers with incorporating universal design in their products and buildings. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 5, Technology for Access and Function: Systems Technology: Universal Design and Accessibility.

Under any one of these priorities, RERCs must focus on innovative technological solutions, new knowledge, and concepts to promote the health, safety, independence, active engagement in daily activities, and quality of life of persons with disabilities. Accordingly, each RERC must:

(1) Contribute substantially to the technical and scientific knowledge-base relevant to the priority;

(2) Research, develop, and evaluate innovative technologies, products, environments, performance guidelines, and monitoring and assessment tools as applicable to the priority;

(3) Identify, implement, and evaluate, in collaboration with the relevant industry, professional associations, and institutions of higher education, innovative approaches to expand research capacity in the specific field of study;

(4) Monitor trends and evolving product concepts that represent and signify future directions for technologies in the specific area of research; and

(5) Provide technical assistance to public and private organizations responsible for developing policies, guidelines, and standards that affect the specific area of research.

In addition, the following requirements apply to each RERC priority:

- Each RERC must have the capability to design, build, and test prototype devices and assist in the transfer of successful solutions to relevant production and service delivery settings. Each RERC must evaluate the efficacy and safety of its new products, instrumentation, or assistive devices.

- Each RERC must develop and implement, in the first three months of the grant, a plan that describes how the RERC will include, as appropriate, individuals with disabilities or their representatives in all phases of its activities including research, development, training, dissemination, and evaluation;

- Each RERC must develop and implement, in the first year of the grant and in consultation with the NIDRR-funded National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), a plan to disseminate the RERC's research results to persons with disabilities, their representatives, disability organizations, service providers, professional journals, manufacturers, and other interested parties.

- Each RERC must develop and implement, in the first year of the grant and in consultation with the NIDRR-funded RERC on Technology Transfer, a plan for ensuring that all new and improved technologies developed by this RERC are successfully transferred to the marketplace.

- Each RERC must conduct a state-of-the-science conference on its respective area of research in the third year of the grant and publish a comprehensive report on the final outcomes of the conference in the fourth year of the grant.

- Each RERC must coordinate with research projects of mutual interest with relevant NIDRR-funded projects as identified through consultation with the NIDRR project officer.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of proposed priorities has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of proposed priorities are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have

