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Environmental Regulatory  
Fact Sheet 00-04**

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**180 Day Accumulation Time Under RCRA for Waste Water Treatment Sludges  
From The Metal Finishing Industry**

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EPA has published a final rule to facilitate recovery of metals from F006 waste. The rule extends the timeframe in which large quantity generators can accumulate F006 waste onsite without a permit. The title of the rule is "180-Day Accumulation Time Under RCRA for Waste Water Treatment Sludges From the Metal Finishing Industry." The complete rule can be found in the March 8, 2000 Federal Register, 65 FR 12378. The following provides a brief summary of this new rule.

**WHO SHOULD READ THIS RULE?**

The rule has limited applicability. It applies only to large quantity generators of F006 waste, and it is only immediately effective in states in which EPA implements the base RCRA program. Because this rule changes the accumulation time limit from 90 days to 180 days (with provisions for up to 270 days), it is considered less stringent than previous standards. Therefore, it will not be effective in RCRA authorized states unless the states choose to adopt the new, less stringent standard. Though EPA encourages adoption, RCRA authorized states are not required to adopt less stringent standards. Therefore these new requirements may not be available in all states.

This rule should be read by:

- **Large Quantity Generators of F006 Waste.** Military installations are known to generate F006 during certain refurbishment activities. This rule will be of interest to these generators. Though the benefits of this rule are not immediately available in most states, it is anticipated that many states will pursue adoption of similar standards. Generators of F006 waste will want to be aware of the Federal standards in anticipation of similar rulemakings at the state level.
- **RCRA Compliance Inspectors.** This rule will also be of interest to DoD personnel conducting internal compliance audits. They will want to be informed of the potential for expanded accumulation times for F006 waste. They will also want to read this rule to be aware of the conditions that must be satisfied in order to qualify for the expanded accumulation time.
- **RCRA Trainers.** Persons providing training with respect to generator standards will also want to read this rule. Since it represents a change from the normally applicable 90-day accumulation time limit, trainers will want to be aware of this exception and may want to address the revised standards in future training sessions.

**BACKGROUND**

F006 waste is defined as:

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"Wastewater treatment sludges from electroplating operations except from the following processes: (1) Sulfuric acid anodizing of aluminum; (2) tin plating on carbon steel; (3) zinc plating (segregated basis) on carbon steel; (4) aluminum or zinc-aluminum plating on carbon steel; (5) cleaning /stripping associated with tin, zinc and aluminum plating on carbon steel; and (6) chemical etching and milling of aluminum."

Prior to this rulemaking, large quantity generators were limited to accumulating F006 waste for only 90 days without a permit. EPA believes that increasing the accumulation time will enable more generators to ship their waste for metal recovery by decreasing transportation costs associated with shipping less than full loads. Under the 90 day accumulation time restriction, generators were forced to ship their waste more frequently regardless of whether or not they had sufficient quantities for full truckloads. Because there are significantly fewer metal recovery facilities than landfills available for accepting F006 waste, wastes frequently needed to be shipped longer distances to be recycled than to be land disposed. Under these circumstances, many generators chose disposal over recycling of F006 waste because it was more cost effective. EPA developed this rule to make recycling more competitive by enabling generators to accumulate sufficient quantities for full truckloads.

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS**

Under this new rule, large quantity generators can accumulate F006 waste for up to 180 days without a RCRA permit (or 270 days if the recovery facility is greater than 200 miles away) provided certain conditions are met. These conditions only apply if the generator chooses to accumulate F006 for greater than 90 days, but must be met for the entire accumulation period.

The conditions are as follows:

- The F006 waste must be accumulated in containers, tanks, or containment buildings. Waste cannot be accumulated in drip pads.
- The F006 waste must be recycled on or offsite for metals recovery. F006 waste this is not destined for metals recovery is not eligible for the 180/270 day accumulation time.
- The generator must have implemented or must implement pollution prevention practices with respect to F006 waste. Pollution prevention is defined as, "source reduction of metal and other toxic raw materials that would otherwise enter a waste stream or be released to the environment prior to recycling, treatment, or disposal." Therefore, reduction in volume alone such as via dewatering, would not constitute pollution prevention. The reader is referred to the Federal Register, page 12385 for a list of examples which would qualify as pollution prevention measures. Though the rule does not contain an associated recordkeeping requirement, EPA states that generators should be prepared to demonstrate that they are implementing pollution prevention measures.

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- No more than 20,000 kilograms of F006 waste may be accumulated onsite at any one time. This amount was selected because it represents the approximate weight of a full, bulk truckload of waste.

In addition, generators must continue to meet requirements previously applicable to large quantity generators. EPA is only changing the accumulation time frame. Large quantity generators must continue to:

- mark containers with the accumulation start date;
- label each container and tank or marking them with the words, "hazardous waste";
- train personnel; and
- comply with requirements for preparedness and prevention, contingency planning, and emergency response.

**CONCLUSION**

EPA has recognized the existence of economic barriers to the recycling of F006 waste. They have addressed the issue by modifying their regulations to allow longer accumulation times to enable generators to accumulate sufficient quantities to make recycling more economically feasible. At the same time, they have established standards to ensure adequate management of F006 while it is being accumulated. They have also encouraged states to adopt similar regulations. The net effect is a regulation which should be protective of human health and the environment which encourages recycling of F006 via metals recovery.