

the notice to the State of a public hearing.

(c) The Administrator shall publish notice of the public hearing in the FEDERAL REGISTER and in a newspaper of general circulation in the involved State, including a summary of the findings made pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, a statement of the time and location for the hearing, and the address and telephone number of an office at which interested persons may obtain further information concerning the hearing.

(d) Hearings convened pursuant to paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section shall be conducted before a hearing officer to be designated by the Administrator. The hearing shall be conducted by the hearing officer in an informal, orderly, and expeditious manner. The hearing officer shall have the authority to call witnesses, receive oral and written testimony, and take such other action as may be necessary to ensure the fair and efficient conduct of the hearing. Following the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing officer may make a recommendation to the Administrator based on the testimony presented at the hearing and shall forward any such recommendation and the record of the hearing to the Administrator.

(e) Within 180 days after the date notice is given pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, the Administrator shall:

(1) Rescind the notice to the State of a public hearing if the State takes corrective action satisfactory to the Administrator; or

(2) Rescind the finding for which the notice was given and promptly notify the State of such rescission; or

(3) Uphold the finding for which the notice was given. In this event, the Administrator shall revoke the State's decision that filtration was not required or revoke the compliance schedule approved by the State, and promulgate, as appropriate, with any appropriate modifications, a revised filtration decision or compliance schedule and promptly notify the State of such action.

(f) Revocation of a State's filtration decision or compliance schedule and/or promulgation of a revised filtration de-

cision or compliance schedule shall take effect 90 days after the State is notified under paragraph (e)(3) of this section.

### Subpart J [Reserved]

### Subpart K—Variances for Small System

SOURCE: 63 FR 43848, Aug. 14, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### § 142.301 What is a small system variance?

Section 1415(e) of the Act authorizes the issuance of variances from the requirement to comply with a maximum contaminant level or treatment technique to systems serving fewer than 10,000 persons. The purpose of this subpart is to provide the procedures and criteria for obtaining these variances. The regulations in this subpart shall take effect on September 14, 1998.

#### § 142.302 Who can issue a small system variance?

A small system variance under this subpart may only be issued by either:

(a) A State that is exercising primary enforcement responsibility under Subpart B for public water systems under the State's jurisdiction; or

(b) The Administrator, for a public water system in a State which does not have primary enforcement responsibility.

#### § 142.303 Which size public water systems can receive a small system variance?

(a) A State exercising primary enforcement responsibility for public water systems (or the Administrator for other systems) may grant a small system variance to public water systems serving 3,300 or fewer persons.

(b) With the approval of the Administrator pursuant to §142.312, a State exercising primary enforcement responsibility for public water systems may grant a small system variance to public water systems serving more than 3,300 persons but fewer than 10,000 persons.

## § 142.304

(c) In determining the number of persons served by the public water system, the State or Administrator must include persons served by consecutive systems. A small system variance granted to a public water system would also apply to any consecutive system served by it.

### § 142.304 For which of the regulatory requirements is a small system variance available?

(a) A small system variance is not available under this subpart for a national primary drinking water regulation for a microbial contaminant (including a bacterium, virus, or other organism) or an indicator or treatment technique for a microbial contaminant.

(b) A small system variance under this subpart is otherwise only available for compliance with a requirement specifying a maximum contaminant level or treatment technique for a contaminant with respect to which:

(1) a national primary drinking water regulation was promulgated on or after January 1, 1986; and

(2) the Administrator has published a small system variance technology pursuant to Section 1412(b)(15) of the Act.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (b)(1): Small system variances are not available for public water systems above the pre-1986 maximum contaminant level even if subsequently revised. If the Agency revises a pre-1986 maximum contaminant level and makes it more stringent, then a variance would be available for that contaminant, but only up to the pre-1986 maximum contaminant level.

### § 142.305 When can a small system variance be granted by a State?

No small system variance can be granted by a State until the later of the following:

(a) 90 days after the State proposes to grant the small system variance;

(b) If a State is proposing to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving 3,300 or fewer persons and the Administrator objects to the small system variance, the date on which the State makes the recommended modifications or responds in writing to each objection; or

(c) If a State is proposing to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving a population more than 3,300 and fewer than 10,000

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persons, the date the Administrator approves the small system variance. The Administrator must approve or disapprove the variance within 90 days after it is submitted to the Administrator for review.

### REVIEW OF SMALL SYSTEM VARIANCE APPLICATION

### § 142.306 What are the responsibilities of the public water system, State and the Administrator in ensuring that sufficient information is available and for evaluation of a small system variance application?

(a) A public water system requesting a small system variance must provide accurate and correct information to the State or the Administrator to issue a small system variance in accordance with this subpart. A State may assist a public water system in compiling information required for the State or the Administrator to issue a small system variance in accordance with this subpart.

(b) Based upon an application for a small system variance and other information, and before a small system variance may be proposed under this subpart, the State or the Administrator must find and document the following:

(1) The public water system is eligible for a small system variance pursuant to §§ 142.303 (*i.e.*, the system serves a population of fewer than 10,000 persons) and 142.304 (*i.e.*, the contaminant for which the small system variance is sought is not excluded from variance eligibility);

(2) The public water system cannot afford to comply, in accordance with the affordability criteria established by the State (or by the Administrator in States which do not have primary enforcement responsibility), with the national primary drinking water regulation for which a small system variance is sought, including by:

(i) Treatment;

(ii) Alternative sources of water supply;

(iii) Restructuring or consolidation changes, including ownership change and/or physical consolidation with another public water system; or