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EPA Proposes to Expand Comparable Fuels Exclusion

EPA is proposing an amendment to allow certain manufacturing waste to be safely burned for energy recovery in industrial boilers. This action will remove unnecessary regulatory costs while maintaining current levels of protection of human health and the environment.

Action

Through this action, EPA is proposing to expand the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act's (RCRA) Hazardous Waste Comparable Fuels Exclusion to encompass a new category of liquid hazardous waste-derived fuel known as emission-comparable fuel (ECF). ECF is fuel that is produced from a hazardous waste but which generates emissions when burned in an industrial boiler that are comparable to emissions from burning fuel oil. In other words, the fuels are comparable from an emissions standpoint but not from a physical standpoint.

This action would allow ECF to be burned by certain industrial waste boilers operating under specified conditions. ECF would be subject to the same regulations that currently apply under the Comparable Fuels Exclusion, but would be exempt from the specifications for certain hydrocarbons and oxygenates. Facilities would also have to meet certain storage and burner conditions, including:

- (1) Design and operating conditions for the ECF boiler that ensure that the ECF is burned under RCRA's "good combustion conditions" typical for oil-fired industrial boilers; and
- (2) Conditions for storage in tanks which are comparable to those for storage of fuels and organic liquids and which are tailored for the hazards that ECF may pose.

EPA is accepting comment on this proposal for 60 days following publication in the Federal Register.

Background

On June 19, 1998, EPA issued the Comparable Fuels Exclusion (CFE) (63 FR 33782), which established the standards to exclude certain hazardous waste-derived fuels from the regulatory definition of solid waste. These hazardous waste-derived fuels are comparable to fossil fuels. Since EPA issued the Comparable Fuels Exclusion, the regulated community informed EPA that regulatory constraints have prevented the use of potentially eligible waste streams as comparable fuels. The regulated community indicated that the removal of constraints could significantly increase the volume of waste eligible for the comparable fuels exclusion.

For More Information

Information on this proposed regulation:
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/combust/compfuels/exclusion.htm>.

To find out more detailed information or to ask a question, visit:
<http://waste.custhelp.com> and click on Find an Answer or Submit a Question.