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News

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PHMSA Continues Push to Clarify & Update Hazmat Rules *Seeks Public Input on Impact of Eliminating Outdated Regulations, Simplifying Procedures*

WASHINGTON – As part of its regulatory review initiative, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today proposed a set of regulatory updates to reduce ambiguity and red tape without sacrificing safety standards.

“Part of protecting the public means making sure our regulations are current and can continue to be applied practically in the real world of transportation,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “As safety needs evolve, we will continue to make sure our regulations evolve with them.”

PHMSA is proposing a long list of updates to the Hazardous Materials Regulations – which provide guidelines for those who offer, accept, or carry hazardous materials to, from or within the U.S. – including [incorporating](#) a [special permit](#) with a history of safety into the rulebook that will effectively eliminate extra steps a shipper currently has to take to transport certain items with special requirements. PHMSA also intends to clarify several exceptions to hazmat requirements, update recordkeeping requirements, and revise certain regulatory requirements.

“These proposed changes are consistent with PHMSA’s agency-wide initiative to identify opportunities to modernize, clarify and reduce regulatory burdens without lowering safety standards,” said PHMSA Administrator Cynthia Quarterman. “When we identify those situations, we will propose solutions and ask the public for feedback.”

PHMSA also recently proposed ending the special permit requirement for several widely-used automobile components, a move that could save the automotive industry nearly \$900,000 a year in costs while maintaining safety standards. Specifically, the notice of

proposed rulemaking states that auto manufacturers would no longer have to bear the burden of obtaining and maintaining an explosive number on hazmat shipping papers for air bag inflators, air bag modules, and seat-belt pretensioners prior to transporting them. Automakers and suppliers would still have to comply with standing conventional regulations for packaging, marking and transporting the assembly components, which are still considered hazardous materials capable of posing some risk to health, safety and property.

The Miscellaneous Amendments NPRM can be found on the *Federal Register* [here](#). After reviewing the NPRM, formal comments can be made at the link provided at the top of the notice. All comments on this notice must include the agency name and docket number PHMSA-2011-0138 for this notice at the beginning of the comment, and must be submitted within 60 days of publication in the *Federal Register*.

Comments are also being accepted by fax at 202-493-2251, and by hand delivery, at Docket Operations in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Mailed comments should be addressed to: Docket Operations, U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Routing Symbol M-30, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, DC 20590.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.5 million mile pipeline transportation system and the nearly 1 million daily shipments of hazardous materials by land, sea, and air. Please visit <http://phmsa.dot.gov> for more information.