

date final regulations are filed with the Office of the Federal Register.

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Margaret Milner Richardson,

Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

[FR Doc. 95-3771 Filed 2-16-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

30 CFR Part 250

RIN 1010-AB96

Flaring or Venting Gas and Burning Liquid Hydrocarbons

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule would amend regulations governing the restrictions on flaring or venting gas to include restrictions on burning liquid hydrocarbons. The MMS is proposing to amend these regulations because of the increased interest in burning liquid hydrocarbons and to clarify the restrictions on burning this natural resource. The amendment would conserve liquid hydrocarbons and protect the environment from the possible effects of burning liquid hydrocarbons.

DATES: Comments on this proposed rule must be postmarked or received on or before April 18, 1995 to be considered for this rulemaking.

ADDRESSES: Mail or hand-carry comments to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 4700; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 22070-4817; Attention: Chief, Engineering and Standards Branch.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Buffington, Engineering and Standards Branch, telephone (703) 787-1600.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Requests for burning liquid hydrocarbons (crude oil and condensate) have become more frequent in the Outer Continental Shelf. In the interest of conserving natural resources, and because of the environmental concerns associated with this burning, MMS proposes to amend the regulations at 30 CFR 250.175, which currently include restrictions on flaring and venting of gas, to include restrictions on burning liquid hydrocarbons.

Under proposed new paragraph (c) of 30 CFR 250.175, lessees will not be permitted to burn liquid hydrocarbons

without the prior approval of the Regional Supervisor. To obtain approval, the lessee must demonstrate that the amounts to be burned would be minimal or that the alternatives, such as transporting the liquids or storing and re-injecting the liquids, are infeasible or pose a significant risk to offshore personnel or the environment. The term "lessee" also includes their agents and designees.

Authors

Sharon Buffington and Jo Ann Lauterbach, Engineering and Technology Division, MMS, prepared this document.

Executive Order (E.O.) 12866

The Department of the Interior (DOI) reviewed this proposed rule under E.O. 12866 and determined that it is not a significant rule.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The DOI determined that this proposed rule will not have a significant effect on a substantial number of small entities. In general, the entities that engage in offshore activities are not considered small due to the technical and financial resources and experience necessary to safely conduct such activities.

Paperwork Reduction Act

The proposed information collection requirements contained in § 250.175 were submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).

The DOI will not require the collection on this information until OMB has approved its collection.

The MMS estimates the public reporting burden for this information to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspects of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Information Collection Clearance Officer; Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 2053, 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 22070-4817, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1010-0041), Washington, DC 20503.

Takings Implication Assessment

The DOI determined that this proposed rule does not represent a governmental action capable of

interference with constitutionally protected property rights. Thus, a Takings Implication Assessment does not need to be prepared pursuant to E.O. 12630, Government Action and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

E.O. 12778

The DOI certified to OMB that this proposed rule meets the applicable civil justice reform standards provided in Sections 2(a) and 2(b)(2) of E.O. 12778.

National Environmental Policy Act

The DOI determined that this action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 250

Continental shelf, Environmental impact statements, Environmental protection, Government contracts, Incorporation by reference, Investigations, Mineral royalties, Oil and gas development and production, Oil and gas exploration, Oil and gas reserves—Penalties, Pipelines, Public lands—mineral resources, Public lands—rights-of-way, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Sulphur development and production, Sulphur exploration, Surety bonds.

Dated: December 23, 1994.

Bob Armstrong,

Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management.

For the reasons set forth above, MMS proposes to amend 30 CFR part 250 to read as follows:

PART 250—OIL AND GAS AND SULPHUR OPERATIONS IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF

1. The authority citation for part 250 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 43 U.S.C. 1334.

2. Section 250.175 is revised to read as follows:

§ 250.175 Flaring or venting gas and burning liquid hydrocarbons.

(a) Lessees must not flare or vent oil-well gas or gas-well gas without the prior approval of the Regional Supervisor except in the following situations:

(1) When gas vapors are flared or vented in small volumes from storage vessels or other low-pressure production vessels and cannot be economically recovered.

(2) During temporary situations such as a compressor or other equipment

failure or the relief of system pressures. The following conditions apply:

(i) Lessees must not flare or vent oil-well gas for more than 48 continuous hours without the approval of the Regional Supervisor. The Regional Supervisor may specify a limit of less than 48 hours when necessary to prevent air quality degradation. Flaring or venting gas from a facility must not continue for more than 144 cumulative hours during any calendar month without the approval of the Regional Supervisor.

(ii) Lessees must not flare or vent gas-well gas beyond the time required to eliminate a temporary emergency without the approval of the Regional Supervisor.

(3) During the unloading or cleaning of a well, drill-stem testing, production-testing, or other well-evaluation testing for periods not to exceed 48 cumulative hours per testing operation on a single completion. The Regional Supervisor may specify a shorter period of time, under prior notice, to prevent air quality degradation.

(b) Lessees may flare or vent oil-well gas for a period not to exceed 1 year when the Regional Supervisor approves the request for one of the following reasons:

(1) The lessee initiated an action which, when completed, will eliminate flaring and venting; or

(2) The lessee submitted an evaluation supported by engineering, geologic, and economic data indicating that the oil and gas produced from the well(s) will not economically support the facilities necessary to save and/or sell the gas, or that sufficient quantities of gas are not available for marketing.

(c) Lessees must not burn produced liquid hydrocarbons without the prior approval of the Regional Supervisor. To burn produced liquid hydrocarbons, the lessee must demonstrate that the amounts to be burned would be minimal, or that the alternatives are infeasible or pose a significant risk to offshore personnel or the environment. Alternatives to burning liquid hydrocarbons include transporting the liquids or storing and re-injecting them into a producible zone.

(d) Lessees must prepare records detailing gas flaring or venting, and liquid hydrocarbon burning, for each facility. The records must include, at a minimum:

(1) Daily volumes of gas flared or vented, and liquid hydrocarbons burned.

(2) Number of hours of flaring, venting, or burning on a daily basis.

(3) Reasons for flaring, venting, or burning.

(4) A list of the wells contributing to flaring, venting, or burning, along with the gas-oil ratio data.

(e) Lessees must keep these records for at least two (2) years. Lessees must make the records available for inspection by Minerals Management Service (MMS) representatives at the lessees' field office that is nearest the Outer Continental Shelf facility, or at other locations conveniently available to the Regional Supervisor. Upon request by the Regional Supervisor, lessees must provide a copy of the records to MMS.

[FR Doc. 95-3986 Filed 2-16-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MR-M

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

30 CFR Part 914

[IN-121-FOR; Amendment 94-7]

Indiana Regulatory Program

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; public comment period and opportunity for public hearing.

SUMMARY: OSM is announcing receipt of a proposed amendment to the Indiana regulatory program (hereinafter referred to as the "Indiana program") under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). The proposed amendment consists of changes to the Indiana Surface Coal Mining rules. The amendment is intended to revise 310 IAC 12-5-54.1 and the timing limitations of backfilling and grading for surface coal mining and reclamation operations under IC 13-4.1.

DATES: Written comments must be received by 4:00 p.m., E.S.T. March 20, 1995. If requested, a public hearing on the proposed amendment will be held on March 14, 1995. Requests to speak at the hearing must be received by 4:00 p.m., E.S.T. on March 6, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and requests to speak at the hearing should be mailed or hand delivered to Roger W. Calhoun, Director, Indianapolis Field Office at the first address listed below.

Copies of the Indiana program, the proposed amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings, and all written comments received in response to this document will be available for public review at the addresses listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Each requester may receive one free copy of the proposed

amendment by contacting OSM's Indianapolis Field Office.

Roger W. Calhoun, Director,
Indianapolis Field Office, Office of
Surface Mining Reclamation and
Enforcement, Minton-Capehart
Federal Building, Room 301,
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204,
Telephone: (317) 226-6166.
Indiana Department of Natural
Resources, 402 West Washington
Street, Room C256, Indianapolis,
Indiana 46204, Telephone: (317) 232-
1547.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Roger W. Calhoun, Director,
Indianapolis Field Office, Telephone:
(317) 226-6166.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background on the Indiana Program

On July 29, 1982, the Secretary of the Interior conditionally approved the Indiana program. Background information on the Indiana program, including the Secretary's findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval can be found in the July 26, 1982, **Federal Register** (47 FR 32071). Subsequent actions concerning the conditions of approval and program amendments can be found at 30 CFR 914.10, 914.15, and 914.16.

II. Discussion of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated January 31, 1995 (Administrative Record No. IND-1420), the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) submitted to OSM a State program amendment package consisting of revisions to the Indiana program rules. The amendment revises language at 310 IAC 12-5-54.1 concerning the timing limitations for backfilling and grading of surface coal mining and reclamation operations. The following amendments are being proposed.

1. 310 IAC 12-5-54.1 Backfilling and Grading; Timing Limitations

Subsection (a). The word "commission" is being deleted and is replaced by the word "director." The word "paragraphs" is being deleted and replaced by "subsection." The words "of this rule" are being deleted.

Subsection (a)(1). The word "and" is being deleted immediately before "eight (180)." The words "an average of" are being deleted immediately preceding "four (4)." The words "(by length)" are being deleted immediately following "four (4) spoil ridges." With these changes, backfilling and grading for dragline type operations which deposit the overburden into spoil ridges must be