



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REGULATIONS BOARD

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

13173

[Docket No. HM-88]

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS
MATERIALS

Notice of Proposed Board Action

The Hazardous Materials Regulations Board is proposing taking action with respect to several special permits which authorize the bulk rail shipment of propylene in DOT Specification 112A340W and 114A340W tank cars.

As a part of the course of its usual regulatory activity, the Board evaluates special permits which have been outstanding for a period of several years, with the view to incorporating successful provisions into the Hazardous Materials Regulations by amendment. The Board has evaluated the permits noted above, authorizing use of the Specifications 112A340W and 114A340W tank cars for shipment of propylene. Existing regulatory provisions for propylene only permit use of a tank having a test pressure equal to or greater than that of the Specification 112A400W car.

Although there has been no accident history accompanying the permits in question, the Board believes that the standard design relationship between a pressure car's test pressure and its authorized operating pressure should be preserved as a principle of transportation safety. Section 173.314(d) of the Hazardous Materials Regulations prescribes that, "The gas pressure * * * at 115° F. in any uninsulated tank car of the DOT-112AW and 114AW class * * * must not exceed three-fourths times the prescribed retest pressure of the tank * * *." The vapor pressure of propylene at 115° F. is at least 259 p.s.i.g., and exceeds the upper limit of 255 p.s.i.g. prescribed for the Specifications 112A340W and 114A340W tank cars. The Board is of the opinion that this exceeds the intended design safety factor of the Specifications 112A340W and 114A340W tank cars, and should not be authorized in the regulations by amendment or continued under special permits.

The Board is proposing, therefore, that all permits authorizing the use of the

Specification 112A340W and 114A340W tank cars for propylene be terminated within a reasonable period of time. After that termination date, proposed to be June 30, 1972, bulk rail shipment of propylene would only be authorized in tank cars having at least the test pressure of the DOT Specification 112A400W car. New permits would be issued until that date and existing permits would be renewed until that date, but all permits would be terminated simultaneously on June 30, 1972.

Information and advice are specifically requested regarding the Board's position that the 75 percent relationship between tank test pressure and operating pressure should be carefully preserved. In addition, data relating to the direct impact of this proposal on the permit holders and the public, including cost analyses and statistics on the availability of Specification 112A400W cars, would be very helpful to the Board in reaching its final decision in this matter.

Interested persons are invited to give their views on this proposal. Communications should identify the docket number and be submitted in duplicate to the Secretary, Hazardous Materials Regulations Board, Department of Transportation, 400 Sixth Street SW., Washington, DC 20590. Communications received on or before October 12, 1971, will be considered before final action is taken on the proposal. All comments received will be available for examination by interested persons at the Office of the Secretary, Hazardous Materials Regulations Board, both before and after the closing date for comments.

This proposal is made under the authority of sections 831-835 of title 18, United States Code, and section 9 of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1657).

Issued in Washington, D.C. on July 9, 1971.

MAC E. ROGERS,
Board Member for the
Federal Railroad Administration.

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