



U.S. Department of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety
Administration**
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

DATE 04/21/2026

MEMO TO FILE

From: Carolyn Nelson, P.E.
Director of Environmental Analysis & Compliance Division
carolyn.nelson@dot.gov

Subject: **Categorical Exclusion Determination**
Pipeline Safety: Standards Update – ASTM F1973

FINAL ACTION

Through this Direct Final Rule (DFR), PHMSA is incorporating by reference an update to a voluntary, consensus industry technical standard already incorporated by reference within the pipeline safety regulations (49 CFR part 192). Specifically, PHMSA is updating the referenced edition of industry standard ASTM F1973, “Standard Specification for Factory Assembled Anodeless Risers and Transition Fittings in Polyethylene (PE) and Polyamide (PA11) and Polyamide 12 (PA12) Fuel Gas Distribution Systems,” to the 2025 edition (ASTM F1973).

ASTM F1973 covers requirements and test methods for the qualification of factory assembled anodeless risers and transition fittings, for use in polyethylene (PE), in sizes through NPS 8, and Polyamide 11 (PA11), in sizes through NPS 6, gas distribution systems. References to the 2025 edition of the standard will replace existing references in § 192.204(b) and appendix B to part 192 to ASTM F1973-21, Standard Specification for Factory Assembled Anodeless Risers and Transition Fittings in Polyethylene (PE) and Polyamide 11 (PA11) and Polyamide 12 (PA12) Fuel Gas Distribution Systems, November 1, 2021. This updated standard will maintain or improve public safety, prevent regulatory confusion, reduce compliance burdens on stakeholders, and satisfy a mandate in the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) of 1995.

APPLICABLE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Categorical exclusions (CE) are categories of actions that the agency has determined normally do not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and therefore do not require either an environmental assessment (EA) or an environmental impact statement (EIS). [DOT Order 5610.1D](#), DOT’s current National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures, notes in paragraph 9(f) that “[a]n OA may apply a CE established in another OA’s procedures.” PHMSA coordinated with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine that the following

FHWA CE is applicable to the action described above and can be used by PHMSA per Section 9(f) of DOT Order 5610.1D:

*Promulgation of rules, regulations, and directives.*¹

UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Based on the scope of the action, PHMSA has determined that this rulemaking action does not meet the criteria for unusual circumstances listed in 23 CFR 771.117(b), which would require PHMSA to conduct appropriate environmental studies to determine if the CE classification is proper.

DETERMINATION

PHMSA analyzed the DFR and determined that the rulemaking will not adversely affect safety and will not significantly affect the quality of the human and natural environment. Based on the information provided in the DFR, including a review of unusual circumstances, PHMSA finds the final action qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion in accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. § 4332, DOT Order 5610.1D, Departmentwide National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, and 23 CFR 771.

Approved by the Environmental Analysis and Compliance Division:

¹ 23 CFR 771.117(c)(20)