



U.S. Department of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety
Administration**
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DATE 04/21/2026

MEMO TO FILE

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Subject: Categorical Exclusion Determination
Pipeline Safety: Standards Update – NACE SP0502

FINAL ACTION

This Direct Final Rule (DFR) amends PHMSA’s regulations to incorporate by reference an updated edition of industry standard NACE SP0502, Pipeline External Corrosion Direct Assessment Methodology. 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 parts 192 and 195). Specifically, PHMSA is updating the referenced edition of industry standard NACE SP0502, Pipeline External Corrosion Direct Assessment Methodology to the 2025 edition (NACE SP0502).

NACE SP0502 covers the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP) external corrosion direct assessment (ECDA) process for buried onshore ferrous piping systems. References to the 2025 edition of the standard will replace existing references in §§ 192.319(f); 192.461(h); 192.620(d); 192.923(b); 192.925(b); 192.931(d); 192.935(b); 192.939(a); and § 195.588(b) to ANSI/NACE SP0502-2010, “Pipeline External Corrosion Direct Assessment Methodology,” revised June 24, 2010. 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)