

hatch covers on tankships. The Coast Guard no longer accepts aluminum as a material for hatch covers as an equivalent material to steel under 46 CFR 30.15-1. All newly constructed tankships must have steel hatch covers. When the owner or operator of a tankship voluntarily replaces a hatch cover for any reason, the replacement cover must be steel.

On October 2, 1980, the Coast Guard published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (45 FR 70918) which would have required each tankship that had aluminum hatch covers to be retrofitted with steel hatch covers at or before its next inspection for certification following the effective date of the final rule. In the economic evaluation accompanying that notice, the total cost of retrofitting all affected vessels was estimated to range from 1.48 to 6.24 million dollars. This cost was offset by the unquantified benefits of reduced fire hazard on tank vessels and resulting increased level of safety.

Before the Coast Guard issued a final rule on this proposal, however, the economic factors were reevaluated under the more rigorous analytical requirements of the then-new Executive Order 12291. The reevaluation did not clearly show that the potential benefits of this proposed regulation exceeded its costs. The benefits associated with the proposed regulation would have accrued only if a ship which had been retrofitted were to suffer a deck fire which would have melted an aluminum hatch cover but not a steel one. There has been only one such incident in the last eighteen years. The loss attributed to the failed hatch cover could not be separated from the loss due to the collision had the hatch cover survived. Considering the age and "life expectancy" of many existing tankers, the objective of the original NTSB recommendation can be achieved without further regulatory action over a somewhat longer period of time with less economic burden on the tankship industry. In consideration of the economic reevaluation, the Coast Guard has decided not to require retrofitting of existing aluminum hatch

covers and is therefore terminating this rulemaking.

Drafting Information

The persons involved in drafting this withdrawal notice are Mr. Frank K. Thompson, Regulations Specialist, Office of Merchant Marine Safety, and LCDR William B. Short, Project Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel.

List of Subjects in 46 CFR Part 32

Fire protection, Marine safety, Tank vessels.

(R.s 4417a; 46 U.S.C. 391a; 49 CFR 1.46(n)(4))

Dated: August 26, 1982.

Clyde T. Lusk, Jr.,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Chief, Office of Merchant Marine Safety.

[FR Doc. 82-24181 Filed 9-1-82; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-14-M

Research and Special Programs Administration

49 CFR Parts 173 and 178

[Docket No. HM-182, Advance Notice]

Specifications for and Use of Specification 17E Steel Drums, Extension of Comment Period

AGENCY: Materials Transportation Bureau, Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Extension of time to file comments.

SUMMARY: On June 10, 1982, the Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB) published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking under Docket HM-182 (47 FR 25167) pertaining to specification requirements for the 17E steel drum to allow certain reductions in head and body thickness provided the drum is manufactured with triple-seamed chimes. The notice request comments on: (1) actual experience of such drums in transportation, (2) safety implications and (3) economic benefits and consequences.

DATE: By this notice, MTB is extending the comment period 90 days, from September 2, 1982, to December 1, 1982.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas J. Charlton, Office of Hazardous Materials Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590 (202) 426-2075.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

In consideration of a request made by the Packaging Institute U.S.A. for additional time in which it may file comments on this advance notice of proposed rulemaking, MTB is extending the comment period by 90 days. The Packaging Institute requested a 90 day extension so that opinions of its packaging professionals could be expressed in meetings scheduled for its Drum Subcommittee and Chemical Packaging Committee in September and October 1982, respectively, and then be made a part of the Docket for consideration by MTB. Since MTB is interested in comments which are anticipated from the Packaging Institute it believes the request for a 90 day extension to be the public interest.

(49 U.S.C. 1803, 1804, 1808, 49 CFR 1.53, App. A to Part 1 and paragraph (a)(4) of App. A to Part 106)

Note.—The Materials Transportation Bureau has determined, on the basis of limited information currently available, that adoption of the petition presented in this advance notice would not result in a "major rule" under the terms of Executive Order 12291 and DOT procedures (44 FR 11034) nor require an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act (49 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.). I certify that the petition presented in this advance notice would not, if adopted, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities that purchase drums.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on August 25, 1982.

Alan I. Roberts,

Associate Director for Hazardous Materials Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.

[FR Doc. 82-23881 Filed 9-1-82; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-M