



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REGULATIONS BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

21360

[49 CFR Part 173]

[Docket No. HM-93; Notice No. 71-28]

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS
MATERIALS

Class B Propellant Explosives in Fiber
Drums

The Hazardous Materials Regulations Board is considering amendment of §173.93 of the Hazardous Materials Regulations to prohibit the shipment of Class B propellant explosives in specification 21C fiber drums by rail freight transportation.

Several instances of serious accidents and gross container failures involving Class B propellant explosives packed in DOT-21C fiber drums have been brought to the Board's attention. These instances appear to be directly related to transportation handling practices. Although these problems are reported to have existed in rail and highway transportation, the Board has no evidence that shippers by highway transportation are now experiencing difficulties. Rail carrier representatives together with involved shippers and Federal officials have been unable to resolve the difficulties associated with the rail transportation of this commodity in the packaging. Significantly, on June 8, 1971, the Department of Defense, a major shipper of this Class B propellant explosives, issued an order to all U.S. Army Ammunition Depots to discontinue such shipments by rail box car. Therefore, in view of the continuing seriousness of the situation, the Board is proposing to prohibit the shipment of Class B propellant explosives in DOT-21C fiber drums in rail transportation.

In consideration of the above, it is proposed to amend 49 CFR Part 173 as follows:

In § 173.93, paragraph (a) (10) would be amended to read as follows:

§ 173.93 Propellant explosives (solid) for cannon, small arms, rockets, guided missiles, or other devices, and propellant explosives (liquid).

(a) . * * *

(10) Spec. 21C (§ 178.224 of this chapter). Fiber drum. Each drum having any wooden head must be provided with a strong, sift-proof liner. Net weight may not exceed 225 pounds. Not authorized for shipment by rail freight.

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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 January 4, 1972, will be considered before final action is taken on this 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 November 2, 1971.

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