

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 144.39

§ 144.37 Continuation of expiring permits.

(a) *EPA permits.* When EPA is the permit-issuing authority, the conditions of an expired permit continue in force under 5 U.S.C. 558(c) until the effective date of a new permit if:

(1) The permittee has submitted a timely application which is a complete application for a new permit; and

(2) The Regional Administrator, through no fault of the permittee does not issue a new permit with an effective date on or before the expiration date of the previous permit (for example, when issuance is impracticable due to time or resource constraints).

(b) *Effect.* Permits continued under this section remain fully effective and enforceable.

(c) *Enforcement.* When the permittee is not in compliance with the conditions of the expiring or expired permit the Regional Administrator may choose to do any or all of the following:

(1) Initiate enforcement action based upon the permit which has been continued;

(2) Issue a notice of intent to deny the new permit. If the permit is denied, the owner or operator would then be required to cease the activities authorized by the continued permit or be subject to enforcement action for operating without a permit;

(3) Issue a new permit under part 124 with appropriate conditions; or

(4) Take other actions authorized by these regulations.

(d) *State continuation.* An EPA issued permit does not continue in force beyond its time expiration date under Federal law if at that time a State is the permitting authority. A State authorized to administer the UIC program may continue either EPA or State-issued permits until the effective date of the new permits, if State law allows. Otherwise, the facility or activity is operating without a permit from the time of expiration of the old permit to the effective date of the State-issued new permit.

§ 144.38 Transfer of permits.

(a) *Transfers by modification.* Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, a permit may be transferred by the permittee to a new owner or oper-

ator only if the permit has been modified or revoked and reissued (under §144.39(b)(2)), or a minor modification made (under §144.41(d)), to identify the new permittee and incorporate such other requirements as may be necessary under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

(b) *Automatic transfers.* As an alternative to transfers under paragraph (a) of this section, any UIC permit for a well not injecting hazardous waste may be automatically transferred to a new permittee if:

(1) The current permittee notifies the Director at least 30 days in advance of the proposed transfer date referred to in paragraph (b)(2) of this section;

(2) The notice includes a written agreement between the existing and new permittees containing a specific date for transfer or permit responsibility, coverage, and liability between them, and the notice demonstrates that the financial responsibility requirements of §144.52(a)(7) will be met by the new permittee; and

(3) The Director does not notify the existing permittee and the proposed new permittee of his or her intent to modify or revoke and reissue the permit. A modification under this paragraph may also be a minor modification under §144.41. If this notice is not received, the transfer is effective on the date specified in the agreement mentioned in paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

§ 144.39 Modification or revocation and reissuance of permits.

When the Director receives any information (for example, inspects the facility, receives information submitted by the permittee as required in the permit (see §144.51 of this chapter), receives a request for modification or revocation and reissuance under §124.5, or conducts a review of the permit file) he or she may determine whether or not one or more of the causes listed in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section for modification or revocation and reissuance or both exist. If cause exists, the Director may modify or revoke and reissue the permit accordingly, subject to the limitations of paragraph (c) of this section, and may

request an updated application if necessary. When a permit is modified, only the conditions subject to modification are reopened. If a permit is revoked and reissued, the entire permit is reopened and subject to revision and the permit is reissued for a new term. See §124.5(c)(2) of this chapter. If cause does not exist under this section or §144.41 of this chapter, the Director shall not modify or revoke and reissue the permit. If a permit modification satisfies the criteria in §144.41 for "minor modifications" the permit may be modified without a draft permit or public review. Otherwise, a draft permit must be prepared and other procedures in part 124 must be followed.

(a) *Causes for modification.* The following are causes for modification. For Class I hazardous waste injection wells, Class II, or Class III wells the following may be causes for revocation and reissuance as well as modification; and for all other wells the following may be cause for revocation or reissuance as well as modification when the permittee requests or agrees.

(1) *Alterations.* There are material and substantial alterations or additions to the permitted facility or activity which occurred after permit issuance which justify the application of permit conditions that are different or absent in the existing permit.

(2) *Information.* The Director has received information. Permits other than for Class II and III wells may be modified during their terms for this cause only if the information was not available at the time of permit issuance (other than revised regulations, guidance, or test methods) and would have justified the application of different permit conditions at the time of issuance. For UIC area permits (§144.33), this cause shall include any information indicating that cumulative effects on the environment are unacceptable.

(3) *New regulations.* The standards or regulations on which the permit was based have been changed by promulgation of new or amended standards or regulations or by judicial decision after the permit was issued. Permits other than for Class I hazardous waste injection wells, Class II, or Class III

wells may be modified during their terms for this cause only as follows:

(i) For promulgation of amended standards or regulations, when:

(A) The permit condition requested to be modified was based on a promulgated part 146 regulation; and

(B) EPA has revised, withdrawn, or modified that portion of the regulation on which the permit condition was based, and

(C) A permittee requests modification in accordance with §124.5 within ninety (90) days after FEDERAL REGISTER notice of the action on which the request is based.

(ii) For judicial decisions, a court of competent jurisdiction has remanded and stayed EPA promulgated regulations if the remand and stay concern that portion of the regulations on which the permit condition was based and a request is filed by the permittee in accordance with §124.5 within ninety (90) days of judicial remand.

(4) *Compliance schedules.* The Director determines good cause exists for modification of a compliance schedule, such as an act of God, strike, flood, or materials shortage or other events over which the permittee has little or no control and for which there is no reasonably available remedy. See also §144.41(c) (minor modifications).

(b) *Causes for modification or revocation and reissuance.* The following are causes to modify or, alternatively, revoke and reissue a permit:

(1) Cause exists for termination under §144.40, and the Director determines that modification or revocation and reissuance is appropriate.

(2) The Director has received notification (as required in the permit, see §144.41(d)) of a proposed transfer of the permit. A permit also may be modified to reflect a transfer after the effective date of an automatic transfer (§144.38(b)) but will not be revoked and reissued after the effective date of the transfer except upon the request of the new permittee.

(3) A determination that the waste being injected is a hazardous waste as defined in §261.3 either because the definition has been revised, or because a previous determination has been changed.

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(c) *Facility siting.* Suitability of the facility location will not be considered at the time of permit modification or revocation and reissuance unless new information or standards indicate that a threat to human health or the environment exists which was unknown at the time of permit issuance.

[48 FR 14189, Apr. 1, 1983, as amended at 53 FR 28147, July 26, 1988]

§ 144.40 Termination of permits.

(a) The Director may terminate a permit during its term, or deny a permit renewal application for the following causes:

(1) Noncompliance by the permittee with any condition of the permit;

(2) The permittee's failure in the application or during the permit issuance process to disclose fully all relevant facts, or the permittee's misrepresentation of any relevant facts at any time; or

(3) A determination that the permitted activity endangers human health or the environment and can only be regulated to acceptable levels by permit modification or termination;

(b) The Director shall follow the applicable procedures in part 124 in terminating any permit under this section.

§ 144.41 Minor modifications of permits.

Upon the consent of the permittee, the Director may modify a permit to make the corrections or allowances for changes in the permitted activity listed in this section, without following the procedures of part 124. Any permit modification not processed as a minor modification under this section must be made for cause and with part 124 draft permit and public notice as required in § 144.39. Minor modifications may only:

(a) Correct typographical errors;

(b) Require more frequent monitoring or reporting by the permittee;

(c) Change an interim compliance date in a schedule of compliance, provided the new date is not more than 120 days after the date specified in the existing permit and does not interfere with attainment of the final compliance date requirement; or

(d) Allow for a change in ownership or operational control of a facility where the Director determines that no other change in the permit is necessary, provided that a written agreement containing a specific date for transfer of permit responsibility, coverage, and liability between the current and new permittees has been submitted to the Director.

(e) Change quantities or types of fluids injected which are within the capacity of the facility as permitted and, in the judgment of the Director, would not interfere with the operation of the facility or its ability to meet conditions described in the permit and would not change its classification.

(f) Change construction requirements approved by the Director pursuant to § 144.52(a)(1) (establishing UIC permit conditions), provided that any such alteration shall comply with the requirements of this part and part 146.

(g) Amend a plugging and abandonment plan which has been updated under § 144.52(a)(6).

Subpart E—Permit Conditions

§ 144.51 Conditions applicable to all permits.

The following conditions apply to all UIC permits. All conditions applicable to all permits shall be incorporated into the permits either expressly or by reference. If incorporated by reference, a specific citation to these regulations (or the corresponding approved State regulations) must be given in the permit.

(a) *Duty to comply.* The permittee must comply with all conditions of this permit. Any permit noncompliance constitutes a violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act and is grounds for enforcement action; for permit termination, revocation and reissuance, or modification; or for denial of a permit renewal application; except that the permittee need not comply with the provisions of this permit to the extent and for the duration such noncompliance is authorized in an emergency permit under § 144.34.

(b) *Duty to reapply.* If the permittee wishes to continue an activity regulated by this permit after the expiration date of this permit, the permittee