

Volatile Organic Compounds/Clean Air Act: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Proposes Revisions to Aerosol Coatings Emission Standards



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09/23/2021

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) announced a proposed rule in the September 17th Federal Register that would revise the Clean Air Act National Volatile Organic Compound (“VOC”) Emission Standards for Aerosol Coatings (“Aerosol Standards”). See 86 Fed. Reg. 51851.

The Aerosol Standards establish reactivity-based emission standards for the aerosol coatings category.

VOCs are chemicals that vaporize (i.e., become a gas). EPA has defined VOCs as any substance which participates in atmospheric photochemical reactions. In other words, any substance that contributes to the formation of smog. They can be emitted from consumer products and a number of manufacturing processes.

The Clean Air Act requires that EPA control VOC emissions from specific categories of sources. Such controls are intended to reduce emissions contributing to ozone formation and ozone nonattainment.

The Aerosol Standards were originally promulgated a number of years ago. They have been revised a number of times. The Aerosol Standards are found in 40 C.F.R. 59, Subpart E, which contains the responsibility of defined parties, definitions, legal requirements, recordkeeping, reporting requirements and category limits. They establish reactivity-based emission limits.

EPA’s September 17th Federal Register Notice states that the proposed rule would:

- Update the product-weighted reactivity limits for aerosol coatings categories
- Add new compounds and reactivity factors
- Update existing reactivity values
- Revise the default reactivity factors
- Amend the thresholds for compounds regulated
- Add electronic reporting revisions

The American Coatings Association had previously submitted two petitions to EPA for rulemaking requesting that EPA:

- Update its Table of MIR values
- Adjust the default
- Modify the regulatory language to allow for changing the value of existing compounds
- Add 16 aerosol coatings compounds to its Table of MIR values

A copy of the Federal Register Notice can be downloaded [here](#).