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(1) Rescind the notice to the State of a public hearing if the State takes corrective action satisfactory to the Administrator; or

(2) Rescind the finding for which the notice was given and promptly notify the State of such rescission; or

(3) Uphold the finding for which the notice was given. In this event, the Administrator shall revoke the State's decision that filtration was not required or revoke the compliance schedule approved by the State, and promulgate, as appropriate, with any appropriate modifications, a revised filtration decision or compliance schedule and promptly notify the State of such action.

(f) Revocation of a State's filtration decision or compliance schedule and/or promulgation of a revised filtration decision or compliance schedule shall take effect 90 days after the State is notified under paragraph (e)(3) of this section.

Subpart J [Reserved]

Subpart K—Variances for Small System

SOURCE: 63 FR 43848, Aug. 14, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 142.301 What is a small system variance?

Section 1415(e) of the Act authorizes the issuance of variances from the requirement to comply with a maximum contaminant level or treatment technique to systems serving fewer than 10,000 persons. The purpose of this subpart is to provide the procedures and criteria for obtaining these variances. The regulations in this subpart shall take effect on September 14, 1998.

§ 142.302 Who can issue a small system variance?

A small system variance under this subpart may only be issued by either:

(a) A State that is exercising primary enforcement responsibility under Subpart B for public water systems under the State's jurisdiction; or

(b) The Administrator, for a public water system in a State which does not

have primary enforcement responsibility.

§ 142.303 Which size public water systems can receive a small system variance?

(a) A State exercising primary enforcement responsibility for public water systems (or the Administrator for other systems) may grant a small system variance to public water systems serving 3,300 or fewer persons.

(b) With the approval of the Administrator pursuant to §142.312, a State exercising primary enforcement responsibility for public water systems may grant a small system variance to public water systems serving more than 3,300 persons but fewer than 10,000 persons.

(c) In determining the number of persons served by the public water system, the State or Administrator must include persons served by consecutive systems. A small system variance granted to a public water system would also apply to any consecutive system served by it.

§ 142.304 For which of the regulatory requirements is a small system variance available?

(a) A small system variance is not available under this subpart for a national primary drinking water regulation for a microbial contaminant (including a bacterium, virus, or other organism) or an indicator or treatment technique for a microbial contaminant.

(b) A small system variance under this subpart is otherwise only available for compliance with a requirement specifying a maximum contaminant level or treatment technique for a contaminant with respect to which:

(1) a national primary drinking water regulation was promulgated on or after January 1, 1986; and

(2) the Administrator has published a small system variance technology pursuant to Section 1412(b)(15) of the Act.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (b)(1): Small system variances are not available for public water systems above the pre-1986 maximum contaminant level even if subsequently revised. If the Agency revises a pre-1986 maximum contaminant level and makes it more stringent, then a variance would be available for that contaminant, but only up to the pre-1986 maximum contaminant level.

§ 142.305 When can a small system variance be granted by a State?

No small system variance can be granted by a State until the later of the following:

- (a) 90 days after the State proposes to grant the small system variance;
- (b) If a State is proposing to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving 3,300 or fewer persons and the Administrator objects to the small system variance, the date on which the State makes the recommended modifications or responds in writing to each objection; or
- (c) If a State is proposing to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving a population more than 3,300 and fewer than 10,000 persons, the date the Administrator approves the small system variance. The Administrator must approve or disapprove the variance within 90 days after it is submitted to the Administrator for review.

REVIEW OF SMALL SYSTEM VARIANCE APPLICATION

§ 142.306 What are the responsibilities of the public water system, State and the Administrator in ensuring that sufficient information is available and for evaluation of a small system variance application?

(a) A public water system requesting a small system variance must provide accurate and correct information to the State or the Administrator to issue a small system variance in accordance with this subpart. A State may assist a public water system in compiling information required for the State or the Administrator to issue a small system variance in accordance with this subpart.

(b) Based upon an application for a small system variance and other information, and before a small system variance may be proposed under this subpart, the State or the Administrator must find and document the following:

- (1) The public water system is eligible for a small system variance pursuant to §§142.303 (*i.e.*, the system serves a population of fewer than 10,000 persons) and 142.304 (*i.e.*, the contaminant for which the small system variance is

sought is not excluded from variance eligibility);

(2) The public water system cannot afford to comply, in accordance with the affordability criteria established by the State (or by the Administrator in States which do not have primary enforcement responsibility), with the national primary drinking water regulation for which a small system variance is sought, including by:

- (i) Treatment;
- (ii) Alternative sources of water supply;
- (iii) Restructuring or consolidation changes, including ownership change and/or physical consolidation with another public water system; or
- (iv) Obtaining financial assistance pursuant to Section 1452 of the Act or any other Federal or State program;

(3) The public water system meets the source water quality requirements for installing the small system variance technology developed pursuant to guidance published under section 1412(b)(15) of the Act;

(4) The public water system is financially and technically capable of installing, operating and maintaining the applicable small system variance technology; and

(5) The terms and conditions of the small system variance, as developed through compliance with §142.307, ensure adequate protection of human health, considering the following:

- (i) The quality of the source water for the public water system; and
- (ii) Removal efficiencies and expected useful life of the small system variance technology.

§ 142.307 What terms and conditions must be included in a small system variance?

(a) A State or the Administrator must clearly specify enforceable terms and conditions of a small system variance.

(b) The terms and conditions of a small system variance issued under this subpart must include, at a minimum, the following requirements:

- (1) Proper and effective installation, operation and maintenance of the applicable small system variance technology in accordance with guidance

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published by the Administrator pursuant to section 1412(b)(15) of the Act, taking into consideration any relevant source water characteristics and any other site-specific conditions that may affect proper and effective operation and maintenance of the technology;

(2) Monitoring requirements, for the contaminant for which a small system variance is sought, as specified in 40 CFR part 141; and

(3) Any other terms or conditions that are necessary to ensure adequate protection of public health, which may include:

(i) Public education requirements; and

(ii) Source water protection requirements.

(c) The State or the Administrator must establish a schedule for the public water system to comply with the terms and conditions of the small system variance which must include, at a minimum, the following requirements:

(1) Increments of progress, such as milestone dates for the public water system to apply for financial assistance and begin capital improvements;

(2) Quarterly reporting to the State or Administrator of the public water system's compliance with the terms and conditions of the small system variance;

(3) Schedule for the State or the Administrator to review the small system variance under paragraph (d) of this section; and

(4) Compliance with the terms and conditions of the small system variance as soon as practicable but not later than 3 years after the date on which the small system variance is granted. The Administrator or State may allow up to 2 additional years if the Administrator or State determines that additional time is necessary for the public water system to:

(i) Complete necessary capital improvements to comply with the small system variance technology, secure an alternative source of water, or restructure or consolidate; or

(ii) Obtain financial assistance provided pursuant to section 1452 of the Act or any other Federal or State program.

(d) The State or the Administrator must review each small system vari-

ance granted not less often than every 5 years after the compliance date established in the small system variance to determine whether the public water system continues to meet the eligibility criteria and remains eligible for the small system variance and is complying with the terms and conditions of the small system variance. If the public water system would no longer be eligible for a small system variance, the State or the Administrator must determine whether continuing the variance is in the public interest. If the State or the Administrator finds that continuing the variance is not in the public interest, the variance must be withdrawn.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

§ 142.308 What public notice is required before a State or the Administrator proposes to issue a small system variance?

(a) At least fifteen (15) days before the date of proposal, and at least thirty (30) days prior to a public meeting to discuss the proposed small system variance, the State, Administrator, or public water system as directed by the State or Administrator, must provide notice to all persons served by the public water system. For billed customers, identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, this notice must include the information listed in paragraph (c) of this section. For other persons regularly served by the system, identified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, the notice shall include the information identified in paragraph (d) of this section. Notice must be provided to all persons served by:

(1) Direct mail or other home delivery to billed customers or other service connections, and

(2) Any other method reasonably calculated to notify, in a brief and concise manner, other persons regularly served by the system. Such methods may include publication in a local newspaper, posting in public places or delivery to community organizations.

(b) At the time of proposal, the State must publish a notice in the State equivalent to the FEDERAL REGISTER or a newspaper or newspapers of wide circulation in the State, or, in the case of the Administrator, in the FEDERAL

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REGISTER. This notice shall include the information listed in paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) The notice in paragraphs (a)(1) and (b) of this section must include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) Identification of the contaminant[s] for which a small system variance is sought;

(2) A brief statement of the health effects associated with the contaminant[s] for which a small system variance is sought using language in appendix C of part 141 subpart O of this chapter;

(3) The address and telephone number at which interested persons may obtain further information concerning the contaminant and the small system variance;

(4) A brief summary, in easily understandable terms, of the terms and conditions of the small system variance;

(5) A description of the consumer petition process under §142.310 and information on contacting the EPA Regional Office;

(6) a brief statement announcing the public meeting required under §142.309(a), including a statement of the purpose of the meeting, information regarding the time and location for the meeting, and the address and telephone number at which interested persons may obtain further information concerning the meeting; and

(7) In communities with a large proportion of non-English-speaking residents, as determined by the primacy agency, information in the appropriate language regarding the content and importance of the notice.

(d) The notice in paragraph (a)(2) of this section must provide sufficient information to alert readers to the proposed variance and direct them where to receive additional information.

(e) At its option, the State or the Administrator may choose to issue separate notices or additional notices related to the proposed small system variance, provided that the requirements in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section are satisfied.

(f) Prior to promulgating the final variance, the State or the Administrator must respond in writing to all significant public comments received relating to the small system variance.

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Response to public comment and any other documentation supporting the issuance of a variance must be made available to the public after final promulgation.

§ 142.309 What are the public meeting requirements associated with the proposal of a small system variance?

(a) A State or the Administrator must provide for at least one (1) public meeting on the small system variance no later than 15 days after the small system variance is proposed.

(b) At the time of the public meeting, the State or Administrator must prepare and make publicly available, in addition to the information listed in §142.308(c), either:

(1) The proposed small system variance, if the public meeting occurs after proposal of the small system variance; or

(2) A draft of the proposed small system variance, if the public meeting occurs prior to proposal of the proposed small system variance.

(c) Notice of the public meeting must be provided in the manner required under §142.308 at least 30 days in advance of the public meeting. This notice must be provided by the State, the Administrator, or the public water system as directed by the State or Administrator.

§ 142.310 How can a person served by the public water system obtain EPA review of a State proposed small system variance?

(a) Any person served by the public water system may petition the Administrator to object to the granting of a small system variance within 30 days after a State proposes to grant a small system variance for a public water system.

(b) The Administrator must respond to a petition filed by any person served by the public water system and determine whether to object to the small system variance under §142.311, no later than 60 days after the receipt of the petition.

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EPA REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SMALL SYSTEM VARIANCES

§ 142.311 What procedures allow the Administrator to object to a proposed small system variance or overturn a granted small system variance for a public water system serving 3,300 or fewer persons?

(a) At the time a State proposes to grant a small system variance under this subpart, the State must submit to the Administrator the proposed small system variance and all supporting information, including any written public comments received prior to proposal.

(b) The Administrator may review and object to any proposed small system variance within 90 days of receipt of the proposed small system variance. The Administrator must notify the State in writing of each basis for the objection and propose a modification to the small system variance to resolve the concerns of the Administrator. The State must make the recommended modification, respond in writing to each objection, or withdraw the proposal to grant the small system variance.

(c) If the State issues the small system variance without resolving the concerns of the Administrator, the Administrator may overturn the State decision to grant the variance if the Administrator determines that the State decision does not comply with the Act or this rule.

§ 142.312 What EPA action is necessary when a State proposes to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving a population of more than 3,300 and fewer than 10,000 persons?

(a) At the time a State proposes to grant a small system variance to a public water system serving a population of more than 3,300 and fewer than 10,000 persons, the State must submit the proposed small system variance and all supporting information, including public comments received prior to proposal, to the Administrator.

(b) The Administrator must approve or disapprove the small system variance within 90 days of receipt of the proposed small system variance and

supporting information. The Administrator must approve the small system variance if it meets each requirement within the Act and this rule.

(c) If the Administrator disapproves the small system variance, the Administrator must notify the State in writing of the reasons for disapproval and the small system variance does not become effective. The State may resubmit the small system variance for review and approval with modifications to address the objections stated by the Administrator.

§ 142.313 How will the Administrator review a State's program under this subpart?

(a) The Administrator must periodically review each State program under this subpart to determine whether small system variances granted by the State comply with the requirements of the Act, this rule and the affordability criteria developed by the State.

(b) If the Administrator determines that small system variances granted by a State are not in compliance with the requirements of the Act, this rule or the affordability criteria developed by the State, the Administrator shall notify the State in writing of the deficiencies and make public the determinations.

(c) The Administrator's review will be based in part on quarterly reports prepared by the States pursuant to § 142.15(a)(1) relating to violations of increments of progress or other violated terms or conditions of small system variances.

PART 143—NATIONAL SECONDARY DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS

Sec.

143.1 Purpose.

143.2 Definitions.

143.3 Secondary maximum contaminant levels.

143.4 Monitoring.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 300f *et seq.*

SOURCE: 44 FR 42198, July 19, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

§ 143.1 Purpose.

This part establishes National Secondary Drinking Water Regulations pursuant to section 1412 of the Safe