

Air Pollution**EPA ADOPTS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR PRIMARY COPPER, LEAD, ZINC SMELTERS**

Performance standards for new and modified primary copper, zinc, and lead smelters (40 CFR 60) were adopted by the Environmental Protection Agency January 15 (41 FR 2332).

According to EPA, the approved regulations are expected to reduce average emissions of smelter particulates and sulfur dioxide by approximately 95 percent from previous uncontrolled levels.

The regulations limit discharge of particulate matter from copper, zinc, and lead smelters to 50 milligrams per dry cubic meter at standard conditions; prohibit discharge of gases containing sulfur dioxide in excess of .065 percent of volume; and prohibit discharge of visible smokestack emissions exhibiting 20 percent or greater opacity.

Reverberatory smelting furnaces at copper smelters processing copper ores with a high level of volatile impurities are not covered by the regulations. According to EPA, those furnaces are excluded from the regulations to permit processing of high-impurity ores at "reasonable costs." The agency said future use of the impure ores would be "negligible." However, EPA said, smelters excluded from the regulations because of the impure ores are to be required to keep monthly records of the weight percent of the impurities in the charges processed, and they must maintain continuous monitoring and recording of SO₂ and opacity.

Although the regulations will cause no significant economic impact in the lead smelting industry, the agency said, implementation of the standards for new copper and zinc smelters is expected to require a \$41 million investment over the next five years and fifth year annualized costs of \$14 million.

The regulations, effective immediately, will be published in Environment Reporter — Federal Regulations.

General Policy**EPA OFFICIALS ANSWER CRITICISM THAT RESEARCH PROGRAMS ARE 'MEDIocre'**

Charges that Environmental Protection Agency research programs are "mediocre" were answered by EPA officials in a series of letters to two of the agency's critics.

Wilson K. Talley, EPA assistant administrator for research and development, said in a letter to Gordon MacDonald, of Dartmouth University, that his testimony before a House Science subcommittee (Current Developments, December 5, 1975, p. 1365) charging that EPA laboratories are not "rewarding places to work" was "a source of concern to our laboratory staffs."

Talley said the reorganization of his office was designed to handle difficulties in organizational and management structures. However, he said other issues, such as facilities, balance between extramural and in-house work, and composition of laboratory staff, had to be handled differently. He said he has asked the Science Advisory Board to assess the quality of all EPA scientific work.

Talley invited MacDonald to visit EPA laboratories, saying "a first-hand acquaintance with the day-to-day activities" would be "a rewarding experience."

Eric D. Schneider, director of EPA's Environmental Research Laboratory, Narragansett, R.I., and David W. Duttweiler, director of EPA's laboratory in Athens, Ga.,

echoed the invitation to visit EPA laboratories. Schneider said the Narragansett laboratory staff met MacDonald's criterion that a staff must identify itself and its work with its mission of environmental protection to operate successfully. Schneider said a visit would "restore your faith in the quality of scientific research performed in-house by EPA".

Duttweiler said MacDonald's charge of mediocrity, "if it has been accurately reported, is unfounded" and is a "disservice to many EPA researchers." He said a visit to the Georgia laboratory and an appraisal of its work would lead MacDonald to realize "that your disparagement ... was truly unwarranted."

Duttweiler also wrote John M. Neuhold, Utah State University, another subcommittee witness, that the reorganization of the Office of Research and Development "has effectively eliminated the problems that decentralization was intended to correct." He said he disagreed with Neuhold's charge that "lines of communication are as cumbersome as before."

Michigan**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL UNIT ASKS EPA TO HELP FUND PROPOSED PCB CONTROLS**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources January 13 requested Environmental Protection Agency assistance in funding a proposed program to control polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the state.

Michigan has introduced legislation at the state level to control the manufacture, sale, and use of PCBs in the state.

Proposed legislation has received the support of Governor William G. Milliken.

W.G. Turney, chief of the bureau of water management in the Department of Natural Resources, said in a letter to EPA Region V Administrator Francis T. Mayo that because it is "unlikely" the Federal Government will ban PCB use, Michigan has introduced state legislation to ban use of the compounds except in transformers and capacitors.

"Since the success of such a bill at the state level may have national impact as a demonstration-type program," he said, "we feel it would be in the best interest of EPA to assist Michigan "in implementing provisions of the bill. Turney said the bill probably will be enacted "quickly."

Howard A. Tanner, department director, said the department "is pleased with the proposed legislation and confident that it would provide adequate mechanisms for control and limitation of the PCB problem."

The department, he said, also "is optimistic that levels of PCB contamination will decline once remaining environmental losses are eliminated."

Tanner said a study of PCBs in Lake Superior fish which was conducted by Northern Michigan University indicates concentrations above the five parts-per-million prescribed by the Food and Drug Administration as acceptable for consumption.

"There is nothing new or alarming about the NMU report," he said, "as PCB levels have not declined in the Great Lakes since being discovered in 1970."

"What is significant, however, is the fact that public attention is now being directed at the real problem, that PCBs are more than a contaminant to fish, that they are finding their way through a multitude of small sources into biological systems."

Tanner said evidence indicates PCBs interfere with the reproduction of Great Lakes fish and fish-eating birds, in-