

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**40 CFR Part 141**

[FRL-6217-3]

Suspension of Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Requirements for Small Public Water Systems**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: EPA is taking direct final action on the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation (UCMR) for public water systems. The UCMR requires all public water systems to monitor for unregulated contaminants during one year every five years. The direct final rule concerns the suspension of monitoring by small and medium systems for monitoring scheduled to begin after December 31, 1998. EPA is issuing these revisions since the revised UCMR program, required by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments, is projected to begin during this third round of monitoring. This will allow systems serving 10,000 or fewer persons to save the cost of monitoring under the existing regulation, which if performed as scheduled would overlap with monitoring under the revised UCMR program.

In the "Rules and Regulations" section of the **Federal Register**, EPA is approving the modification to the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation suspending monitoring by systems serving 10,000 or fewer persons as a direct final rule without prior proposal because EPA views this as a noncontroversial revision and anticipate no adverse comment. EPA has explained our reasons for this approval in the preamble to the direct final rule. If EPA receives no adverse comment, it will not take further action on this

proposed rule. If EPA receives adverse comment, the Agency will withdraw the direct final rule and it will not take effect. EPA would then address all public comments in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. EPA will not institute a second comment period on this action. Any parties interested in commenting must do so at this time.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing by February 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to the Comment Clerk, docket number W-98-29, Water Docket (MC 4101), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460. Please submit an original and three copies of your comments and enclosures (including references).

The full record for this rulemaking has been established under docket number W-98-29 and includes supporting documentation as well as printed, paper versions of electronic comments. The full record is available for inspection from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays at the Water Docket, East Tower Basement, USEPA, 401 M Street, SW, Washington DC. For access to docket materials, please call 202-260-3027 to schedule an appointment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Charles Job, Standards and Risk Management Division, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (MC-4607), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460, (202) 260-7084 or Rachel Sakata, Standards and Risk Management Division, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (MC-4607), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460, (202) 260-2527. Information may also be obtained from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline. Callers within the United States may reach the Hotline at (800) 426-4791. The Hotline is open Monday

through Friday, excluding Federal holidays, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: To ensure that EPA can read, understand and therefore properly respond to comments, the Agency would prefer that commenters cite, where possible, the paragraph(s) or sections in the notice or supporting documents to which each comment refers.

Commenters should use a separate paragraph for each issue discussed.

Commenters who want EPA to acknowledge receipt of their comments should enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. No facsimiles (faxes) will be accepted. Comments may also be submitted electronically to ow-docket@epamail.epa.gov. Electronic comments must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Electronic comments must be identified by the docket number W-98-29. Comments and data will also be accepted on disks in WordPerfect in 5.1 format or ASCII file format. Electronic comments on this document may be filed online at many Federal Depository Libraries.

This document concerns the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation. For further information, please see the information provided in the direct final action that is located in the "Rules and Regulations" section of this **Federal Register** publication.

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 141

Environmental protection, Indians—lands, Intergovernmental relations, Radiation protection, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Water supply.

Dated: December 31, 1998.

Carol M. Browner,

Administrator.

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