

Because the notice is purely informational, EPA will be flexible in interpreting the requirement that the notice be mailed a reasonable time before the commencement of the trial burn. Ideally, the Agency anticipates that permitting agencies will mail the notice at least thirty days before the trial burn. However, as long as the notice is mailed sufficiently in advance of the scheduled trial burn so that the recipients would be expected to receive the notice prior to the commencement date, EPA would consider the notice timely.

It is EPA's intent that the trial burn notice requirements in §§ 270.62(b)(6) and 270.66(d)(3) apply only to initial trial burns, and not to subsequent trial burns that may be conducted as part of the permit modification procedures. EPA believes that the trial burn notices required by today's rule are not necessary in these latter circumstances, since the amount of time between modification approval and the subsequent trial burn is typically much shorter than the amount of time that may elapse between permit issuance and the initial trial burn. Moreover, the modification procedures in § 270.42 include provisions for involving the public throughout the modification submittal and approval process (e.g., through notices or public meetings). Of course, if there are substantial unforeseen delays between the approval of the modification request and the trial burn, EPA suggests that the permitting agency issue a notice in accordance with the procedures set forth in today's rule.

2. Notice of Planned Trial Burn Plan Approval for Interim Status Combustion Facilities (Proposed § 270.74(b) and (c)(3)). Trial burns at interim status facilities generally take place before permit issuance so that the permitting agency can set operating conditions in the permit based on the results of the trial burn. The proposed rule required the permitting agency to give public notice of the tentative approval of a trial burn plan for interim status incinerators and BIFs. The notice requirements are the same as those proposed for permitted incinerators and BIFs, except for an additional provision that the notice contain a schedule of activities that are required prior to permit issuance, including the permitting agency's anticipated schedule for trial burn plan approval and the actual trial burn.

Synopsis of Major Comments on § 270.74(b) and (c)(3). Many of the comments described in section E.1. above with regard to the trial burn notice for permitted incinerators and

BIFs also are relevant to the trial burn notice for interim status incinerators and BIFs (e.g., comments on the timing of the notice). A number of commenters raised the issue of a comment period on the trial burn plan for interim status facilities. A few commenters supported the idea, some opposed it, and several more asked EPA to clarify whether or not we would require a comment period on the tentatively approved trial burn plan. One commenter noted that this additional information was critical for interim status facilities where the public has not yet had an opportunity for involvement.

EPA's Response to Commenters. EPA has decided to finalize the provisions for interim status facilities with two slight changes from the proposal. First, the final rule provides for notice of the Director's intention to approve a trial burn plan, rather than his or her "tentative approval." In response to commenter concerns that the notice could be an extra time-consuming step in the process, EPA has changed the language to better reflect its intent that the notice occurs in the final stages of review, rather than being a separate step following completion of review.

Second, we proposed to place the notice requirements in a newly created § 270.74, which contained interim status combustion permitting requirements. However, since EPA is not finalizing the combustion permitting sections of the proposed rule at this time, we have integrated the notice requirements with the regulations for the permitting of interim status combustion facilities, i.e., § 270.62(d) for incinerators and § 270.66(g) for BIFs.

Although the Agency has not changed the trial burn plan notice requirements for interim status combustors in the final rule, the requirements are in a different format than in the proposal. First, the notice requirements are now located in the centers of the paragraphs (§ 270.62(d) for incinerators and § 270.66(g) for BIFs) along with other permitting requirements. Since the notice contents for interim status facilities differ from the contents for permitted facilities with regard to announcing planned approval of the trial burn plan, we are amending §§ 270.62(d) and 270.66(g) to list the specific information that the permitting agency must include in the notices for interim status combustors. Second, we do not list the timing and distribution requirements for the notice for interim status facilities, as we did in the proposed rule. Instead, each of these paragraphs refers the reader to another paragraph (§ 270.62(b) and § 270.66(d), respectively) that covers the notice of

the trial burn for permitted facilities. For instance, § 270.62(d) states that the agency shall issue the notice "in accordance with the timing and distribution requirements of (b)(6) of this section." The requirements in (b)(6) are the new notice requirements that we are issuing today for permitted combustion facilities (see section E.1. above). In following the standards in (b)(6), the permitting agency will send the notice to the facility mailing list and the appropriate units of State and local government within a reasonable period of time before the trial burn. Section 270.66(g) takes the same approach for BIFs by referring to paragraph (d) of that section.

For permitted combustion facilities, EPA has clarified in §§ 270.62(b)(6) and 270.66(d)(3) that a facility applying for a permit may not commence its trial burn until after the permitting agency has issued the required notice. EPA does not believe that comparable clarifying language is necessary in §§ 270.62(d) or 270.66(g) for the notice of planned approval of a trial burn plan for an interim status facility. EPA believes it is clear under these provisions that the permitting agency will not approve a plan and, consequently, the facility cannot commence its trial burn, until issuance of the required notice.

The role of the notice for interim status BIFs and incinerators is much the same as the notice for permitted facilities, i.e., to keep the public informed throughout the trial burn stage. The final rule does not require a comment period after the permitting agency gives notice of the planned approval of the trial burn plan and the trial burn dates for interim status facilities. The trial burn notice, like the other notices required by this rule, is primarily intended to keep the community informed while not slowing down the permitting process. Since interim status facilities are already operating, and continue to operate while the permitting agency evaluates the permit application, EPA does not believe it would generally be in the public interest to delay the evaluation process in order to provide a formal response to comments on the trial burn plan. However, if members of the public submit significant information or views relating to the trial burn plan, the Director should consider this information, and may choose to respond in writing at the time of plan approval. In addition, a formal comment period will, of course, still take place after draft permit issuance.

EPA believes that the final rule strikes the appropriate balance between public