

owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000.

The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this final rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

#### Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this final rule so that they can better evaluate its effects on them and participate in the rulemaking. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the office listed in **ADDRESSES** in this preamble. Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247).

#### Collection of Information

This final rule would call for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520.).

#### Federalism

We have analyzed this final rule under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, and have determined that this rule does not have implications for federalism under that Order.

#### Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 or more in any one year. Though this final rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

#### Taking of Private Property

This final rule would not affect a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

#### Civil Justice Reform

This final rule meets applicable standards in sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform, to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

#### Protection of Children

We have analyzed this final rule under Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This rule is not an economically significant rule and would not create an environmental risk to health or risk to safety that might disproportionately affect children.

#### Indian Tribal Governments

This final rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

#### Energy Effects

We have analyzed this final rule under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use. We have determined that it is not a “significant energy action” under that order because it is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866 and is not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy. It has not been designated by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs as a significant energy action.

#### Environment

We have considered the environmental impact of this final rule and concluded that, under figure 2–1, paragraph (34) (g), of Commandant Instruction M16475.IC, this rule is categorically excluded from further environmental documentation.

#### List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

#### PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1(g), 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; 49 CFR 1.46.

#### \$ 165.908 [Removed]

2. Remove § 165.908.

Dated: October 21, 2002.

**P.G. Gerrity,**

*Commander, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Detroit.*

[FR Doc. 02–27609 Filed 10–29–02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–15–P**

#### POSTAL SERVICE

##### 39 CFR Part 111

#### Metal Strapping Materials on Pallets

**AGENCY:** Postal Service.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** This final rule revises the standards for securing pallets of mail, whether an individual pallet of mail, a pallet composed of several individual pallets stacked to form a single unit, or a pallet with a pallet box containing mail, by excluding the use of metal strapping or metal banding material. These revisions will also exclude metal buckles, seals, or other devices used to secure the ends of nonmetal strapping material used on pallets of mail. These revisions will not change current approved methods or other materials for securing the mail to pallets.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 31, 2003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** O.B. Akinwale, (703) 292–3643.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On July 24, 2002, the Postal Service published for public comment in the **Federal Register** a proposed rule (FR 67 48425–48426) that excluded the use of metal strapping or metal banding material to secure pallets of mail, whether an individual pallet of mail, a pallet composed of several individual pallets stacked to form a single unit, or a pallet with a pallet box containing mail. The Postal Service also invited comments on the proposed rule from interested

parties and accepted comments until August 23, 2002. This final rule contains the DMM standards adopted by the Postal Service after review of the comment that was submitted.

#### Evaluation of Comments Received

The Postal Service received one piece of correspondence offering comments on the July 24 proposed rule. The respondent is a large business mailer.

Based on additional costs expected to be incurred, due to stock on hand, the mailer proposed a December 31, 2003, implementation date.

Metal straps, bands, buckles, or seals used to secure the ends of other nonmetal strapping material, can create serious safety hazards to personnel and equipment preparing, processing and distributing the mail. In addition, the accumulation and disposal of metal strapping materials can create additional hazardous situations and environmental concerns. It should be noted that current Postal Service standards for packaging mail prohibit the use of metal or wire for securing mail into packages, and the standards for traying mail specify the use of plastic straps for securing tray sleeves and lids.

The Postal Service is committed to integrating safety into all postal operations, not only for its employees but also for its customers. Serious injuries, such as deep cuts, can occur when metal bands are applied, often when removed. In addition, the Postal Service is committed to conservation initiatives and supports environmentally sound practices. In keeping with these two commitments, the Postal Service believes that eliminating the use of metal straps or on palletized mail will improve employee and customer safety and promote better resource conservation.

The *Domestic Mail Manual* is revised as follows. These changes are incorporated by reference in the Code of Federal Regulations. See 39 CFR part 111.

#### List of Subjects in 39 CFR Part 111

Administrative practice and procedure, Postal Service.

#### PART 111—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for 39 CFR Part 111 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 5 U.S.C. 552(a); 39 U.S.C. 101, 401, 403, 404, 414, 3001–3011, 3201–3219, 3403–3406, 3621, 3626, 5001.

2. Revise the following sections of the *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) as set forth below:

#### *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### M Mail Preparation and Sortation

##### M000 General Preparation Standards

\* \* \* \* \*

##### M040 Pallets

##### M041 General Standards

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 1.0 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 1.3 Securing Pallets

[Revise 1.3 to read as follows:]

Except for stacked pallets under 3.1 and pallet boxes under 4.3, each loaded pallet of mail must be prepared to maintain the integrity of the mail and the entire pallet load during transport and handling using one of the following methods:

a. Securing with at least two straps or bands of appropriate material. Wire or metal bands, straps, buckles, seals, and similar metal fastening devices may not be used.

b. Wrapping with stretchable or shrinkable plastic.

c. Securing with at least two straps or bands of appropriate material and wrapping with stretchable or shrinkable plastic. Wire and metal bands and straps, metal buckles, metal seals, and similar metal fastening devices may not be used.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 3.0 STACKING PALLETES

[Revise the heading of 3.1 and the text of item d to read as follows:]

##### 3.1 Physical Characteristics

\* \* \* \* \*

d. The stack of pallets is secured with at least two straps or bands of appropriate material to maintain the integrity of the stacked pallets during transport and handling. Wire or metal bands, straps, buckles, seals, and similar metal fastening devices may not be used. The stack of pallets may not be secured together with stretchable or shrinkable plastic.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 4.0 PALLET BOXES

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 4.3 Securing

[Revise 4.3 to read as follows:]

Pallet boxes must be secured to the pallet with strapping, banding, stretchable, plastic, shrinkwrap, other material (Wire or metal bands, straps, buckles, seals, and similar metal fastening devices may not be used) that

ensures that the pallet can be safely unloaded from vehicles, transported, and processed as a single unit to the point where the contents are distributed with the load intact if: \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

An appropriate amendment to 39 CFR 111 will be published to reflect the changes.

**Stanley F. Mires,**

*Chief Counsel, Legislative.*

[FR Doc. 02–27499 Filed 10–29–02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7710–12–P**

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

### 40 CFR Part 52

[NC 104–200239(a); FRL–7400–4]

#### Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina: Approval of Revisions to Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Regulations Within the North Carolina State Implementation Plan

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Direct final rule.

**SUMMARY:** On August 7, 2002, the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources submitted revisions to the North Carolina State Implementation Plan (SIP). These revisions are contained within 15A NCAC 2D .1000 Motor Vehicle Emissions Control Standards. North Carolina has submitted these rules for an enhanced inspection and maintenance (I/M) program which is a component of the State's Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) Budget and Allowance Trading Program. The I/M program establishes reductions which are being utilized by the State as part of their NO<sub>x</sub> SIP budget. Approval of these I/M rules allow North Carolina to gain credits ranging from 914 tons in 2004 to 4,385 credits in 2007. These credits are then used to determine the number of credits that will be made available for new growth in North Carolina. This submittal resolves all outstanding issues and allows for EPA's final approval of the State's NO<sub>x</sub> Budget and Allowance Trading Program. The final approval of the North Carolina NO<sub>x</sub> Budget and Allowance Trading Program, which was proposed for approval in 67 FR 42519 and received no adverse comments, will be processed in a later action. The EPA is approving these revisions.

**DATES:** This direct final rule is effective December 30, 2002 without further notice, unless EPA receives adverse