

e.g., a published numbered VA form (OF 522) or comparable form approved by the local VA facility"; and in paragraph (d)(2), removing "OF522". These references to OF522, *Request for Administration of Anesthesia and Performance of Operations and Other Procedures*, are obsolete. Use of the OF522, which is a general form, in VA health care facilities is being phased out. Facilities now have access to procedure-specific VA-authorized consent forms.

Unfunded Mandates

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 requires, at 2 U.S.C. 1532, that agencies prepare an assessment of anticipated costs and benefits before issuing any rule that may result in an expenditure by State, local, or tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of \$100 million or more (adjusted annually for inflation) in any given year. This rule would have no such effect on State, local, or tribal governments, or the private sector.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

This rule contains no new collections of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501–3521). The existing information collections associated with the informed consent procedures under § 17.32 have been approved by OMB under 2900–0853.

Executive Order 12866

Executive Order 12866 directs agencies to assess all costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, when regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits (including potential economic, environmental, public health and safety, and other advantages; distributive impacts; and equity). The Order classifies a rule as a significant regulatory action requiring review by the Office of Management and Budget if it meets any one of a number of specified conditions, including: Having an annual affect on the economy of \$100 million or more; creating a serious inconsistency or interfering with an action of another agency, materially altering the budgetary impact of entitlements or the rights of entitlement recipients, or raising novel legal or policy issues. VA has examined the economic, legal, and policy implications of this proposed rule and concluded that it is a significant regulatory action because it raises novel policy issues.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Secretary hereby certifies that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a

substantial number of small entities as they are defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601–612. The rule will affect only individuals and will not directly affect any small entities. Therefore, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 605(b), this rule is exempt from the initial and final regulatory flexibility analysis requirements of sections 603 and 604.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance numbers and titles for the programs affected by this document are 64.009, Veterans Medical Care Benefits; 64.010, Veterans Nursing Home Care; and 64.011, Veterans Dental Care.

List of Subjects in 38 CFR Part 17

Administrative practice and procedure, Alcohol abuse, Alcoholism, Claims, Day care, Dental health, Drug abuse, Foreign relations, Government contracts, Grant programs—health, Grant programs—veterans, Health care, Health facilities, Health professions, Health records, Homeless, Medical and dental schools, Medical devices, Medical research, Mental health programs, Nursing homes, Philippines, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Scholarships and fellowships, Travel and transportation expenses, Veterans.

Approved: November 29, 2005.

Gordon H. Mansfield,

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

For the reasons set out above, VA proposes to amend 38 CFR part 17 to read as follows:

PART 17—MEDICAL

1. The authority citation for part 17 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 1721, and as stated in specific sections.

2. Section 17.32 is amended by:

- a. Revising the section heading.
- b. In paragraph (a), in the definition of *signature consent*, removing “, e.g., a published numbered VA form (OF 522) or comparable form approved by the local VA facility”.
- c. Revising paragraph (d)(2).
- d. Revising the authority citation at the end of the section.

The revisions read as follows:

§ 17.32 Informed consent and advance care planning.

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(2) A patient or surrogate will sign with an “X” when the patient or surrogate has a debilitating illness or disability, i.e., significant physical

impairment and/or difficulty in executing a signature due to an underlying health condition(s), or is unable to read or write. When the patient’s or surrogate’s signature is indicated by an “X”, two adults must witness the act of signing. By signing, the witnesses are attesting only to the fact that they saw the patient or surrogate and the practitioner sign the form. The signed form must be filed in the patient’s medical record. A properly executed VA-authorized consent form is valid for a period of 60 calendar days. If, however, the treatment plan involves multiple treatments or procedures, it will not be necessary to repeat the informed consent discussion and documentation so long as the course of treatment proceeds as planned, even if treatment extends beyond the 60-day period. If there is a change in the patient’s condition that might alter the diagnostic or therapeutic decision, the consent is automatically rescinded.

* * * * *

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7331–7334)

[FR Doc. E6–3290 Filed 3–8–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320–01–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[R04–OAR–2005–AL–0002–200528b; FRL–8043–1]

Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Alabama: State Implementation Plan Revision

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: EPA is approving revisions to the Alabama State Implementation Plan (SIP), submitted by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) on September 11, 2003. The revisions include modifications to Alabama’s open burning rules found at Alabama Administrative Code (AAC) Chapter 335–3–3–.01. These revisions are part of Alabama’s strategy to meet the national ambient air quality standards by reducing emissions of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. Open burning creates smoke that contains fine particles (PM_{2.5}) and precursors to ozone. ADEM has found that elevated levels of PM_{2.5} mirror the months when ozone levels are highest (May–September). These rules are intended to help control levels of PM_{2.5} and ozone precursors that contribute to high ozone

and PM_{2.5} levels. Today's action is being taken pursuant to section 110 of the Clean Air Act. In its September 11, 2003, submittal, ADEM also proposed SIP revisions to include changes to AAC Chapter 335-3-4, concerning opacity. EPA is not acting on that part of the revision at this time.

In the Rules Section of this **Federal Register**, EPA is approving Alabama's SIP revision as a direct final rule without prior proposal because the Agency views this as a noncontroversial submittal and anticipates no adverse comments. A rationale for the approval is set forth in the direct final rule, and incorporated herein by reference. If no significant, material, and adverse comments are received in response to this rule, no further activity is contemplated with regard to this proposed action. If EPA receives adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed action. EPA will not institute a second comment period on this document. Any parties interested in commenting on this document should do so at this time.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before April 10, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted by mail to: Stacy DiFrank, Regulatory Development Section, Air Planning Branch, Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street, SW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960. Comments may also be submitted electronically, or through hand delivery/courier. Please follow the detailed instructions described in the direct final rule, **ADDRESSES** section which is published in the Rules Section of this **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stacy DiFrank, Regulatory Development Section, Air Planning Branch, Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street, SW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960. The telephone number is (404) 562-9042. Ms. DiFrank can also be reached via electronic mail at difrank.stacy@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For additional information, see the direct final rule which is published in the Rules Section of this **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 17, 2006.

A. Stanley Meiburg,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region 4.

[FR Doc. 06-2183 Filed 3-8-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 578

[Docket No. NHTSA-06-24109; Notice 1]

RIN 2127-AJ83

Civil Penalties

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This document proposes to increase the maximum aggregate civil penalties for violations of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, as amended. This action would be taken pursuant to the Federal Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, which requires us to review and, as warranted, adjust penalties based on inflation at least every four years. Additionally, this document proposes to codify statutory amendments to our penalty provisions and to make a technical correction to the text of the agency's penalty regulation.

DATES: Comments on the proposal are due April 10, 2006.

Proposed effective date: 30 days after date of publication of the final rule in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- Web Site: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.
- Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

Instructions: All submissions must include the agency name and docket number or Regulatory Identification

Number (RIN) for this rulemaking. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the Request for Comments heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading under Rulemaking Analyses and Notices.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <http://dms.dot.gov> at any time or to Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Kido, Office of Chief Counsel, NHTSA, telephone (202) 366-5263, facsimile (202) 366-3820, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In order to preserve the remedial impact of civil penalties and to foster compliance with the law, the Federal Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (28 U.S.C. 2461 Notes, Pub. L. No. 101-410), as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Pub. L. No. 104-134) (referred to collectively as the "Adjustment Act" or, in context, the "Act"), requires us and other Federal agencies to adjust civil penalties for inflation. Under the Adjustment Act, following an initial adjustment that was capped by the Act, these agencies must make further adjustments, as warranted, to the amounts of penalties in statutes they administer at least once every four years.

NHTSA's initial adjustment of civil penalties under the Adjustment Act was published on February 4, 1997. 62 FR 5167. At that time, we codified the penalties under statutes administered by NHTSA, as adjusted, in 49 CFR part 578, Civil Penalties. On July 14, 1999, we further adjusted certain penalties. 64 FR 37876. In 2000, the Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation ("TREAD") Act increased the maximum penalties under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act as amended (sometimes referred to as the "Motor Vehicle Safety Act"). We codified those amendments in part 578 on November 14, 2000. 65 FR 68108. On August 7, 2001, we also adjusted certain penalty amounts pertaining to odometer requirements