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October 7, 1997

LETTER TO ALL MANUFACTURERS AND ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

Subject: Identification of Priorities for 42 CFR 84 Rule Making

In response to public comments received from its May 16, 1996 request (61 FR 24740), NIOSH is announcing the intended priority order for the development of the next modules to 42 CFR Part 84. The priority order is based on the comments and data in the public record. The priority order of the planned modules is provided to help the respirator community plan for potential changes. NIOSH Team Chairs have been designated for the top four priority areas.

NIOSH intends to propose technical modules in the following areas:

1. Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) - Establishment of N, R, and P series filters; Use of active low flow or low pressure warning devices; and Addition of new duration ratings. (W. Hoffman - Chair)
2. Airline Respirator - Single airline for pneumatic devices and breathing air; Airline suits (i.e. Department of Energy/Los Alamos National Laboratory suits); Metabolic simulator tests; Air flow/pressure rate requirements; and Air flow measuring and warning devices. (S. Terry - Chair)
3. Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) - Maximum weight limit, with accessory definition; Upgrade of cylinder air specifications; Incorporation of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requirements; Non-facepiece SCBA; Metabolic simulator tests; Air flow/pressure rate requirements; and Alternatives to Department of Transportation and Compressed Gas Association requirements.
4. Gas and Vapor Respirator - Certification to a wider variety of specific substances and addition of service life categories.

NIOSH intends to propose Administrative/Quality Assurance modules in the following areas:

1. Corrections to 42 CFR part 84 and existing program policies not included in the regulations. (J. Dower - Chair)
2. Upgrade of Quality Assurance requirements; Use of independent quality auditors in the certification program and updated fee schedule. (M. Bowyer - Chair)
3. Use of independent testing laboratories in the certification program and restructured fee schedule.

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Further information regarding these activities will be announced in a soon-to-be published Federal Register notice.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roland Berry Ann".

Roland Berry Ann
Certification and Quality Assurance Branch
Division of Respiratory Disease Studies