

# ALKYLPHENOLS BULLETIN

An Update from the Alkylphenols & Ethoxylates Research Council

October 1, 2014

## **EPA Significant New Use Rule (SNUR) for Nonylphenol and Nonylphenol Ethoxylates Does Not Affect Existing Uses or Products**

Today EPA issued a [Proposed Rule](#) to apply a Significant New Use Rule (SNUR) to nonylphenol (NP) and nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs) identified by commercially inactive Chemical Abstract System (CAS) numbers. The Proposed SNUR is not a ban and imparts no restrictions on existing uses of commercially relevant NP or NPE compounds, which are identified by CAS numbers not listed in the Proposed Rule. Rather, the SNUR is intended to require notification to EPA of any new (or resumed) uses of the inactive NP and NPE CAS numbers in order to provide the Agency with the opportunity to evaluate the new uses for any unreasonable risks. It also identifies those uses of commercially relevant NP CAS numbers that are known to the Agency and imposes a SNUR only on any new uses.

There has been some miscommunication about the relevance of this SNUR to the use of NPE in laundry and cleaning applications. This is likely because EPA's 2010 Chemical Action Plan for NP/NPEs proposed to issue a SNUR specifically for the use of NPEs in laundry. Since SNURs are not applicable to current uses of existing chemicals, EPA's original plan was contingent on the complete and voluntary deselection of NPEs in industrial laundry and cleaning products. Regardless of voluntary agreements with some industrial laundry and cleaning manufacturers, the Proposed Rule reports that there is ongoing use of NPE in the U.S. market. This use, when related to CAS numbers for NPE not listed in the Proposed Rule, would not be subject to the SNUR.

The Proposed SNUR is based on concerns about the aquatic toxicity of NP and NPE. It points out that EPA has finalized ambient Water Quality Criteria for NP, which are listed in the SNUR, apparently in error, as "6.6 µg/L for acute exposures and 1.7 µg/L for chronic exposures". The actual [EPA WQC](#) for NP are 28µg/L (acute) and 6.6 µg/L (chronic) for freshwater and 7.0 µg/L

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(acute) and 1.7 µg/L (chronic) for salt water. It is interesting to note that with the exception of surface water monitoring data drawn from a study published more than 30 years ago, the monitoring data cited in the proposed SNUR document do not exceed these WQC. This provides confidence that current and existing uses of NP and NPE do not represent a risk to fish and aquatic species in U.S. surface waters.

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*The Alkylphenols & Ethoxylates Research Council has been in existence for over 25 years and is composed of manufacturers, processors and raw material suppliers of alkylphenols and alkylphenol ethoxylates, including NP and NPE. Its mission is to promote the safe use of AP and AP derivatives through research, product stewardship and outreach efforts, within the framework of responsible chemical management. The Research Council has sponsored over four million dollars in research and reviewed over four thousand studies on these compounds.*