

be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceedings. Copies of this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection in the Public Reference Room. This filing may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.fed.us/online/rims.htm> (call 202-208-2222 for assistance).

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**  
*Acting Secretary.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. SA99-15-000]

#### Vidor Pipeline Company; Notice of Petition For Adjustment

April 28, 1999.

Take notice that on March 5, 1999, Vidor Pipeline Company (VPC) filed pursuant to Section 502(c) of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 (NGPA), a petition for adjustment under Section 285.123(b)(1)(ii) of the Commission's Regulations to permit VPC to use its tariff on file with the Railroad Commission of Texas (TRC), for services performed pursuant to NGPA Section 311.

In support of its petition, VPC states that it is an intrastate pipeline providing transportation service within the State of Texas, and is a gas utility subject to the jurisdiction of the TRC. VPC states that it will in the future perform transportation services pursuant to NGPA Section 311(a)(2) on behalf of interstate pipeline companies and/or local distribution companies served by interstate pipeline companies. VPC states its system will soon be connected to the interstate facilities of Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation.

VPC requests an adjustment from 18 CFR Part 284(C) to permit VPC to base its rates for Section 311(a) services on the rates contained in its tariff for Hess Energy Services Company, LLC filed with the TRC. VPC believes the interstate transportation service performed on behalf of Hess Energy Services Company, LLC can be viewed as "comparable" to the services contemplated under Section 311.

The regulations applicable to this proceeding are found in Subpart K of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. Any person desiring to participate in this rate proceeding must file a motion to intervene in accordance with Sections 385.211 and 385.214 of

the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures. All motions must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission within 15 days after publication of this notice in the Federal Register. The petition for adjustment is on file with the Commission and is available for public inspection. This filing may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.fed.us/online/rims.htm> (please call (202) 208-2222 for assistance).

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**  
*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-11088 Filed 5-3-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

#### Notice of OASIS How Working Group Meeting

April 28, 1999.

Take notice that on May 24, 1999, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and on May 25, 1999, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon, the OASIS How Working Group (How Group) will conduct its monthly meeting at the Commission's offices at 888 First Street, N.E., Room 3M-2A, Washington, D.C. 20426. The How Group is a voluntary industry group with a diverse membership that has made recommendations to the Commission on the Open Access Same-time Information System (OASIS) and related matters. It is expected that the How Group will discuss OASIS-related issues at the meetings. The meetings will be open to interested participants and the public.

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**  
*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-11081 Filed 5-3-99; 8:45 am]

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## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6335-6]

#### Peer Review Workshop on Guidance for Conducting Health Risk Assessment of Chemical Mixtures

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

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The EPA Risk Assessment Forum (Forum) is announcing a peer review workshop convened by Eastern Research Group, Inc., an EPA contractor, for scientific peer review of the EPA draft document Guidance for

Conducting Health Risk Assessment of Chemical Mixtures. The workshop will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, and will be open to members of the public as observers. The peer review, to be conducted by scientists from outside EPA, is being organized to review the procedures and related issues presented in the document Guidance for Conducting Health Risk Assessment of Chemical Mixtures. The Forum Technical Panel will consider the opinions of experts outside the Agency in finalizing the document.

**DATES:** The workshop will begin on Thursday, May 20, 1999 at 9:00 a.m. and end on Friday, May 21, 1999 at 4:00 p.m. Members of the public may attend as observers.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Briedenbach Research Center, 26 West Martin Luther King Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45268. Since seating capacity is limited, please contact Eastern Research Group, Inc., Tel.: (781) 674-7374, by May 14, 1999 to attend the workshop as an observer.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For technical inquires, contact Dr. Richard Hertzberg, U.S. EPA Region 4, 10th Floor WMD, 61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3104. Tel.: (404)562-8663. The document will be Internet-accessible from the Risk Assessment Forum publications page, at <http://www.epa.gov/ncea/raf/rafpub.htm>. Inquiries concerning the workshop should be directed to Eastern Research Group, Inc.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** To address concerns over health risks from multichemical exposures, the U.S. EPA issued Guidelines for Health Risk from Exposure to Chemical Mixtures in 1986 (U.S. EPA, 1986). Those Guidelines described broad concepts related to mixtures exposure and toxicity and included few specific procedures. In 1989, the U.S. EPA published guidance for the Superfund program on hazardous waste that gave practical steps for conducting a mixtures risk assessment (U.S. EPA, 1989). Also in 1989, the U.S. EPA published the revised document on the use of Toxicity Equivalence Factors for characterizing health risks of the class of chemicals including the dibenzo-dioxins and dibenzofurans. In 1990, the U.S. EPA published a Technical Support Document to provide more detailed information on toxicity of whole mixtures and on toxicologic interactions (e.g., synergism) between chemicals in a binary (two-chemical) mixture (U.S. EPA, 1990). The concept of toxicologic similarity was also discussed.

This guidance document, *Guidance for Conducting Health Risk Assessment of Chemical Mixtures*, represents a supplement to the original Guidelines of 1986 and is intended to reflect the evolutionary scientific development in the area of chemical mixtures risk assessment. Consequently, many of the former discussions have been reiterated. New guidance has been provided that gives more specific details on the nature of the desired information and the procedures to use in analyzing the data. This supplement to the earlier guidances is organized according to the type of data available to the risk assessor, ranging from data rich to data poor situations. Procedures are described for assessment using data on the mixture of concern, data on a toxicologically related mixture, as well as data on the mixture component chemicals. The state of science varies dramatically for these three approaches. No single approach is recommended in this supplementary guidance. Instead, guidance is given for the use of several approaches depending on the nature and quality of the data. Although several of the procedures described in the guidance have not yet been applied in actual health risk assessments, their use and the generation of data to support their use is encouraged, along with research on new procedures to improve or replace those discussed. As new information relevant to health risk from exposure to chemical mixtures becomes available, additional guidance documents will be published. Following the external peer review, reviewers' comments will be addressed and the revised guidance will undergo Risk Assessment Forum final review.

Dated: April 26, 1999.

**William H. Farland,**

*Director, National Center for Environmental Assessment.*

[FR Doc. 99-11167 Filed 5-3-99; 8:45 am]

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## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6335-1]

### Notice of Availability of Topical Scientific Reports for an Integrated Assessment of the Causes and Consequences of Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in coordination with National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce, invite public comments on six topical scientific reports requested by the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) for an assessment of the causes and consequences of hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico as required by section 604(a) of Public Law 105-383. The six topic papers will be used by the CENR Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Working Group to prepare an Integrated Assessment which will provide ecological and economic analysis of various options for reducing nutrient loads carried by the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico. This Integrated Assessment will be delivered to the President, Congress and the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by August 2, 1999. All comments received after the formal comment period will be reviewed by the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Working Group and delivered to the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force for their consideration along with the final Integrated Assessment.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be submitted to: Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Working Group National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, WS 13446 SSMC4, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. John Field, National Ocean Service, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, WS 13446 SSMC4, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, telephone 301-713-3060 x135, Internet John.Field@noaa.gov; or Dr. Mary Belefski, U.S. EPA, Assessment and Watershed Protection Division (AWPD), 401 M Street, S.W. (4503F), Washington, D.C. 20460, telephone (202) 260-7061; Internet: belefski.mary@epa.gov.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Purpose

The Environmental Protection Agency leads the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force consisting of Federal, State, and Tribal members. The purpose of this group is to coordinate and support nutrient management and hypoxia related activities in the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico watersheds.

#### Status

These reports will provide the basis for the formulation of an Integrated Assessment of hypoxia in the northern Gulf of Mexico, as required in section 604(a) of Public Law 105-383. This law requires the assessment to consider the distribution, dynamics, and causes; ecological and economic consequences; sources and loads of nutrients transported by the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico; effects of reducing nutrient loads; methods for reducing nutrient loads; and the social and economic costs and benefits of such methods. This assessment will be delivered to the President and Congress and will subsequently provide the basis for the Action Plan required by section 604(b) of Public Law 105-383.

Each of the reports has undergone extensive peer review by independent scientific experts. These reports, along with the public comment on them, will be considered in developing the Integrated Assessment and, subsequently, the Action Plan.

The six reports are entitled:

**TOPIC 1—Characterization of hypoxia.** This report describes the seasonal, interannual, and long-term variation of hypoxia in the northern Gulf of Mexico, and its relationship to nutrient loadings. It also documents the relative roles of natural and human-induced factors in determining the size and duration of the hypoxic zone.

**TOPIC 2—Ecological and economic consequences of hypoxia.** This report presents an evaluation of the ecological and economic consequences of nutrient loading, including impacts on Gulf of Mexico fisheries and the regional and national economy.

**TOPIC 3—Flux and sources of nutrients in the Mississippi-Atchafalaya River Basin.** This report identifies the sources of nutrients within the Mississippi/Atchafalaya system and within the Gulf of Mexico with two distinct components, first, the geographic location of the most significant nutrient additions, and second, the relative importance of specific human activities in contributing to these loads.

**TOPIC 4—Effects of reducing nutrient loads to surface waters within the Mississippi River basin and Gulf of Mexico.** This report estimates the effects of nutrient source reductions in the Mississippi-Atchafalaya Basin on water quality in these waters and on primary productivity and hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.

**TOPIC 5—Reducing nutrient loads, especially nitrate-nitrogen, to surface water, groundwater, and the Gulf of**