



## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### 10 CFR Part 590

[DOE-HQ-2025-0010]

RIN 1901-AB67

## Amending the Administrative Procedures with Respect to the Import and Export of Natural Gas

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy (DOE); Fossil Energy.

**ACTION:** Direct final rule (DFR); request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** This DFR amends the regulations for the administrative procedures with respect to the import and export of natural gas to update and streamline the general requirements for filing documents with the Office of Fossil Energy (FE). Specifically, this change is made to remove references to offices that no longer exist, allow for the submission of documents online, allow for electronic service, update filing fee instructions, and remove the unnecessary and burdensome requirement that applicants submit multiple copies of applications, filings, and submittals.

**DATES:** The final rule is effective [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*], unless significant adverse comments are received by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]. Significant adverse comments oppose the rule and raise, alone or in combination, a serious enough issue related to each of the independent grounds for the rule that a substantive response is required. If significant adverse comments are received, notice will be published in the *Federal Register* before the effective date either withdrawing the rule or issuing a new final rule which responds to significant adverse comments.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are encouraged to submit comments using the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) under docket number DOE-HQ-2025-0010. Follow

the instructions for submitting comments. The docket for this final rule, which includes Federal Register notices, comments, and other supporting documents and materials, is available for review at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). All documents in the docket are listed in the [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) index. However, not all documents listed in the index may be publicly available, such as information that is exempt from public disclosure. The docket web page can be found at [www.regulations.gov/docket/DOE-HQ-2025-0010](http://www.regulations.gov/docket/DOE-HQ-2025-0010). The docket web page contains instructions on how to access all documents, including public comments, in the docket, as well as a summary.

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(4), a summary of this rule may be found at [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov), under the docket number.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. David Taggart, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of the General Counsel, GC-1, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121. Telephone: (202) 586-5281. Email: [DOEGeneralCounsel@hq.doe.gov](mailto:DOEGeneralCounsel@hq.doe.gov)

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### **I. General Discussion**

DOE is amending Part 590 of Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations by this direct final rule. Part 590 contains rules that govern the administrative procedures with respect to the import and export of natural gas. On July 25, 2018, DOE amended the Part 590 regulations for the first

time since being promulgated by DOE in 1989. See 83 FR 35106. DOE now amends the Part 590 regulations again to remove antiquated references and update submission processes to reduce the burden on the public. Notably, DOE is moving the general requirements for filing documents with FE to FE's website (<https://www.energy.gov/fe/regulation>). Doing so allows FE to update filing instructions to increase accuracy and decrease unnecessary burdens on the public. For example, the regulations as currently written require parties to submit "an original and fifteen (15) copies of all applications, filings and submittals" to FE. See § 590.103(a). This may have been an appropriate and reasonable requirement when the regulations were first promulgated in 1989, but this requirement does not serve any legitimate purpose today and only serves to create an unnecessary burden on the public. The regulations also currently require parties to physically file documents to the "Office of Fuels Program" (see § 590.104), an office that no longer exists. Additionally, the regulations as currently written do not contemplate submission, inspection, or service of documents through electronic means. See, e.g., §§ 590.103(a), 590.104, 590.106, 590.107(c), 590.107(e). Finally, the regulations as currently written are inaccurate with respect to the payment of filing fees (see § 590.207) since checks are no longer accepted and filing fees must be submitted electronically. DOE is updating these antiquated aspects of the regulation to bring the process into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **II. Procedural Issues and Regulatory Review**

### *A. Review Under Executive Orders 12866*

Executive Order ("E.O.") 12866, "Regulatory Planning and Review," requires agencies, to the extent permitted by law, to (1) propose or adopt a regulation only upon a reasoned determination that its benefits justify its costs (recognizing that some benefits and costs are difficult to quantify); (2) tailor regulations to impose the least burden on society, consistent with obtaining regulatory objectives, taking into account, among other things, and to the extent practicable, the costs of cumulative regulations; (3) select, in choosing among alternative regulatory approaches, those approaches that maximize net benefits; (4) to the extent feasible,

specify performance objectives, rather than specifying the behavior or manner of compliance that regulated entities must adopt; and (5) identify and assess available alternatives to direct regulation, including providing economic incentives to encourage the desired behavior, such as user fees or marketable permits, or providing information upon which choices can be made by the public.

#### *B. Review Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) requires preparation of an initial regulatory flexibility analysis (“IRFA”) and a final regulatory flexibility analysis (“FRFA”) for any rule that by law must be proposed for public comment, unless the agency certifies that the rule, if promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. As required by E.O. 13272, “Proper Consideration of Small Entities in Agency Rulemaking,” 67 FR 53461 (Aug. 16, 2002), DOE published procedures and policies on February 19, 2003, to ensure that the potential impacts of its rules on small entities are properly considered during the rulemaking process. 68 FR 7990. DOE has made its procedures and policies available on the Office of the General Counsel’s website ([www.energy.gov/gc/office-general-counsel](http://www.energy.gov/gc/office-general-counsel)).

DOE reviewed this amendment under the provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act and the policies and procedures published on February 19, 2003. This direct final rule streamlines and eliminates regulations. Therefore, DOE initially concludes that the impacts of the amendment would not have a “significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities,” and that the preparation of an IRFA is not warranted. DOE will transmit this certification and supporting statement of factual basis to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration for review under 5 U.S.C. 605(b).

#### *C. Review Under the Paperwork Reduction Act*

This amendment imposes no new information or record-keeping requirements. Accordingly, OMB clearance is not required under the Paperwork Reduction Act. (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).

#### *D. Review Under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*

DOE has analyzed this proposed action in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, (“NEPA”) and DOE’s NEPA implementing regulations (10 CFR part 1021). DOE’s regulations include a categorical exclusion for rulemakings that are strictly procedural. See 10 CFR part 1021, subpart D, appendix A6. DOE has determined that this rulemaking qualifies for categorical exclusion A6 because it is a strictly procedural rulemaking.

#### *E. Review Under Executive Order 13132*

E.O. 13132, “Federalism,” 64 FR 43255 (Aug. 10, 1999), imposes certain requirements on Federal agencies formulating and implementing policies or regulations that preempt State law or that have federalism implications. The Executive Order requires agencies to examine the constitutional and statutory authority supporting any action that would limit the policymaking discretion of the States and to carefully assess the necessity for such actions. The Executive Order also requires agencies to have an accountable process to ensure meaningful and timely input by State and local officials in the development of regulatory policies that have federalism implications. On March 14, 2000, DOE published a statement of policy describing the intergovernmental consultation process it will follow in the development of such regulations. 65 FR 13735.

#### *F. Review Under Executive Order 12988*

With respect to the review of existing regulations and the promulgation of new regulations, section 3(a) of E.O. 12988, “Civil Justice Reform,” imposes on Federal agencies the general duty to adhere to the following requirements: (1) eliminate drafting errors and ambiguity, (2) write regulations to minimize litigation, (3) provide a clear legal standard for affected conduct rather than a general standard, and (4) promote simplification and burden reduction. 61 FR 4729 (Feb. 7, 1996). Regarding the review required by section 3(a), section 3(b) of E.O. 12988 specifically requires that Executive agencies make every reasonable effort to ensure that the regulation (1)

clearly specifies the preemptive effect, if any, (2) clearly specifies any effect on existing Federal law or regulation, (3) provides a clear legal standard for affected conduct while promoting simplification and burden reduction, (4) specifies the retroactive effect, if any, (5) adequately defines key terms, and (6) addresses other important issues affecting clarity and general draftsmanship under any guidelines issued by the Attorney General.

Section 3(c) of E.O. 12988 requires Executive agencies to review regulations in light of applicable standards in section 3(a) and section 3(b) to determine whether they are met or it is unreasonable to meet one or more of them. DOE has completed the required review and determined that, to the extent permitted by law, this amendment meets the relevant standards of E.O. 12988.

#### *G. Review Under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act*

Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (“UMRA”) requires each Federal agency to assess the effects of Federal regulatory actions on State, local, and Tribal governments and the private sector. Public Law 104–4, sec. 201 (codified at 2 U.S.C. 1531). For a regulatory action likely to result in a rule that may cause the expenditure by State, local, and Tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100 million or more in any one year (adjusted annually for inflation), section 202 of UMRA requires a Federal agency to publish a written statement that estimates the resulting costs, benefits, and other effects on the national economy. (2 U.S.C. 1532(a), (b)) The UMRA also requires a Federal agency to develop an effective process to permit timely input by elected officers of State, local, and Tribal governments on a “significant intergovernmental mandate,” and requires an agency plan for giving notice and opportunity for timely input to potentially affected small governments before establishing any requirements that might significantly or uniquely affect them. On March 18, 1997, DOE published a statement of policy on its process for intergovernmental consultation under UMRA. 62 FR 12820. DOE’s policy statement is also available at [www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/gcprod/documents/umra\\_97.pdf](http://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/gcprod/documents/umra_97.pdf).

DOE examined this amendment according to UMRA and its statement of policy and determined that the amendment does not contain a Federal intergovernmental mandate, nor is it expected to require expenditures of \$100 million or more in any one year by State, local, and Tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector. As a result, the analytical requirements of UMRA do not apply.

*H. Review Under the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999*

Section 654 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999 (Pub. L. 105–277) requires Federal agencies to issue a Family Policymaking Assessment for any rule that may affect family well-being. This amendment would not have any impact on the autonomy or integrity of the family as an institution. Accordingly, DOE has concluded that it is not necessary to prepare a Family Policymaking Assessment.

*I. Review Under Executive Order 12630*

Pursuant to E.O. 12630, “Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights,” 53 FR 8859 (March 18, 1988), DOE has determined that this amendment would not result in any takings that might require compensation under the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

*J. Review Under the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001*

Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2001 (44 U.S.C. 3516, note) provides for Federal agencies to review most disseminations of information to the public under information quality guidelines established by each agency pursuant to general guidelines issued by OMB. OMB’s guidelines were published at 67 FR 8452 (Feb. 22, 2002), and DOE’s guidelines were published at 67 FR 62446 (Oct. 7, 2002). Pursuant to OMB Memorandum M–19–15, Improving Implementation of the Information Quality Act (April 24, 2019), DOE published updated guidelines which are available at: <https://www.energy.gov/cio/department-energy-information-quality-guidelines>. DOE has reviewed this amendment under the OMB and DOE guidelines and has concluded that it is consistent with applicable policies in those guidelines.

*K. Review Under Executive Order 13211*

E.O. 13211, “Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use,” 66 FR 28355 (May 22, 2001), requires Federal agencies to prepare and submit to OIRA at OMB, a Statement of Energy Effects for any significant energy action. A “significant energy action” is defined as any action by an agency that promulgates or is expected to lead to promulgation of a final rule, and that: (1) is a significant regulatory action under Executive Order 12866, or any successor order and is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy; or (2) is designated by the Administrator of OIRA as a significant energy action. For any significant energy action, the agency must give a detailed statement of any adverse effects on energy supply, distribution, or use should the rule be implemented, and of reasonable alternatives to the action and their expected benefits on energy supply, distribution, and use.

DOE has tentatively determined that this rule would not have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy. Accordingly, DOE has not prepared a Statement of Energy Effects. DOE may prepare such a statement for the final rule, and seeks all comments.

*L. Review Under Additional Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda*

DOE has examined this amendment and has determined that it is consistent with the policies and directives outlined in E.O. 14154 “Unleashing American Energy,” E.O. 14192, “Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation,” and Presidential Memorandum, “Delivering Emergency Price Relief for American Families and Defeating the Cost-of-Living Crisis.” This amendment is expected to be an Executive Order 14192 deregulatory action.

*M. Congressional Notification*

As required by 5 U.S.C. 801, DOE will report to Congress on the promulgation of this rule before its effective date.

### **III. Approval of the Office of the Secretary**

The Secretary of Energy has approved publication of this notice of direct final rule; and request for comment.

#### **List of Subjects in 10 CFR Part 590**

Administrative practice and procedure, Exports, Natural gas, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

#### **Signing Authority**

This document of the Department of Energy was signed on May 9, 2025, by Chris Wright, Secretary of Energy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DOE. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DOE Federal Register Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication, as an official document of the Department of Energy. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the *Federal Register*.

Signed in Washington, DC, on May 9, 2025

Treena V. Garrett,  
Federal Register Liaison Officer,  
U.S. Department of Energy.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, DOE amends part 590 of chapter II, subchapter G, of title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as set forth below:

**PART 590 – ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPORT AND EXPORT OF NATURAL GAS**

1. The authority for part 590 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** Secs. 301(b), 402(f), and 644, Pub. L. 95-91, 91 Stat. 578, 585, and 599 (42 U.S.C. 7151(b), 7172(f), and 7254), Sec. 3, Act of June 21, 1938, c. 556, 52 Stat. 822 (15 U.S.C. 717b); E.O. 12009 (42 FR 46267, September 15, 1977); DOE Delegation Order Nos. 0204-111 and 0204-127 (49 FR 6684, February 22, 1984; 54 FR 11437, March 20, 1989).

§ 590.103 [Amended]

2. Amend § 590.103(a) by removing “under this part. Such document shall be considered officially filed with FE when it has been received and stamped with the time and date of receipt by the Office of Fuels Programs, FE. Documents transmitted to FE must be addressed as provided in § 590.104. All documents and exhibits become part of the record in the official FE docket file and will not be returned. An original and fifteen (15) copies of all applications, filings and submittals shall be provided to FE. No specific format is required. Applicants required to file quarterly reports as a condition to an authorization need only file an original and four (4) copies” and adding in its place “in accordance with the instructions at FE’s website: <https://www.energy.gov/fe/regulation>”.

3. Revise § 590.104 to read as follows:

**§ 590.104 Address for filing documents.**

Documents shall be filed in accordance with the instructions at FE’s website:

<https://www.energy.gov/fe/regulation>.

§ 590.105 [Amended]

4. Amend § 590.105(c) by removing “by the Office of Fuels Programs, FE,”.

§ 590.106 [Amended]

5. Amend § 590.106 by removing “shall be available for inspection and copying by the public during regular business hours between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Dockets are located in the Office of Fuels Programs, FE, Docket Room 3F-056, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585” and adding in its place “are available online (<https://www.energy.gov/fe/articles/electronic-docket-room-e-docket-room>). Additional information about the contents of dockets and how to access them can be found here: <https://www.energy.gov/fe/regulation>”.

§ 590.107 [Amended]

5. Amend § 590.107 by:

A. In paragraph (c), by adding “electronically (preferred),” after “may be served”.

B. In paragraph (e) by inserting “electronically (preferred),” after “on the parties by FE either”.

§ 590.108 [Amended]

7. Amend § 590.108(a)(4) by removing “for Fuels Programs” after “Deputy Assistant Secretary”.

§ 590.202 [Amended]

8. Amend § 590.202(a) by striking “a maximum of” before “two persons”.

§ 590.207 [Amended]

9. Amend § 590.207 by removing “Checks shall be made payable to “Treasury of the United States”” and adding in its place “Instructions on submitting the filing fee can be found here:

<https://www.energy.gov/fe/submitting-electronic-payment>”.