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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Docket Number CDC-2026-1849, NIOSH-357]

Request for Public Comment on the Proposed Short-Term Exposure Limit for Occupational Exposure to Carbon Monoxide

AGENCY: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACTION: Request for comment.

SUMMARY: The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an operating division of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), requests public comment on the draft document, *Proposed Short-Term Exposure Limit for Occupational Exposure to Carbon Monoxide*.

DATES: Electronic or written comments must be received by [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by docket number CDC-2026-1849 and docket number NIOSH-357, by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal*: https://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Mail*: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH Docket Office, 1090 Tusculum Avenue, MS C-34, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226-1998.

Instructions: All information received in response to this notice must include the agency name and docket number (CDC-2026-1849; NIOSH-357). All relevant comments, including any personal information provided, will be posted without change to https://www.regulations.gov. Do not submit comments by email. CDC does not accept

comments by email. For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to https://www.regulations.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: R. Todd Niemeier, PhD, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, MS-C15, 1090 Tusculum Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45226. Telephone: (513) 533-8166.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NIOSH is requesting public comment on a draft document, *Proposed Short-Term Exposure Limit for Occupational Exposure to Carbon Monoxide*, available in the dockets for this activity. NIOSH's existing recommendations for limiting carbon monoxide exposure in the workplace were published in 1972. This draft document details NIOSH's reassessment of the original recommended exposure limits and proposes updating the ceiling limit recommendation to a short-term exposure limit. This is being done in consideration of improvements to the science and technologies, including instrumentation and monitoring methods, involved in the recognition and control of workplace carbon monoxide health hazards since the publication of NIOSH's original recommendations in 1972. The final publication, which will address public comments, will be available on the NIOSH website and in the dockets for this activity (NIOSH-357 and CDC-2026-1849).

Background: NIOSH develops recommended occupational exposure limits (RELs) to protect workers from the risk of adverse health effects from acute and repeated exposures to chemicals. These include RELs, short-term exposure limits (STELs), or ceiling values depending on the length of exposure time the recommendation is intended to apply to. NIOSH bases its occupational exposure limits on detailed reviews of available human and animal toxicity data to identify health hazards, determine the level at which they are likely to occur in workers, and characterize the point at which the risk to health becomes unreasonable. The analytical feasibility of putting these recommendations into practice using available methods and measurement technologies is also factored into NIOSH's

decisions. The Current Intelligence Bulletin (CIB) 69: *NIOSH Practices in Occupational Risk Assessment* details the information and methods used to develop NIOSH RELs [NIOSH 2020].

The bases for NIOSH's current REL for carbon monoxide are detailed in the *Criteria for a Recommended Standard: Occupational Exposure to Carbon Monoxide* [NIOSH 1972]. The recommendations at that time included a REL applicable to a whole-day average and a ceiling limit meant not to be exceeded at any point. These recommendations considered the workplace exposure data that were available at the time and the capacity to put the recommendations into practice using available methods and technologies. As technologies and data availability have improved over the years, NIOSH has reassessed the original carbon monoxide exposure limit recommendations and proposes this update to ensure consistency with the current state-of-science and applicability to the modern workplace. This is consistent with NIOSH risk assessment practices [NIOSH 2020].

To facilitate the review of this document, NIOSH requests comment on the following specific questions for this draft proposed workplace short-term exposure limit for carbon monoxide:

1. Does this document clearly describe NIOSH's proposed update for short-term workplace exposure to carbon monoxide and its justification? If not, what specific information is missing from the document?
2. Are the scientific rationale and logic behind the proposed update to the short-term exposure limit clearly explained? If not, what specific information is needed to clarify the basis of the short-term exposure limit?
3. Does the scientific evidence and modeling support replacing the 1972 NIOSH 200-parts per million (ppm) ceiling limit with a 200-ppm, 10-minute time-weighted average (TWA) STEL? Does the proposed STEL adequately protect workers from acute carbon

monoxide effects associated with short-term exposures over the 10-minute averaging period? Does the proposed STEL adequately protect workers from acute carbon monoxide effects associated with short-term exposures over the course of a work day?

4. Are the tables, figures, and equations clearly presented? Are the analyses clearly explained in support of the proposed STEL? If not, what specific improvements would be helpful?

5. Are you aware of any additional scientific information reported in government publications, databases, peer-reviewed journals, or other sources that should be considered in this document? If yes, please provide the full reference citation of any additional information or publications that would be helpful to consider.

References

NIOSH [1972]. Criteria for a recommended standard: occupational exposure to carbon monoxide. Cincinnati, OH: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, DHEW (NIOSH) Publication No. 73-11000.

NIOSH [2020]. Current intelligence bulletin 69: NIOSH practices in occupational risk assessment. By Daniels RD, Gilbert SJ, Kuppusamy SP, Kuempel ED, Park RM, Pandalai SP, Smith RJ, Wheeler MW, Whittaker C, Schulte PA. Cincinnati, OH: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2020-106 (revised 03/2020).

John J. Howard,

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