

on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with Executive Order 12612, it is determined that this proposal would not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a Federalism Assessment.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this proposed regulation (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and (3) if promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. A copy of the draft regulatory evaluation prepared for this action is contained in the Rules Docket. A copy of it may be obtained by contacting the Rules Docket at the location provided under the caption ADDRESSES.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend part 39 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 39) as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. Section 39.13 is amended by adding a new airworthiness directive to read as follows:

Bell Helicopter Textron Canada: Docket No. 98-SW-62-AD.

Applicability: Model 206L-4 helicopters, serial numbers 52001 through 52208, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (b) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by

this AD; and, if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required within 300 hours time-in-service, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent intermittent hydraulic pressure to the flight controls and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Remove hydraulic relief valve, part number (P/N) 206-076-036-101, and replace it with an improved hydraulic relief valve, P/N 206-076-036-105, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions in Bell Helicopter Textron Alert Service Bulletin No. 206L-98-111, dated July 24, 1998.

(b) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification Office, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Certification Office.

(c) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with sections 21.197 and 21.199 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199) to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

Note 3: The subject of this AD is addressed in Transport Canada (Canada) AD No. CF-98-34, dated September 10, 1998.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on March 1, 1999.

Eric Bries,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 99-5723 Filed 3-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-U

POSTAL SERVICE

39 CFR Part 111

Packaging Material Standards for Flat-Size Periodicals and Standard Mail

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: To ensure that packages maintain their integrity during transportation and processing, the Postal Service plans to prohibit use of string and rubber bands to secure packages of flat-size Periodicals and Standard Mail when prepared on pallets. Mailers are also hereby notified that, in the future, the Postal Service plans to prohibit use of string and rubber bands to secure packages of flat-size Periodicals and Standard Mail prepared in sacks.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Mail or deliver written comments to the Manager, Mail Preparation and Standards, USPS Headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 6800, Washington, DC 20260-2405. Copies of all written comments will be available for inspection and photocopying at USPS Headquarters Library, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, 11th Floor N, Washington, DC between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lynn M. Martin, (202) 268-6351.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Many packages of Periodicals and Standard Mail, tendered to the Postal Service either on pallets or in sacks, do not maintain their integrity during transportation to postal plants and during postal processing. The Postal Service must redirect the resulting loose packages or broken packages (individual pieces) to manual operations for additional processing. If packages lose their integrity while being processed on small parcel and bundle sorters (SPBSs), this can cause machine slowdowns and stoppages, and can also result in these packages being manually processed by postal employees.

Experience shows that packages that are secured together using string or rubber bands are the most likely to lose their integrity. A study performed on behalf of the Postal Service Engineering and Development Center confirmed that packages prepared with string or rubber bands are the most likely to break, and that the tendency for these packages to break increases as the thickness of the package increases. This study also showed that for packages prepared with plastic strapping, the greater the thickness of the package, the more likely it is for the package to remain intact.

The Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) working group on Pallet, Container and Package Integrity independently confirmed that packages prepared with string and rubber bands are the most likely to break, resulting in increased costs for the Postal Service, and increased time to process the pieces in those packages. Accordingly, this MTAC work group supports the Postal Service's proposal to prohibit the use of string and rubber bands to secure packages for flat-size Standard and Periodicals Mail that is presented to the Postal Service on pallets. The Postal Service also believes that mailers should not use string or rubber bands to prepare packages of flat-size mail that are placed in sacks. In order to ease the burden imposed on mailers who currently use rubber bands and string to secure flat-

size packages in sacks, the Postal Service is not proposing to prohibit use of string and rubber bands on packages of flat-size mail placed in sacks at this time. Mailers are advised, however, that such a prohibition will be proposed in the future and should begin to plan accordingly.

A clarification that wire or metal strapping is not permissible banding material for flat-size mail prepared in sacks has also been included in these proposed revisions to packaging standards.

The Postal Service is proposing to implement this revision to the mail preparation standards on July 1, 1999.

Although exempt from the notice and comment requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553(b), (c)) regarding proposed rulemaking by 39 U.S.C. 410(a), the Postal Service invites comments on the following proposed revisions of the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM), incorporated by reference in the Code of Federal Regulations. See 39 CFR part 111.

List of Subjects in 39 CFR Part 111

Administrative practice and procedure.

PART 111—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for 39 CFR part 111 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552(a); 39 U.S.C. 101, 401, 403, 404, 414, 3001–3011, 3201–3219, 3403–3406, 3621, 3626, 5001.

2. Revise the following sections of the Domestic Mail Manual as set forth below:

M Mail Preparation and Sortation

M000 General Preparation Standards

* * * * *

M020 Packages and Bundles

1.0 BASIC STANDARDS

* * * * *

1.4 Palletization

[Amend 1.4 to read as follows:]

Packages and bundles on pallets must be able to withstand normal transit and handling without breakage or injury to USPS employees. Heavy-gauge shrinkwrap over plastic banding, shrinkwrap alone, or banding material alone is acceptable if the package or bundle can stay together during normal processing. Except for packages and bundles of individually polywrapped pieces, packages and bundles on BMC pallets must be shrinkwrapped. Packages and bundles of individually polywrapped pieces on BMC pallets

may be secured with banding material only. All packages and bundles on BMC pallets must be machinable on BMC parcel sorters. Machinability is determined by the USPS. If banding material is used to secure packages, it must be applied at least once around the length and once around the girth. String, string-like material closed with a tie, rubber bands, wire, and metal strapping are prohibited banding materials.

* * * * *

2.0 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS—FIRST-CLASS MAIL, PERIODICALS, AND STANDARD MAIL (A)

* * * * *

2.2 Flat-Size Pieces

[Amend 2.2 to read as follows:]

Flat-size pieces are subject to these packaging standards:

a. Flat-size pieces must always be secured into packages, unless excepted by standard. Wire and metal strapping must not be used as banding materials.

b. For Periodicals and Standard Mail prepared on pallets, string, string-like material closed with a tie, and rubber bands must not be used as banding material. For both palletized and sacked mail, it is recommended that plastic strapping or shrink-wrap, or both, be used to secure packages.

c. Though not subject to a specific thickness limit, packages of flat-size pieces must be secure and stable. Packages are subject to specific weight limits if palletized.

* * * * *

An appropriate amendment to 39 CFR 111.3 to reflect these changes will be published if the proposal is adopted.

Stanley F. Mires,

Chief Counsel, Legislative.

[FR Doc. 99-5784 Filed 3-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710-12-P

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

44 CFR Part 67

[Docket No. FEMA-7279]

Proposed Flood Elevation Determinations

AGENCY: Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: Technical information or comments are requested on the proposed base (1% annual chance) flood elevations and proposed base flood elevation modifications for the communities listed below. The base

flood elevations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that the community is required either to adopt or to show evidence of being already in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

DATES: The comment period is ninety (90) days following the second publication of this proposed rule in a newspaper of local circulation in each community.

ADDRESSES: The proposed base flood elevations for each community are available for inspection at the office of the Chief Executive Officer of each community. The respective addresses are listed in the following table.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matthew B. Miller, P.E., Chief, Hazards Study Branch, Mitigation Directorate, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW., Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646-3461, or (email) matt.miller@fema.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA or Agency) proposes to make determinations of base flood elevations and modified base flood elevations for each community listed below, in accordance with section 110 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, 42 U.S.C. 4104, and 44 CFR 67.4(a).

These proposed base flood and modified base flood elevations, together with the floodplain management criteria required by 44 CFR 60.3, are the minimum that are required. They should not be construed to mean that the community must change any existing ordinances that are more stringent in their floodplain management requirements. The community may at any time enact stricter requirements of its own, or pursuant to policies established by other Federal, state or regional entities. These proposed elevations are used to meet the floodplain management requirements of the NFIP and are also used to calculate the appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings built after these elevations are made final, and for the contents in these buildings.

National Environmental Policy Act

This proposed rule is categorically excluded from the requirements of 44 CFR Part 10, Environmental Consideration. No environmental impact assessment has been prepared.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Associate Director, Mitigation Directorate, certifies that this proposed