NOTIFICATION

Addendum

The following communication, dated 13 February 2020, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the United States of America.

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TITLE: Pipeline Safety: Safety of Underground Natural Gas Storage Facilities

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Department of Transportation (DOT)

ACTION: Final rule

SUMMARY: The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration is publishing this final rule to amend its minimum safety standards for underground natural gas storage facilities (UNGSFs). On 19 December 2016, PHMSA issued an interim final rule (IFR) establishing regulations in response to the 2015 Aliso Canyon incident and the subsequent mandate in section 12 of the Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act of 2016. The IFR incorporated by reference two American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practices (RPs): API RP 1170, "Design and Operation of Solution-mined Salt Caverns Used for Natural Gas Storage" (First Edition, July 2015); and API RP 1171, "Functional Integrity of Natural Gas Storage in Depleted Hydrocarbon Reservoirs and Aquifer Reservoirs" (First Edition, September 2015). The IFR required each provision in the API RPs to apply as mandatory (i.e., each "should" statement would apply as a "shall") unless an operator provides written justification for not implementing the practice, including an explanation for why it is impracticable and not necessary for safety. Based on the comments received to the IFR and a petition for reconsideration, PHMSA has determined that the RPs, as originally published, will provide PHMSA with a stronger basis upon which to base enforcement than the IFR. This final rule also addresses recommendations from commenters and a petition for reconsideration of the IFR by modifying compliance timelines, revising the definition of a UNGSF, clarifying the states' regulatory role, reducing recordkeeping and reporting requirements, formalizing integrity management practices, and adding risk management requirements for solution-mined salt caverns.

DATES: This final rule is effective on 13 March 2020. The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference on 18 January 2017.

Primary and Supporting Documents, as well as Comments, are accessible from Regulations.gov at: [<https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=PHMSA-2016-0016>](https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=PHMSA-2016-0016)

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-02-12/html/2020-00565.htm>

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-02-12/pdf/2020-00565.pdf>

<https://members.wto.org/crnattachments/2020/TBT/USA/20_1176_00_e.pdf>

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