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Increased Civil Penalties Take Effect for Those Who Knowingly Violate Federal Hazmat Laws and Regulations

PHMSA Publishes Final Rule Announcing Updated Civil Penalties for Hazmat Violations

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today announced that the increased maximum civil penalties for safety violations of Federal hazardous materials transportation law and the regulations issued under that law that lead to death, serious injuries or extensive property damage are now in effect. The increased penalties are being published in revisions to PHMSA’s regulations and reflect statutory changes in the [Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act](#) (MAP-21).

“These laws exist to keep people safe, and the increased penalties will help us make sure that those who knowingly violate the rules will be held accountable,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

Civil penalties are assessed for [knowingly violating](#) a hazardous material transportation law or a regulation, order, special permit or approval issued under that law. MAP-21 provides that the following updated civil penalties apply to violations occurring on or after October 1, 2012:

- The maximum civil penalty is increased from \$55,000 to \$75,000 for knowingly violating Federal hazardous material transportation law;
- The maximum civil penalty for knowingly violating laws and regulations that result in death, serious illness, severe injury to any person or substantial destruction of property is increased from \$110,000 to \$175,000;
- The \$250 minimum civil penalty has been eliminated;
- The civil penalty for violations related to training has reverted to \$450.

“Hazmat safety regulations exist to keep people, property, and the environment safe, and it is our responsibility to enforce these laws,” said PHMSA administrator Cynthia Quarterman. “When someone breaks the rules, it puts us all at risk. The consequences for doing so should be substantial enough to discourage misconduct.”

MAP-21 builds on the Department’s efforts to improve safety across all modes of transportation. Adjustments to civil penalties were authorized in *the [Hazardous Materials Transportation Safety Improvement Act of 2012](#)*, the section of MAP-21 that provides PHMSA with resources it needs to carry out its critical safety mission.

The final rule is available [here](#).

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.6 million mile pipeline transportation system and the nearly 1 million daily shipments of hazardous materials by land, sea, and air. Please visit <http://phmsa.dot.gov> for more information.

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