

SUBCHAPTER IV—NATURAL GAS  
CURTAILMENT POLICIES

**§ 3391. Natural gas for essential agricultural uses**

**(a) General rule**

Not later than 120 days after November 9, 1978, the Secretary of Energy shall prescribe and make effective a rule, which may be amended from time to time, which provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law (other than subsection (b)) and to the maximum extent practicable, no curtailment plan of an interstate pipeline may provide for curtailment of deliveries of natural gas for any essential agricultural use, unless such curtailment—

(1) does not reduce the quantity of natural gas delivered for such use below the use requirement specified in subsection (c); or

(2) is necessary in order to meet the requirements of high-priority users.

**(b) Curtailment priority not applicable if alternative fuel available**

If the Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, determines, by rule or order, that use of a fuel (other than natural gas) is economically practicable and that the fuel is reasonably available as an alternative for any agricultural use of natural gas, the provisions of subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to any curtailment of deliveries for such use.

**(c) Determination of essential agricultural use requirements**

The Secretary of Agriculture shall certify to the Secretary of Energy and the Commission the natural gas requirements (expressed either as volumes or percentages of use) of persons (or classes thereof) for essential agricultural uses in order to meet the requirements of full food and fiber production.

**(d) Authority of Secretary of Agriculture to intervene**

The Secretary of Agriculture may intervene as a matter of right in any proceeding before the Commission which is conducted in connection with implementing the requirements of the rule prescribed under subsection (a).

**(e) Limitation**

The Secretary of Agriculture may not exercise any authority under this section for the purpose of restricting the production of any crop.

**(f) Definitions**

For purposes of this section—

**(1) Essential agricultural use**

The term “essential agricultural use”, when used with respect to natural gas, means any use of natural gas—

(A) for agricultural production, natural fiber production, natural fiber processing, food processing, food quality maintenance, irrigation pumping, crop drying, or

(B) as a process fuel or feedstock in the production of fertilizer, agricultural chemicals, animal feed, or food,

which the Secretary of Agriculture determines is necessary for full food and fiber production.

**(2) High-priority user**

The term “high-priority user” means any person who—

(A) uses natural gas in a residence;

(B) uses natural gas in a commercial establishment in amounts of less than 50 Mcf on a peak day;

(C) uses natural gas in any school, hospital, or similar institution; or

(D) uses natural gas in any other use the curtailment of which the Secretary of Energy determines would endanger life, health, or maintenance of physical property.

(Pub. L. 95-621, title IV, §401, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3394.)

**§ 3391a. “Essential agricultural use” defined**

For the purposes of section 3391 of this title, the term “essential agricultural use” shall—

(1) include use of natural gas in sugar refining for production of alcohol;

(2) include use of natural gas for agricultural production on set-aside acreage or acreage diverted from the production of a commodity (as provided under the Agricultural Act of 1949 [7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.]) to be devoted to the production of any commodity for conversion into alcohol or hydrocarbons for use as motor fuel or other fuels; and

(3) for the 5-year period beginning on June 30, 1980, include use of natural gas in the distillation of fuel-grade alcohol from food grains or other biomass by facilities in existence on June 30, 1980, which do not have the installed capability to burn coal lawfully.

(Pub. L. 96-294, title II, §273, June 30, 1980, 94 Stat. 711.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Agricultural Act of 1949, referred to in par. (2), is act Oct. 31, 1949, ch. 792, 63 Stat. 1051, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 35A (§1421 et seq.) of Title 7, Agriculture. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1421 of Title 7 and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Biomass Energy and Alcohol Fuels Act of 1980 which is title II of the Energy Security Act, and not as part of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 which comprises this chapter.

**§ 3392. Natural gas for essential industrial process and feedstock uses**

**(a) General rule**

The Secretary of Energy shall prescribe and make effective a rule which provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law (other than subsection (b)) and to the maximum extent practicable, no interstate pipeline may curtail deliveries of natural gas for any essential industrial process or feedstock use, unless such curtailment—

(1) does not reduce the quantity of natural gas delivered for such use below the use requirement specified in subsection (c);

(2) is necessary in order to meet the requirements of high-priority users; or

(3) is necessary in order to meet the requirements for essential agricultural uses of natural gas for which curtailment priority is established under section 3391 of this title.

**(b) Curtailment priority applicable only if alternative fuel not available**

The provisions of subsection (a) shall apply with respect to any curtailment of deliveries for any essential industrial process or feedstock use only if the Commission determines that use of a fuel (other than natural gas) is not economically practicable and that no fuel is reasonably available as an alternative for such use.

**(c) Determination of essential industrial use requirements**

The Secretary of Energy shall determine and certify to the Commission the natural gas requirements (expressed either as volumes or percentages of use) of persons (or classes thereof) for essential industrial process and feedstock uses (other than those referred to in section 3391(f)(1)(B) of this title).

**(d) Definitions**

For purposes of this section—

**(1) Essential industrial process or feedstock use**

The term “essential industrial process or feedstock use” means any use of natural gas in an industrial process or as a feedstock which the Secretary determines is essential.

**(2) High-priority user**

The term “high-priority user” has the same meaning as given such term in section 3391(f)(2) of this title.

(Pub. L. 95-621, title IV, §402, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3395.)

**§ 3393. Establishment and implementation of priorities****(a) Establishment of priorities**

The Secretary of Energy shall prescribe the rules under sections 3391 and 3392 of this title pursuant to his authority under the Department of Energy Organization Act [42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.] to establish and review priorities for curtailments under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.].

**(b) Implementation of priorities**

The Commission shall implement the rules prescribed under sections 3391 and 3392 of this title pursuant to its authority under the Department of Energy Organization Act [42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.] to establish, review, and enforce curtailments under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.].

(Pub. L. 95-621, title IV, §403, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3396.)

## REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Department of Energy Organization Act, referred to in subsecs. (a) and (b), is Pub. L. 95-91, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 565, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 84 (§7101 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 7101 of Title 42 and Tables.

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsecs. (a) and (b), is act June 21, 1938, ch. 556, 52 Stat. 821, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 15B (§717 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this act to the Code, see section 717w of this title and Tables.

**§ 3394. Limitation on revoking or amending certain pre-1969 certificates of public convenience and necessity****(a) General rule**

The Commission may not, during the 10-year period beginning on November 9, 1978, revoke or amend any certificate of public convenience and necessity issued before January 1, 1969, under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717f] for the transportation of natural gas owned by any electric utility except upon the application of the person to whom such certificate was issued.

**(b) Commission curtailment authority**

The limitation under subsection (a) shall not affect the authority of the Commission to enforce any curtailment of deliveries of natural gas under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.].

(Pub. L. 95-621, title IV, §404, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3396.)

## REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsec. (b), is act June 21, 1938, ch. 556, 52 Stat. 821, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 15B (§717 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this act to the Code, see section 717w of this title and Tables.

SUBCHAPTER V—ADMINISTRATION,  
ENFORCEMENT, AND REVIEW**§ 3411. General rulemaking authority****(a) In general**

Except where expressly provided otherwise, the Commission shall administer this chapter. The Commission, or any other Federal officer or agency in which any function under this chapter is vested or delegated, is authorized to perform any and all acts (including any appropriate enforcement activity), and to prescribe, issue, amend, and rescind such rules and orders as it may find necessary or appropriate to carry out its functions under this chapter.

**(b) Authority to define terms**

Except where otherwise expressly provided, the Commission is authorized to define, by rule, accounting, technical, and trade terms used in this chapter. Any such definition shall be consistent with the definitions set forth in this chapter.

(Pub. L. 95-621, title V, §501, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3396; Pub. L. 101-60, §3(b)(4), July 26, 1989, 103 Stat. 159.)

## AMENDMENTS

1989—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 101-60 struck out subsec. (c) which authorized Commission to delegate to any State agency (with consent of such agency) any of its functions with respect to sections 3315, 3316(b), and 3319(a)(1) and (3) of this title.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-60 effective Jan. 1, 1993, see section 3(b) of Pub. L. 101-60, set out as a note under section 3372 of this title.

**§ 3412. Administrative procedure****(a) Administrative Procedure Act**

Subject to subsection (b), the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5 shall apply