

Applications for Permits to Fire more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units; and Posting Notices of Misfires
OMB Control Number: 1219-0025
OMB Expiration Date: 12/31/2025

**Supporting Statement for
Applications for Permits to Fire more than 20 Boreholes
and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units;
and Posting Notices of Misfires Paperwork Reduction Act Submission**

This information collection request (ICR) seeks to extend, without change, a currently approved information collection.

OMB Control Number: 1219-0025

Information Collection Request Title: Applications for Permits to Fire More than 20 Boreholes and For Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-firing Units; and Posting Notices of Misfires

Type of OMB Review: Extension

Authority:

Part 75—Mandatory Safety Standards—Underground Coal Mines

Subpart N—Explosives and Blasting

30 CFR 75.1321—Permits for firing more than 20 boreholes and for use of nonpermissible blasting units.

30 CFR 75.1327—Misfires.

Part 77—Mandatory Safety Standards, Surface Coal Mines and Surface Work Areas of Underground Coal Mines

Subpart T—Slope and Shaft Sinking

30 CFR 77.1909-1—Use of nonpermissible explosives and nonpermissible shot-firing units; approval by Health and Safety District Manager.

Collection Instrument(s): None

General Instructions

A Supporting Statement, including the text of the notice to the public required by 5 CFR 1320.5(a)(i)(iv) and its actual or estimated date of publication in the Federal Register, must accompany each request for approval of a collection of information. The Supporting Statement must be prepared in the format described below and must contain the information specified in Section A below. If an item is not applicable, provide a brief explanation. When the question “Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses or employ statistical methods” is checked "Yes", Section B of the Supporting Statement must be completed. OMB reserves the right to require the submission of additional information with respect to any request for approval.

Specific Instructions

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A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

Section 103(h) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act) as amended, 30 U.S.C. 813(h), authorizes the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) to collect information necessary to carry out its duty in protecting the safety and health of miners. Further, section 101(a) of the Mine Act, 30 U.S.C. 811(a), authorizes the Secretary of Labor (Secretary) to develop, promulgate, and revise as may be appropriate, improved mandatory health or safety standards for the protection of life and prevention of injuries in coal, metal, and nonmetal mines.

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) governs paperwork burdens imposed by Federal agencies on the public for using identical questions to collect information from 10 or more persons. The PRA defines paperwork burden in 44 U.S.C. 3502(2) as time, effort, or financial resources expended to generate, maintain, or provide information to or for a Federal agency. Under 44 U.S.C. 3507, the PRA also establishes policies and procedures of information collection for controlling paperwork burdens imposed by Federal agencies on the public, including evaluating public comments.

To fulfill the statutory mandates to promote miners' health and safety, MSHA requires information collected under the information collection request (ICR) titled "Applications for Permits to Fire more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units; and Posting Notices of Misfires." The information collection is intended to provide necessary information for MSHA to issue permits to mine operators for firing of more than 20 boreholes in a round, for the use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units, and for necessary posting of misfire notices. The permits inform mine management and miners of the steps that need to be taken to protect the safety of any person exposed to such blasting while using nonpermissible items.

Under section 313 of the Mine Act, 30 U.S.C. 873, any explosives used in underground coal mines must be permissible. The Mine Act also provides that under safeguards as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may permit mine operators to fire more than 20 shots and allow the use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units in sinking shafts and slopes from the surface in rock. In the case of a misfire, mines must post notices at the entrance of the areas where the misfire occurred.

Burden costs associated with the ICR include:

- I. Applying for permits to fire more than 20 boreholes or for use of nonpermissible blasting units, explosives, and shot-firing units; and
- II. Posting of misfire notices.

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Details of the authorities for these costs are described below.

I. Applying for Permits for Firing more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(a), applications for permits for firing more than 20 boreholes in a round and for the use of nonpermissible blasting units must be submitted, by the mine operator, in writing to the District Manager for the district in which the mine is located and must contain the following information:

- (1) The name and address of the mine;
- (2) The active workings in the mine affected by the permit and the approximate number of boreholes to be fired;
- (3) The period of time during which the permit will apply;
- (4) The nature of the development or construction for which they will be used, e.g., overcasts, undercasts, track grading, roof brushing or boom holes;
- (5) A plan, proposed by the mine operator designed to protect miners in the mine from the hazards of methane and other explosive gases during each multiple shot, e.g., changes in the mine ventilation system, provisions for auxiliary ventilation and any other safeguards necessary to minimize such hazards;
- (6) A statement of the specific hazards anticipated by the mine operator in blasting for overcasts, undercasts, track grading, brushing of roof, boom holes or other unusual blasting situations such as coalbeds of abnormal thickness; and
- (7) The method to be employed to avoid the dangers anticipated during development or construction which will ensure the protection of life and the prevention of injuries to the miners exposed to such underground blasting.

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(b), District Managers may permit the firing of more than 20 boreholes of permissible explosives in a round where they have determined that it is necessary to reduce the overall hazard to which miners are exposed during underground blasting. The District Manager may also permit the use of nonpermissible blasting units if they find that a permissible blasting unit does not have adequate blasting capacity and that the use of such permissible units will create development or construction hazards such as exposure to disturbed roof in an adjacent cavity while scaling and supporting the remaining roof prior to wiring a new series of boreholes; exposure to underburden boreholes where prior rounds have removed the burden adjacent to a remaining borehole; exposure to an unsupported roof while redrilling large fragmented roof rock following the loss of predrilled boreholes during earlier blasting operations; or any other hazard created by the use of permissible blasting units during underground development or construction.

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(c), permits must be issued on a mine-by-mine basis for periods of time to be specified by the District Manager.

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(d), permits must specify and include as a condition of their use, any safeguards, in addition to those proposed by the mine operator, which the District Manager

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issuing such permits has determined will be required to ensure the welfare of the miners employed in the mine at the time of the blasting permitted.

Under 30 CFR 77.1909-1, where the District Manager has determined that the use of nonpermissible explosives and nonpermissible shot-firing units will not pose a hazard to any person during the development of a slope or shaft, the District Manager may, after written application by the operator, approve the use of such explosives and shot-firing units and issue a permit for the use of such explosives and devices setting forth the safeguards to be employed by the operator to protect the health and safety of any person exposed to such blasting.

II. Posting of Misfire Notices

Under 30 CFR 75.1327(a), when misfires occur, mine operators must ensure that only work by a qualified person to dispose of misfires and other work necessary to protect persons must be done in the affected area.

Under 30 CFR 75.1327(b), when a misfire cannot be disposed of, mine operators must ensure that:

- (1) A qualified person must post each accessible entrance to the area affected by the hazard of the misfire with a warning at a conspicuous location to prohibit entry; and
- (2) The misfire must be immediately reported to mine management.

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2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

MSHA uses the information requested to issue permits to mine operators for firing more than 20 boreholes in a round, for the use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units, as well as for the necessary posting of misfire notices. The permits inform mine management and miners of the steps that need to be taken to protect the safety of any person exposed to such blasting while using nonpermissible items.

To obtain permits, the mine operators file applications with MSHA District Managers in the district where the mine is located. Applications contain the name and address of the mine; the designated active workings in which the units will be used and the approximate number of shots to be fired; the period of time during which such units are to be used; the nature of the development or construction for which they will be used; a plan to protect miners; a statement of the specific hazards anticipated; and the method to be employed to avoid the anticipated dangers.

The District Managers may permit the firing of more than 20 boreholes of permissible explosives in a round when determining that it is necessary to reduce the overall hazard to which miners are exposed during underground blasting. The District Managers may permit the use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units when finding that a permissible shot-firing unit does not have adequate blasting capacity, and the use of such permissible units will create development or construction hazards. As a condition of use, the District Managers may include safeguards, in addition to those proposed by the mine operator, that are necessary to protect the safety of the miners at the time the District Managers permit blasting.

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3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

No improved information technology has been identified that would reduce the existing burden.

The applications to fire more than 20 boreholes, or to use nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units in shaft or slope construction are narrative descriptions of the equipment and explosives to be used, the number and pattern of the boreholes to be fired, and the safety precautions to be employed. The applications may also include schematics, tables, and drawings. Such narrative plans and simple graphics can be prepared using personal computers and submitted via email. The mine operators have the capability of affixing transmittable authorization signatures, or where the respondent follows an email or facsimile with a signed hard copy.

However, to comply with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, mine operators may retain records in whatever method they choose, which may include utilizing computer technology to store the records electronically. Applications may be mailed, emailed, or faxed, using company letterhead stationery.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item A.2 above.

No similar or duplicate information is available or submitted to MSHA.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The information collection provisions apply to all mine operators, both large and small. Congress intended that the Secretary enforce the law at all mining operations within the Agency's jurisdiction regardless of size and that information collection and recordkeeping requirements be consistent with efficient and effective enforcement of the Mine Act. [S. Rep. No. 95-181 (1977)]. Section 103(e) of the Mine Act, 30 U.S.C. 813(e), directs the Secretary not to impose an unreasonable burden on small businesses when obtaining any information under the Mine Act. MSHA considered the burden on small mines when developing the collection and believes that these information collection requirements are imposed on all mining operators and do not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses or other small entities.

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6. Describe the consequence to federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

In the absence of this collection, MSHA cannot issue permits for firing more than 20 boreholes in a round or for use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units. The permits inform mine management and miners of the steps that need to be taken to protect the safety of any person exposed to such blasting while using nonpermissible items.

As a result, mine operators or shaft and slope contractors would be putting miners at risk. There would be no guarantee that mine operators would have a separate plan designed to ensure the protection of life and the prevention of injuries to the miners exposed to underground blasting. In addition, MSHA would be unable to enforce the safety and health requirements of the Mine Act regarding the use of nonpermissible explosives and/or shot-firing units without this collection.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- **Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **That includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

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This collection of information is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of the publication in the *Federal Register* of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

In accordance with 5 CFR 1320.8(d), MSHA will publish the proposed information collection requirements in the *Federal Register*, notify the public that these information collection requirements are being reviewed in accordance with the PRA, and provide 60 days for the public to submit comments. MSHA published a 60-day Federal Register notice on July 3, 2025 (90 FR 29575). MSHA received no comments.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

MSHA does not provide payment or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

There is no assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**
- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included under ‘Annual Cost to Federal Government’.**

Respondents

In this section, an estimate is provided for the annual burden to 33 coal mines in 2024. All information related to quantities and inspection rates are estimated by MSHA’s Headquarters Enforcement Division based on field experience with different types of mining operations, sizes of mines, and the frequency of inspections dictated by statute. Mine operators provide MSHA Headquarters Enforcement Division the number of mines and employment, and from this information MSHA tracks the number of active and inactive mines and mine types throughout the United States.

Based on data provided by each MSHA local District Office, there were 33 coal mines in 2024 affected by this ICR.

Wage Rates Determinations¹

MSHA uses data from the May 2023 Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for hourly wage rates² and adjusts the rates for

¹ For all wage rates, including Federal wage rates, MSHA uses the relevant precision throughout the calculation to avoid compound rounding errors and rounds at the final rate value. Displayed intermediate calculation values are presented to explain the calculation and are representative, but the final rate value reflects the correct rounding and final estimate.

² To obtain OEWS data, follow BLS’s directions in its Frequently Asked Questions: “E. How to get OEWS data. 4. What are the different ways to obtain OEWS estimates from this website?”

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benefits,³ wage inflation,⁴ and overhead costs.⁵ The occupations listed below in Table 12-1 are those that were determined to be relevant for the cost calculations.

Table 12-1. Hourly Wage Rates

Occupation	NAICS Code	Mean Wage Rate	Benefit Multiplier	Inflation Multiplier	Overhead Cost Multiplier	Loaded Hourly Wage Rate
		A	B	C	D	A x B x C x D
Engineer[a]	212100	\$50.59	1.456	1.048	1.01	\$77.97
Miner[b]	212100	\$31.57	1.456	1.048	1.01	\$48.65

Notes:

Benefit Multiplier – MSHA uses the latest 4-quarter moving average 2023Q4-2024Q3 to determine that 31.3 percent of total loaded wages are benefits for private industry workers in construction, extraction, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations. The benefit multiplier is $1.456 = 1 + (0.313 / (1 - 0.313))$.

Inflation Multiplier – The inflation multiplier is determined by using the employment price index from the most current quarter, 2024Q3, divided by the base year and quarter of the OEWS employment and wage statistics, 2023Q2, for private industry workers in construction, extraction, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, current dollar index. The inflation multiplier is $1.048 = 164.8 / 157.3$.

Overhead Multiplier – MSHA uses the overhead multiplier of 1.01.

[a] The Standard Occupation Codes (SOC) used for this occupation are (17-2071), (17-2081), (17-2112), (17-2141), and (17-2151).

[b] The SOC's used for this occupation are (47-5000), (49-9043), (49-9071), (51-9021), and (53-7000).

Hour Burden

I. Applying for Permits for Firing more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(a) and 77.1909-1, mine operators may apply for permits for firing more than 20 boreholes in a round, or for the use of nonpermissible blasting units, nonpermissible explosives and/or nonpermissible shot-firing units.

at https://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. The average wage rate is calculated as the employment-weighted average of hourly mean wages for the occupation.

³ The benefit multiplier comes from BLS Employer Costs for Employee Compensation accessed by menu at <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/srgate> or directly at <http://download.bls.gov/pub/time.series/cm/cm.data.0.Current>. Insert the data series CMU2030000405000D and CMU2030000405000P, Private Industry Total benefits for Construction, extraction, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, which is divided by 100 to convert to a decimal value. MSHA uses the latest 4-quarter moving average to determine what percent of total loaded wages are benefits. MSHA computes the benefit multiplier with a number of detailed calculations, but it may be approximated with the formula $1 + (\text{benefit percentage} / (1 - \text{benefit percentage}))$.

⁴ Wage inflation is the change in Series ID: CIS2020000405000I; Seasonally adjusted; Series Title: Wages and salaries for Private industry workers in Construction, extraction, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, Index. (<https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/srgate>; Inflation Multiplier = (Current Quarter Cost Index Value / OEWS Wage Base Quarter Index Value).

⁵ MSHA uses an overhead rate of 1 percent. The mining environment generally involves very little overhead, especially costs associated with workers engaged in administrative or clerical tasks.

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Permit applications, which contain all pertinent information, are submitted one time by any participating mine. There are no requirements for the respondent to report the ongoing or occasional use of the District Manager-approved blasting plan, including the use of nonpermissible explosives and shot-firing units or the firing of more than 20 boreholes. However, while mine operators are not explicitly required to submit information more than once, revised applications do need to be submitted to MSHA when the conditions outlined in 30 CFR 75.1321(a)(6) occur.

In 2024, a total of 33 permit applications were received from 33 coal mines, including 25 applications for firing more than 20 boreholes in a round under 30 CFR 75.1321(a) and 8 applications for use of nonpermissible blasting units, explosives, or shot-firing units under 30 CFR 77.1909-1.

MSHA estimates that it takes an engineer, earning \$77.97 per hour, 1 hour to prepare and submit a permit application.

Table 12-2. Estimated Annual Respondent Hour and Cost Burden, Preparing and Submitting Permit Applications (30 CFR 75.1321(a) and 77.1909-1)

Activity (Occupation)	Number of Respondents (Mines)	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses (Applications)	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
Preparing and Submitting Permit Applications (Engineer)	33	1	33	1	33.00	\$77.97	\$2,573.01
Subtotal (Rounded)	33		33		33		\$2,573

II. Posting Misfires Notices

Under 30 CFR 75.1327(b), when misfires occur, mine operators must ensure that a qualified person posts warning notices at conspicuous locations such as the entrance to the affected area.

Misfires are rare and none were reported for 2024. Hence, there were no required postings of warning notices. However, for this renewal, MSHA will assume that there will be one misfire annually, which will require posting of a warning notice.

MSHA assumes this it takes a miner, earning \$48.65 per hour, 20 minutes to post warning notices regarding the presence of a misfire that has not been remediated.

Table 12-3. Estimated Annual Respondent Hour and Cost Burden, Posting Misfire Notices (30 CFR 75.1327(b))

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Activity (Occupation)	Number of Respondents (Mines)	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses (Posts)	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
Posting Misfire Notices (Miner)	33	0.03	1	0.33	0.33	\$48.65	\$16.22
Subtotal (Rounded)	1		1		0.3		\$16

Note: The number of responses per respondent is calculated by dividing the number of responses by the number of respondents and rounded.

Hour Burden Summary

MSHA estimates that the 33 respondents (underground coal mines) would incur, on average, an annual collection burden of 33 hours with an associated annual cost of \$2,589. The annual respondent hour and cost burden is summarized in the summary table below.

Table 12-4. Estimated Annual Respondent Hour and Cost Burden, Summary

Activity	Number of Respondents (Mines)	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
I. Preparing and submitting Permit Applications	33	1	33	1	33.00	\$77.97	\$2,573.01
II. Posting Misfire Notices	33	0.03	1	0.33	0.33	\$48.65	\$16.22
Total (Rounded)	33		34		33		\$2,589

Notes: The total number of respondents is not a sum of respondents from each cost category. It corresponds to the number of coal mines filing petitions. The number of responses per respondent is calculated by dividing the number of responses by the number of respondents and rounded.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

- The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.
- If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or

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contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

- **Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

I. Applying for Permits for Firing more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(a) and 77.1909-1, mine operators may apply for permits to fire more than 20 boreholes in a round, for the use of nonpermissible blasting units, nonpermissible explosives and nonpermissible shot-firing units.

MSHA estimates that the narrative and any tables, charts, or drawings created for use in permit applications can be developed on normal office equipment used in the customary and usual course of business. Applications submitted by email or fax would not incur mailing costs.

MSHA estimates that out of 33 mines, 47 percent of respondents would mail their physical applications (16 applications), and 53 percent will submit them electronically (17 applications). MSHA estimates that the cost to copying and mailing an application is approximately \$10, including \$3 for copying and \$7 for mailing.

Table 13-1 Estimated Annual Respondent or Recordkeeper Cost Burden, Copying and Mailing Physical Permit Applications (30 CFR 75.1321 and 77.1909-1)

Cost components	Number of Responses (Applications)	Unit Cost per Response	Cost to Recordkeepers
Copying and Mailing Permit Applications	16	\$10.00	\$160.00
Subtotal (Rounded)	16		\$160

II. Posting Misfire Notices

Under 30 CFR 75.1327(b), mine operators must post a notification of a misfire. MSHA estimates there will be one misfire each year and that the sign of a misfire will be non-reusable, pre-printed “danger/misfire” placards. The estimated cost of placards is approximately \$10 each.

Table 13-2 Estimated Annual Respondent or Recordkeeper Cost Burden, Printing Misfire Notices (30 CFR 75.1327(b))

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Cost components	Number of Responses (Posts)	Unit Cost per Response	Cost to Recordkeepers
Printing Misfire Notices	1	\$10.00	\$10.00
Subtotal (Rounded)	1		\$10

Cost Burden to Respondents or Recordkeepers Summary

The annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers is summarized in the summary table below.

Table 13-13. Estimated Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Recordkeepers, Summary

Cost Component	Number of Responses	Unit Cost per Response	Cost to Recordkeepers
I. Copying and Mailing Permit Applications	16	\$10.00	\$160.00
II. Printing Misfire Notices	1	\$10.00	\$10.00
Total (Rounded)	17		\$170

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

MSHA uses data from the FedScope published by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for hourly wage rates of Federal employees and adjusts the rates for benefits and overhead. The occupations listed below in Table 14-1 are those that were determined to be relevant for the Federal government cost calculations.

Table 14-1. Federal Hourly Wage Rates

Occupation	Occupation Code	Mean Wage Rate	Benefit & Overhead Multiplier [a]	Loaded Hourly Wage Rate
		A	B	A x B
GS-12 Technical Specialist [b]	1822	\$47.55	1.586	\$75.41

Note: Hourly wage rates developed from Office of Personnel Management (OPM) September 2023 FedScope Employment Cube, <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov/>.

[a] Benefit and overhead multiplier = 1 + (MSHA personnel benefits, travel and transportation, and rental expenses / MSHA personnel compensation) = (1 + ((76,679+20+5,309+5,932+17,577+71) / 180,071)) (FY 2024 budget submission, use FY2023 Revised Enacted Budget: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/general/budget/2024/CBJ-2024-V2-13.pdf>).

[b] Data search qualifiers are: Agency = DLMS, Occupation = 1822 (Mine Safety and Health Inspection), Work Schedule = Full-Time, Salary Grade = GS-12, Measure = Average Salary. The hourly wage is the annual salary

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divided by 2,087. In order to include the cost of benefits and overhead, MSHA multiplies the average annual salary by a Federal benefit and overhead multiplier for MSHA of 1.586. Rate equals \$75.41 = ((\\$99,228 / 2,087) x 1.586).

I. Reviewing of Applications for Permits for Firing more than 20 Boreholes and for Use of Nonpermissible Blasting Units, Explosives, and Shot-Firing Units

Under 30 CFR 75.1321(b), the District Managers may permit the firing of more than 20 boreholes of permissible explosives in a round where the District Managers have determined that it is necessary to reduce the overall hazard to which miners are exposed during underground blasting. The District Managers may also permit the use of nonpermissible blasting units if they find that a permissible blasting unit does not have adequate blasting capacity and that the use of such permissible units will create development or construction hazards.

Under 30 CFR 77.1909-1, the District Managers may approve the use of nonpermissible explosives and nonpermissible shot-firing units, after written application by the operator, approve the use of such explosives and shot-firing units, and issue a permit for their use if it is determined that the use of such explosives and shot-firing units will not pose a hazard to any person during the development of a slope or shaft, and to protect the health and safety of any person exposed to such blasting.

MSHA receives 33 applications for permit per year. MSHA estimates that it takes a MSHA GS-12 technical specialist, earning \$75.41 per hour, 4 hours to review a petition and prepare a written response to the mine operator.

Table 14-2. Estimated Federal Hour and Cost Burden, Reviewing Permit Applications (30 CFR 75.1321(b) and 77.1909-1)

Federal Occupation	Number of Responses (Review of Petitions)	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
GS-12 Technical Specialist	33	4.00	132	\$75.41	\$9,954.12
Subtotal (Rounded)	33		132		\$9,954

Cost Summary to the Federal Government

The annual cost burden to the Federal government is summarized in the summary table below.

Table 14-3. Estimated Federal Hour and Cost Burden, Summary

Activity	Number of Responses	Average Burden per Response (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
I. Reviewing Permit Applications	33	4.00	132	\$75.41	\$9,954.12
Total (Rounded)	33		132		\$9,954

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15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments on the burden worksheet.

Number of Respondents: The estimated number of respondents decreased from 41 to 33 due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Number of Responses: The estimated number of responses decreased from 42 to 34 due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Annual Time Burden: The estimated annual time burden decreased from 41 to 33 hours due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Annual Burden Costs: The estimated annual burden costs decreased from \$2,937 to \$2,589 due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Annual Other Burden Costs: The estimated annual other burden cost increased from \$150 to \$170 due to an increase in copying and mailing costs.

Federal Hours: The estimated annual federal hours decreased from 164 to 132 due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Federal Costs: The estimated annual federal costs decreased from \$10,659 to \$9,954 due to a decline in the number of permit applications.

Table 15-1. Summary of Changes

	Currently Approved ICR	Updated ICR	Currently Approved ICR
Number of Respondents	41	33	-8
Number of Responses	42	34	-8
Annual Time Burden	41	33	-8
Annual Burden Costs	\$2,937	\$2,589	-\$348
Annual Other Burden Costs	\$150	\$170	\$20
Federal Hours	164	132	-32
Federal Costs	\$10,659	\$9,954	-\$705

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

MSHA does not intend to publish the results of this information collection.

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17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

MSHA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection and there is no form associated with this collection.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

There are no certification exceptions identified with this information collection.

B. Collections of information employing statistical methods

As statistical analysis is not required by the regulation, questions 1 through 5 do not apply.