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DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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VOLUNTARY INSPECTION SERVICES FEES STREAMLINED BY INTERIOR

A new method of charging firms engaged in processing fishery products under the Department of the Interior's Voluntary Fishery Products Inspection Service will become effective June 1, 1962, the Department of the Interior announced today.

Under the new regulations, as proposed and published in the Federal Register of March 6, 1962, all processors will be charged the same hourly rate ($4.20 per hour regular time, $5 per hour overtime) for continuous inspection services. They will be billed monthly at a minimum charge of 8 hours per working day, plus overtime when appropriate, for each Federal inspector. A minimum yearly charge of 260 days will be made for each inspector permanently assigned to each plant.

This is the first major effort by any Federal agency to streamline recovery of costs of services rendered under voluntary inspection programs conducted by the Government at the request of industry. It will achieve a higher degree of uniformity in the assessment of fees and methods of charging, eliminate variations between plants and provide more flexibility to the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries in operating the program. Under the old methods for recovering costs for services, there were often differences of as much as $2,000 per year for inspection costs, depending on the assigned inspector's salary grade level.

Industry representatives attending the Industry-Government Inspection Conference, June 8 and 9, 1961, in Washington, D. C., expressed agreement, after some deliveration, that the Bureau's proposal of these changes was logical and would be more equitable to all subscribers to the voluntary inspection service. Two comments were received during the 30-day period following the publication March 6, 1962 of the proposed rule making in the Federal Register. These were given careful consideration by the Department.

The new regulations also provide for other incidental changes, including a clarification of fees for lot inspection services.

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