

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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No. 97-110

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Friday, August 1, 1997)

NRC SEEKS EARLY PUBLIC INPUT TO HELP DEVELOP CHANGES
TO REGULATIONS ON MEDICAL USES OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is developing revisions to its regulations on medical uses of licensed radioactive material and seeks public comments on staff-level draft documents associated with the revisions.

The draft documents will be available, beginning this month, at the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, telephone: 202/634-3273. They also will be posted on the Internet at the following address:
<http://techconf.llnl.gov/noframe.html>.

In addition, the NRC will conduct two public meetings this fall to solicit comments on specific rule text proposals. Times and locations will be announced later.

The Commission has examined its medical use program in great detail over the last four years. It conducted an internal management review, commissioned an independent external review by the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, and included medical use as one of the issues examined during its recent strategic assessment and rebaselining initiative.

Notwithstanding the Institute of Medicine's recommendation that the NRC should not be the federal agency involved in the regulation of ionizing radiation in medicine, the Commission believes the report's conclusions were not substantiated and therefore should not be pursued.

The Commission has directed the NRC staff to revise its regulations, associated guidance documents, and, if necessary, its 1979 Medical Policy Statement. In developing revisions to the medical use regulations, the NRC intends to focus primary attention on procedures that pose the highest risk.

A proposed rule is scheduled to be released for formal public comment next summer. However, public input is sought during the development of the proposed and final rule and associated documents.

Suggestions may be submitted in writing to the Secretary, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. They may also be submitted electronically, as described in a Federal Register notice that will be published shortly. The suggestions will be most helpful if received by March 1, 1998.

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