

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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EDITORS: This announcement corrects a press release on this subject issued Tuesday, Feb. 23.

NRC PROPOSES CHANGES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS FOR OPERATING LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATIONS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a proposed amendment to its regulations governing environmental reviews of applications for renewal of nuclear power plant licenses.

The amendment to Part 51 of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations would make two changes:

(1) It would eliminate the requirement that a license renewal application address one specific type of environmental impact caused by spent nuclear fuel generated by the plant after its license is renewed -- the impact of hauling that fuel in the vicinity of a permanent high level waste repository, such as the one proposed at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The amendment also would account for the transportation environmental impacts caused by the use of fuel with higher uranium enrichment and higher "burnup," which provides more power production per metric ton of fuel than has previously been the case.

(2) It would add a requirement that a license renewal application address the impact of transportation on local services in the vicinity of the plant during the license renewal term. This requirement was inadvertently omitted from the present rule.

Regarding the first change, new studies have given the NRC confidence that the expected environmental impact of transporting spent fuel near a repository can be handled generically -- that is, in a way that applies to the whole nuclear industry, rather than focusing on a specific site. These new studies, which also deal with the use of more highly enriched fuel and higher burnup fuel during the renewal term, are described in a draft supplemental environmental impact statement which is also being issued for public comment. Because more nuclear power plants are beginning to use fuel with higher enrichment and higher burnup, NRC believes it likely that many plants seeking license renewal would be following that practice.

More details on both the proposed rule and the draft environmental impact statement are included in a notice published in the February 26 edition of the *Federal Register*. Comments, which are due no later than April 27, may be sent to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and

Adjudications Staff, Mail Stop 016-C1. They may be delivered to: One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. 20852, between 7:30 a. m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays. Comments also may be submitted to NRC's interactive rulemaking web site through the NRC home page at: <http://www.nrc.gov>.

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