



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. 10-205

November 8, 2010

FEDERAL AGENCIES, PRIVATE INDUSTRY REMOVE HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FROM SUBURBAN SAN DIEGO

The U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission today announced the successful removal of nearly 60 kilograms of spent nuclear fuel from an NRC-licensed facility near San Diego, Calif. The facility includes a research reactor that supported government research for more than four decades, but is permanently shut down and awaiting decommissioning.

Over the course of three weeks in August and September 2010, the NRC and DOE – including its National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) – worked with the NRC licensee to complete three shipments totaling 19.7 kilograms of highly enriched uranium (HEU) and 37 kilograms of low enriched uranium (LEU). Each convoy completed a 22-hour, nearly 1,000 mile trip from San Diego to a secure federal facility. The licensee reimbursed the federal government for expenses related to the operation.

“This is a major accomplishment that exemplifies our commitment to work across the federal government and with the private sector to enhance nuclear security here at home and around the globe,” said DOE Undersecretary for Nuclear Security and NNSA Administrator Thomas P. D’Agostino. “The President’s pledge to make sure nuclear and radiological materials are safe and secure applies both internationally and in the United States. Partnerships like this help ensure that we are leading by example as we work to achieve that goal.”

“We’re pleased to have played a role – along with NNSA, other state and federal partners, and private industry – in the relocation of this material,” said NRC Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko. “This is a clear example of federal and state agencies working well together to ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials.”

The fuel was removed from a reactor that conducted government-sponsored research for close to 40 years beginning in the late 1950s. When it was built, the reactor site was located in a remote and isolated area. Over the past 50 years the suburbs of San Diego have expanded to surround this once isolated location.

As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to secure nuclear material around the world within four years, DOE and the NRC – as the regulator – worked with the licensee to package the material in specially designed shipping casks, and to safely and securely transport it. Operations like this help demonstrate the U.S. government's commitment to doing its part to round up all unneeded HEU and send it to more secure government locations.

NNSA's Domestic Material Protection program – part of its Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) – collaborates with partner sites in the private sector, state and local agencies, and federal agencies like the NRC to provide voluntary additional security enhancements at sites that possess nuclear and radiological sources to prevent terrorists from acquiring those materials. In its FY2011 budget request, the Obama Administration proposed an eight-fold increase in funding for this program from FY2010 to FY2015.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission regulates the civilian uses of radioactive materials, including research reactors and the storage, transportation and disposal of spent nuclear fuel. The NRC regularly cooperates with NNSA and other federal and state agencies to ensure the safe recovery of unused or unwanted radioactive materials.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science in the nation's national security enterprise. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability, and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; reduces the global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the United States and abroad. Visit <http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/> for more information, or follow NNSA News on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [Flickr](#).

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.