



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD PREDECISIONAL ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE WITH U.S. ARMY ON DEPLETED URANIUM MUNITIONS AT ARMY SITES

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials will hold a predecisional enforcement conference with representatives of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) on Tuesday, May 10, to discuss apparent violations of NRC licensing requirements at various Army installations in the United States.

The conference will be from 2-5 p.m. Central Daylight Time in the NRC's Region IV office in Arlington, Texas. The public is invited to observe and will have one or more opportunities to communicate with NRC staff after the business portion, but before the meeting is adjourned. Interested persons may participate via a toll-free telephone bridge line and view presentations on a Webinar. For details, please contact Sarah Achten at 301-415-6009 or by e-mail at sarah.achten@nrc.gov.

In the 1960s, the Army used spotting rounds made with depleted uranium (DU) in training soldiers with the Davy Crockett weapon system. Fragments of expended rounds remain on the ground in impact areas of training ranges. There appears to be enough DU at several sites to require an NRC license to possess and monitor the material to ensure it does not escape to the surrounding environment and pose a health risk to troops or the public.

The DU training rounds were used under an Atomic Energy Commission license that expired in 1978. After discovering spent rounds at several training locations beginning in 2005, the Army applied to NRC for a possession license in November 2008. The sites in question are located in Alaska, California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas and Washington.

Separately from the Army's license application, a resident of Hawaii filed a petition on March 4, 2010, requesting the NRC take enforcement action against the Army if it found the Army possessed or released depleted uranium to the environment without a license in violation of NRC requirements.

Based on NRC's review of the information provided by the Army, it appears that the Army is in violation of NRC regulations on the licensing of source material, which includes DU, at several Army installations. It also appears that the Army performed decommissioning activities at the Schofield Barracks in Hawaii without NRC authorization.

The conference is an opportunity for the IMCOM officials to provide their perspective on the apparent violation and to offer other information they believe the NRC should take into consideration in making an enforcement decision. No decision on the apparent violation or any enforcement action will be made at the conference. Those decisions will be taken later by NRC officials.

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