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NRC Postpones California Meetings on Waste Confidence Because of Government Shutdown

Due to the anticipated lack of federal funding, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has postponed public meetings scheduled for Oct. 7 and Oct. 9 in California on the agency's proposed rule and environmental study about the extended storage of spent nuclear fuel. Additional meetings scheduled throughout October and early November may also be affected if the current federal government shutdown continues.

The proposed rule and generic environmental impact study, collectively known as "waste confidence," were published Sept. 13, with a public comment period to Nov. 27. The agency scheduled 12 meetings around the country to present the findings and receive public comments.

"Public outreach is an important part of our waste confidence effort," NRC Chairman Allison Macfarlane said. "Unfortunately, the lack of appropriations gives us no choice but to postpone these two meetings. Once we resume full operations, we will reschedule the meetings."

The federal shutdown began Oct. 1, the start of the new fiscal year, because Congress has not appropriated funding for government operations. The NRC has continued to operate on unexpended funds from previous appropriations, and held the first two public meetings on waste confidence Oct. 1 at agency headquarters in Rockville, Md., and Oct. 3 in Denver. However, the NRC expects its funds to run out by the middle of next week. Should it be necessary at that time, the agency will begin scaled-down operations focusing on immediate public safety and security issues, such as nuclear power plant inspections. For more information about the effect of the partial government shutdown on NRC operations, [see the agency blog](#).

The NRC is also canceling other public meetings scheduled for NRC headquarters and around the country. The status of these meetings will be updated on the agency's [Public Meetings Schedule](#) on the NRC website.

The Oct. 7 waste confidence meeting was scheduled for San Luis Obispo; the Oct. 9 meeting for Carlsbad. Decisions on [additional waste confidence meetings](#) will be made on a week-by-week basis.