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NRC Proposes to Amend Annual Fees Regulations

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on proposed changes to its regulations for the licensing, inspection, special project, and annual fees it would charge applicants and licensees for fiscal year 2019.

The proposed rule, published Jan. 31 in the *Federal Register*, includes fees required by law to recover approximately 90 percent of the agency's annual budget. The total budget enacted for the NRC in FY 2019 is approximately $911 million.

After accounting for fee-recovery exclusions, fee-relief activities, and net billing adjustments, the NRC must bill approximately $781.9 million in fees in FY 2019. Approximately $246.7 million will be recovered through fees for service under 10 CFR Part 170, and approximately $535.2 million through annual fees under 10 CFR Part 171.

Proposed annual fees for FY 2019 increased for operating reactors, some materials users, and Department of Energy transportation activities. Proposed annual fees for FY 2019 decreased for spent fuel storage/reactor decommissioning, research and test reactors, fuel facilities, and the DOE Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act Program. Proposed annual fees for non-DOE uranium recovery licensees remained unchanged.

The proposed rule also includes several other changes affecting licensees and applicants. First, the NRC proposes to increase the hourly rate from $275 in FY 2018 to $278 for FY 2019. Second, the NRC proposes to revise the flat rate license application fees in 10 CFR 170.21 and 170.31 to reflect the new hourly rate. Finally, the proposed rule includes two proposed fee-policy changes, and one administrative change.

The *Federal Register* notice includes detailed instructions on how to submit written comments on the proposed fee rule and the petition for rulemaking. Comments will be accepted through March 4.