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NRC AMENDS REGULATIONS GOVERNING
HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE REPOSITORY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulations which govern the construction, operation and closure of a deep-underground, geologic repository for the disposal of high-level radioactive wastes which consist predominantly of used reactor fuel.

NRC has adopted these amendments to clarify existing requirements that govern the protection of workers and the public from radiation caused by a range of normal conditions and by accidents which might occur before a repository is permanently closed.

The amendments also make existing requirements more consistent with other NRC regulations governing similar types of facilities, such as independent spent fuel storage installations.

Among other things, the amendments:

- Modify the definition of structures, systems and components that are "important to safety";
- Add requirements for the establishment of a pre-closure controlled area from which members of the public could be excluded if necessary;
- Provide radiation dose criteria for protection of the public during accident conditions; and
- Clarify the radiation protection requirements for workers and members of the public during normal or otherwise anticipated conditions.

This final rule, which amends Part 60 of the Commission's regulations, reflects minor changes made as the result of comments received after publication of a proposed rule in March of last year. NRC began the rulemaking partly in response to a petition submitted by the Department of Energy. More information

is available in a notice published in the December 4 edition of the Federal Register.

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