



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, DC 20555-0001 E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: www.nrc.gov

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NRC WITHDRAWS DIRECT FINAL RULE CLARIFYING USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH AGENCY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has withdrawn a direct final rule that would have amended its rules to clarify when and how licensees and other members of the public might use electronic means to communicate with the agency. The NRC is taking the action because it has received a significant number of adverse comments on the rule.

These comments will now be considered regarding an identical proposed rule published concurrently with the direct final rule. They will be addressed by the NRC in a later final rule.

Last September, the agency published a direct final rule in the *Federal Register* amending its regulations to clarify when and how all members of the public might communicate with it through use of electronic media. The rule included guidance on how to submit documents to the agency electronically. The direct rule and guidance were scheduled to become effective on December 5. The NRC also concurrently published for comment an identical proposed rule on September 6, which stated that if any significant adverse comments were received, timely notice of the withdrawal of the direct final rule would be published in the *Federal Register*. In addition, it noted that no rule and guidance would take effect until the comments had been addressed and text of the rule revised, if necessary.

The NRC, in fact, received several adverse comments on the rule and, as a result, is withdrawing the direct final rule. Neither the rule nor the guidance appended to it will take effect on December 5. The agency will now treat the comments on the proposed companion rule and address them in a later final rule. The NRC will not initiate a second comment period on the rule.

For more information about the withdrawal, please contact John Skoczlas at 301-415-7186, e-mail EIE@nrc.gov, or Brenda Shelton, at 301-415-7233, e-mail bjs1@nrc.gov.

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