



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Washington, D.C. 20472

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Regional Assistance Committee Chairs  
Regions I-VII, IX, and X

FROM: W. Craig Conklin *W. Craig Conklin*  
Director  
Technological Services Division

SUBJECT: Revision of "FEMA Guidance on the Use of Potassium Iodide by  
the General Public for Commercial Nuclear Power Plant  
Accidents."

On December 20, 2001, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) sent a letter to the emergency management directors of States with populations within a 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone and offered to purchase potassium iodide (KI) for the general public for States that requested it. The letters contained an enclosure, provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), entitled "FEMA Guidance on the Use of Potassium Iodide by the General Public for Commercial Nuclear Power Plant Accidents." The FEMA guidance erroneously specified that the State must "complete and submit revised plans and procedures, public information materials, and prescribed emergency instructions to the public by the end of the calendar year in which the State submits an application for the receipt of KI." During the KI panel at the April 2002 National Radiological Emergency Preparedness Conference, FEMA corrected the timing for submitting the plans and related materials to FEMA as "within one year of receipt of the KI." Subsequent to the Conference, some of the attending States asked FEMA to explicitly define the correct timeframe.

FEMA has revised the guidance to reflect the original intent of the guidance and timing stated during the National REP Conference, i.e., the State has one year from the date of receipt of the KI to submit its plans and related materials to FEMA. During the June 25-26, 2002, Regional Assistance Committee Chairs Advisory Council (RAC AC) meeting, the RAC AC agreed with the proposed revision. The NRC does not object to the revision.

Please distribute the attached revised guidance to your constituents. We have also posted the revised guidance on the FEMA web site at <http://www.fema.gov/rrr/rep/rep>.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Vanessa E. Quinn, Chief, Radiological Emergency Preparedness Branch, at (202) 646-3664.

Attachment

**FEMA GUIDANCE ON THE  
USE OF POTASSIUM IODIDE BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC  
FOR COMMERCIAL NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ACCIDENTS**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) believes that potassium iodide (KI) can be an effective supplement to sheltering and evacuation in the unlikely event of a release of radioactive iodine as a result of a commercial nuclear power plant accident.

The decision to include KI in the range of public protective actions rests with the States. FEMA is available to assist States with the decision making process. There are two basic methods of distribution: (1) pre-distribution to the public and (2) stockpiles in facilities such as reception or mass care centers. Based on the distribution method adopted by a State, the capability to implement the decision will be evaluated by FEMA as part of its "Reasonable Assurance Finding" recommendation to the NRC.

The evaluation of a State's capability to distribute KI to the general public can be achieved through the Annual Letter of Certification, when KI is pre-distributed, and/or a combination of Staff Assistance Visits and biennial exercise demonstrations, when KI is in a fixed facility.

If a State chooses to include KI in its range of public protective actions, we recommend that the State immediately prepare a procedure as to how it would disseminate the KI, if needed. The State must complete and submit revised plans and procedures, public information materials, and prescribed emergency instructions to the public within one year after receipt of the KI. Because States are not required to have their emergency plans revised prior to receipt of KI tablets, the tablets should be stored in convenient locations for ad hoc distribution, should that become necessary.

The capability to distribute KI tablets to the general public will be demonstrated by all Offsite Response Organizations (ORO) during the first exercise following the submission of plans and procedures (but no sooner than 90 days from the submission). Thereafter, OROs will demonstrate their capability as specified in the frequency of demonstration table for the evaluation areas.

ORO's will address any issues regarding the distribution of KI to the general public in their Annual Letter of Certification, including the number of KI tablets issued or reissued during the previous year. Specific plan review requirements are attached.