



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO AGENCY'S CONSUMER PRODUCTS POLICY STATEMENT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on proposed changes to its policy statement on consumer products containing radioactive material. The proposed revisions would make minor changes that would bring the statement up to date, but would not represent a policy shift.

The Atomic Energy Commission issued the original Consumer Products Policy Statement in 1965 because, although presenting very low risks of significant individual doses to members of the general public, consumer products containing radioactive material are a source of routine exposure to the public. For example, a substantial portion of the population uses, and enjoys benefits from, smoke detectors, and consequently receives a very small radiation exposure from this product.

The policy statement incorporates the three fundamental principles of radiation protection: Justification of a practice; optimization of protection (the "As Low As Reasonably Achievable" practice, or ALARA); and application of dose limits to individuals. For example, under the policy, approval of a proposed consumer product depends upon both associated exposures of persons to radiation and the apparent usefulness of the product. The policy calls for monitoring the amounts of radioactive materials being distributed for use by the general public and reconsidering the policy if there is any indication that materials in products reaching the public may result in a significant fraction of the permissible dose. Well-informed regulatory decisions in this area can have a significant effect on minimizing cumulative exposures to the public.

The proposed revisions would update terminology and reflect changes in the theory and practice of radiation protection as it has evolved since 1965.

The proposed revisions were published today in the *Federal Register*. Comments will be accepted through Dec. 28. Comments may be submitted through the federal government's Rulemaking website at www.regulations.gov using Docket ID NRC-2010-0292; by e-mail to Rulemaking.Comments@nrc.gov; by fax to 301-415-1101; or by mail to Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.

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