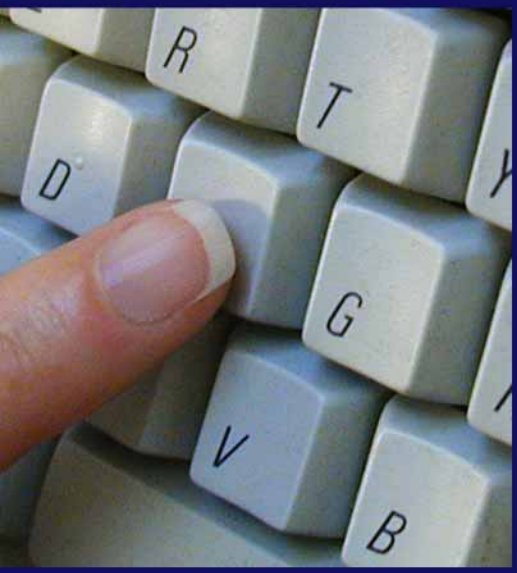
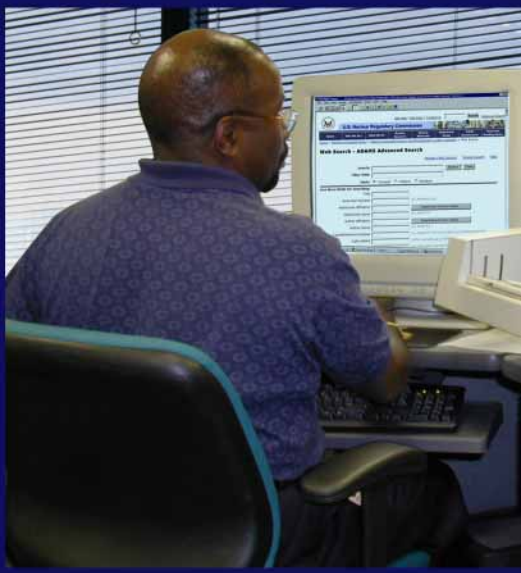
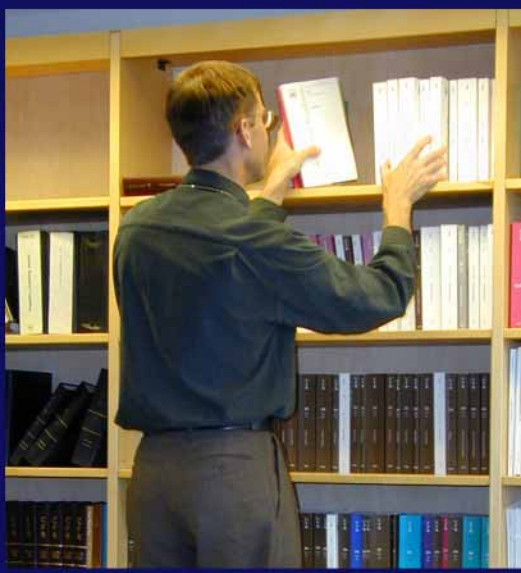
Citizen's Guide

to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Information







This Citizen's Guide provides an overview of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the information we produce, and how to obtain it. To learn more about our programs and activities, visit our Web site at http://www.nrc.gov. For information about all U.S. Government organizations, services, and activities, select FIRSTGOV from NRC's home page on our Web site.

CONTENTS

1 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Congress established the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as an independent agency in January 1975 by passing the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974. This Act, along with provisions in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, gave NRC a mandate to assume from the former Atomic Energy Commission the responsibility for regulating various commercial, industrial, academic, and medical uses of nuclear materials and nuclear energy.

> The NRC's mission is to regulate the Nation's civilian use of byproduct, source, and special nuclear materials to ensure the adequate protection of public health and safety, to promote the common defense and security, and to protect the environment.
>
> The NRC's regulatory mission covers three major areas:
>
> - Nuclear Reactors: Commercial reactors for generating electric power and non-power reactors used for research, testing, and training and for decommissioning of nuclear facilities from service.
> - Nuclear Materials: Use of materials in medical, industrial, and academic settings and in facilities that produce nuclear fuel.
> - Radioactive Waste: Transportation, storage, and disposal of radioactive waste.

For example, NRC regulates (1) over 100 commercial nuclear power plants that provide about 20 percent of the nation's electricity; (2) over 45 fuel cycle facilities involved in the extraction, processing, and fabrication of uranium into reactor fuel; (3) approximately 5,000 large and small users of nuclear material for industrial, medical, or academic purposes; and (4) low-level and high-level waste facilities, interim storage of spent nuclear fuel, containers used in the transportation of radioactive material, and decommissioning of nuclear facilities.

Congress has passed other acts affecting NRC's regulation of civilian uses of nuclear energy; these acts are published in a compact disk or in two volumes titled "Nuclear Regulatory Legislation" (NUREG–0980).[1] * Select Who We Are, then Governing Legislation on our Web site at http://www.nrc.gov for summaries or complete versions of this legislation.

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*Endnote 1 is the first of a number of Endnotes found in Section 9 at the end of this guide that list the sources for NRC information.

2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The NRC places a high priority on keeping its stakeholders—the general public, Congress, NRC licensees, other Federal agencies, States, Indian Tribes, local governments, nuclear industry managers and workers, and the international community—informed of its activities. (See also Section 5, "NRC Stakeholders.") See the latest volume of "NRC's Performance and Accountability Report" (NUREG-1542) to learn more about our goals and how well we have met them.

Public involvement in the NRC's activities is a cornerstone of appropriate regulation of the nuclear industry. The NRC recognizes the public's interest in the safe regulation of nuclear activities and publishes information about the regulatory process and opportunities for citizens to make their opinions known in the rulemaking, licensing, enforcement, and hearing processes as well as in public meetings.

NRC's public meetings of the Advisory Committees on Reactor Safeguards, Nuclear Waste, and Medical Uses of Isotopes serve as independent forums for the public to articulate opinions and concerns about various issues facing the Commission. The NRC solicits public involvement early in the regulatory process so that safety concerns can be resolved in a timely and practical manner. This process is considered vital to assuring the public that the NRC is making sound, balanced decisions about nuclear safety in a fair manner.

See NRC's policy on meetings open to the public by selecting Public Involvement on our home page, then Frequently Asked Questions About Public Meetings. For more information, see "Public Involvement in the Nuclear Regulatory Process" (NUREG/BR-0215) by selecting Electronic Reading Room on our home page, then Collection of Documents by Type. See also Section 6.3.4 in this guide.

3 INFORMATION ABOUT NRC REGULATORY PROGRAMS

3.1 Nuclear Reactors

The NRC licenses and inspects commercial nuclear power plants to ensure that they operate safely and securely. Approximately one-fifth of the Nation's electricity is generated by 103 commercial nuclear reactors in 31 States. NRC's reactor oversight process uses a variety of tools to monitor and evaluate the performance of commercial nuclear power plants and focuses on those plant activities most important to safety.

NRC continues to regulate nuclear reactors after they are permanently shut down and decommissioned within 60 years of shutdown. Decommissioning removes a facility or site safely from service and reduces residual radioactivity to a level that permits either—

- release of the property for unrestricted use and termination of the license or
- release of the property under restricted conditions and termination of the license.

During the reactor decommissioning process, NRC conducts inspections, processes license amendments (including approval of the License Termination Plan), and monitors the status of activities to ensure that radioactive contamination and exposure are minimized.

3.2 Nuclear Materials

The NRC licenses and inspects 21 nuclear fuel cycle facilities, 23 uranium recovery facilities, 2 gaseous diffusion enrichment facilities, and 1 mixed-oxide fuel fabrication facility. Seven major facilities are licensed to operate in six States, and the gaseous diffusion facilities are certified to operate in Paducah, Kentucky, and Piketon, Ohio.

The NRC and Agreement States license and inspect over 21,000 licensees who use radioactive material for—

- medical diagnosis and therapy,
- medical and biological research,
- academic training and research,
- industrial gauges,
- nondestructive testing,

- production of radiopharmaceuticals, and
- fabrication of commercial products (e.g., smoke detectors, other sealed sources and devices).

Of the 21,000 licensees, the NRC regulates approximately 5,000. The remaining licensees are regulated by the 32 States that participate in the NRC Agreement States Program. An Agreement State is one that has signed an agreement with the NRC to regulate the use of some radioactive materials within the State's borders. To learn more, select What We Do on our home page, then State and Tribal Programs.

About 3 million packages of radioactive materials are shipped each year in the United States, either by highway, rail, air, or water. Regulating the safety of these shipments is the joint responsibility of the NRC and the Department of Transportation (DOT). The NRC establishes requirements for the design and manufacture of packages for radioactive materials. The DOT regulates the shipments while they are in transit and sets standards for labeling these packages and for smaller quantity packages. Over the last 30 years, over 1,000 shipments of commercially generated spent nuclear fuel have been made throughout the United States without causing any radiological releases to the environment or harm to the public. To learn more, see our brochure, "The Regulation and Use of Radioisotopes in Todays World" (NUREG/BR-0217) in our Electronic Reading Room, or select Nuclear Materials on our home page, then Materials Transportation.

3.3 Radioactive Waste

Low-level waste. The NRC and Agreement States regulate low-level radioactive waste disposal facilities. The facilities must be designed, constructed, and operated to meet safety standards, and the operator must analyze how the facility will perform a thousand years into the future. Low-level waste includes items, such as rags, filters, needles, and animal tissue that have become contaminated with radioactive material or have become radioactive through exposure to neutron radiation. It is typically stored on the nuclear plant site by owners licensed by the NRC, either until its radioactivity levels have been significantly reduced and can be disposed of as ordinary trash or until amounts are large enough for shipment to one of three U.S. low-level waste disposal sites in containers approved by the DOT and the NRC.

To learn more, see our brochure, "Radioactive Waste: Production, Storage, Disposal" (NUREG/BR–0216) in the Electronic Reading Room of our Web site.

High-level waste. High-level radioactive waste is mostly the highly radioactive material produced as a byproduct of the reactions that occur inside nuclear reactors. It is principally spent (used) reactor fuel. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA) and its amendments (1987) outline a detailed approach for the disposal of high-level radioactive waste. The NWPA gave the Department of Energy (DOE) responsibility for constructing and operating a high-level waste repository. It gave the NRC responsibility for regulating all construction and operational activities for the repository. The NRC certifies spent fuel storage and transport cask designs and licenses the interim storage of spent fuel at site-specific reactor or away-from-reactor sites. The disposal of high-level radioactive waste requires a determination of acceptable health and environmental impacts over thousands of years.

Current plans call for the ultimate disposal of the waste in solid form in a licensed deep, geologic repository. The NWPA amendments directed DOE to investigate only one potential high-level waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. On July 23, 2002, the President signed a joint resolution from Congress that permits the DOE to submit a license application seeking NRC's authorization to construct a repository at Yucca Mountain. The DOE intends to submit a license application to NRC in December 2004.

The NRC will issue a license to DOE only if DOE can demonstrate that it can construct and operate a repository safely and comply with NRC's regulations.

3.4 Decommissioning

NRC has a program for decommissioning of materials and fuel cycle facilities similar to that used for nuclear reactor facilities. Approximately 300 materials licenses are terminated each year. Some facilities require more complex decommissioning activities for timely cleanup of unusual and difficult sites, particularly those with a great deal of soil contamination or with old, contaminated buildings. In addition, NRC is responsible for overseeing the cleanup of formerly licensed, contaminated sites. To learn more about decommissioning, select Nuclear Reactors on our home page, then Reactor Decommissioning, or select Nuclear Materials, then Materials Decommissioning.

3.5 Enforcement

The NRC uses enforcement action as part of its regulatory oversight program to emphasize to licensees the importance of complying with NRC regulations and to encourage prompt identification and correction of these violations. Violations are identified through inspections and investigations and are subject to civil enforcement action, such as fines, and may also be subject to criminal prosecution. To learn more, on our home page at http://www.nrc.gov, select, What We Do, then Enforcement.

3.6 Common Defense and Security

Part of the NRC's mission concerns promotion of the common defense and security. Hence, NRC imposes regulations and license requirements aimed at protecting nuclear facilities from sabotage and special nuclear material from theft and diversion. Following the events of September 11, 2001, NRC further stepped up security measures for NRC licensees. To learn more, select What We Do on our home page, then Nuclear Security and Safeguards.

3.7 Nuclear Research

The NRC conducts a wide range of research and technical studies to (1) support realistic safety and security decision-making, (2) assess the safety significance of potential technical issues, and (3) prepare the agency for the future by evaluating potential safety issues involving new reactor designs and technology. The research program focuses on—

- reviewing emerging technologies (e.g., digital instrumentation and control systems),
- understanding and resolving nuclear plant aging issues arising out of operating experience,
- decommissioning licensed facilities,
- understanding the risks associated with nuclear facilities, including independent reviews of operating experience to identify potential safety concerns,
- providing the technical basis to support the NRC's move toward using more risk insights in its regulations, and
- participating in numerous joint international safety research agreements.

The results of this research are often published in a NUREG–series report. To learn more, see "Nuclear Research Programs To Ensure Public Health and Safety" (NUREG/BR–0282) in the Electronic Reading Room or on our home page, select What We Do, then Research under Support for Decisions.

3.8 International Activities and Non-Proliferation

The NRC participates in a wide range of mutually beneficial programs to exchange health and safety information with counterparts in the international community and to enhance the safety and security of peaceful nuclear activities worldwide. Among NRC's international activities are the—

- licensing of imports and exports for nuclear facilities, equipment, materials, and related commodities;
- development of legal instruments addressing issues such as non-proliferation, nuclear safety, spent fuel, and waste management;
- collaboration in numerous international and joint research projects on nuclear safety; and
- maintenance of arrangements with counterpart foreign national regulatory organizations for information exchange.

To learn more, on our home page at http://www.nrc.gov, select What We Do, then International Programs.

3.9 Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for the NRC was established on April 15, 1989. The Inspector General reports to and serves under the administrative supervision of the NRC Chairman, but operates with personnel and contracting and budget authority independent of the NRC. This office is statutorily mandated to promote the economy and efficiency of NRC's programs and operations and to detect and prevent fraud and abuse, should it occur, in these programs and operations. To fulfill its mandate, the OIG conducts and supervises audits and investigations. It also reviews and comments on existing and proposed regulations and legislation. The OIG operates a confidential, toll-free hotline (1-800-233-3497) to which individuals may report incidents of possible fraud, waste, and abuse in the agency.

4 DEVELOPMENT OF NRC REGULATIONS

When Congress enacts legislation to create a Federal agency, it provides general authority for the agency to perform its mission. One way the NRC more specifically accomplishes this mission is by issuing regulations. The process of developing regulations is called rulemaking. A regulation is sometimes referred to as a rule. The NRC's regulations are found in Chapter I of Title 10, "Energy," of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR). Chapter I is divided into Parts 1 through 199. These regulations are binding on all persons and organizations who are regulated by the NRC in the possession of nuclear materials or the operation of nuclear facilities. To see Title 10 of the CFR, select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, Collections of Documents by Type, then Regulations (10 CFR).

4.1 The *Federal Register*

The *Federal Register* (see Section 9, Endnote 2) is the official publication used by all Federal agencies to inform the public of various actions that the government is considering. It is published each Federal workday (access the *Federal Register* at http:/www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html). The NRC publishes proposed and final rules, advanced notices of proposed rulemakings, policy statements, memoranda of understanding, petitions for rulemaking, general notices, and announcements informing the public of NRC actions. The NRC also publishes a semiannual agenda of its regulatory activity (NUREG–0936).

Most NRC rulemakings are initiated by the NRC staff or the Commission, although a member of the public may petition the NRC to develop, change, or rescind any of its regulations (see Petitions for Rulemaking in this section). Most rulemakings provide the public with at least one opportunity to comment on a proposed rule.

After a draft proposed rule is developed, the Commission decides whether to approve it for publication in the *Federal Register* to obtain public comment. A published notice includes an NRC point of contact for the rule and the address to which you may send comments on the rule. The NRC may also hold public meetings and workshops to discuss the proposed rule and receive further comments. To access all proposed rulemakings published in the *Federal Register* and to submit your comments electronically, use Web address

http://ruleforum.llnl.gov then select Draft Rule Text for Comment in the left-side tool bar under Related Documents. The NRC considers electronically submitted comments in the same way that it considers mailed or hand-delivered comments.

4.2 Petitions for Rulemaking

Anyone may petition the NRC to issue, amend, or rescind a regulation (see 10 CFR 2.802, "Petitions for Rulemaking"). Before filing a petition, you are encouraged to contact the NRC's Rules and Directives Branch[3] in the Office of Administration about the process. The NRC is permitted to—

- describe the procedure and process for filing and responding to a petition for rulemaking,
- clarify an existing NRC regulation and the basis for the regulation, and
- assist you in clarifying a potential petition so that the Commission is able to understand the nature of the issues of concern.

4.3 National Codes and Standards

NRC regulations and regulatory guides may incorporate or endorse national codes and standards developed by professional societies, such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. NRC has assembled a reference collection consisting of codes and standards in current use. The collection may be consulted by appointment at the NRC Technical Library.[4] Copying of most codes and standards is restricted because they are copyrighted. Recognizing that participation in standards development improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the regulatory process, Federal law stipulates that Federal agencies participate in the development and use of consensus standards. To learn more, select What We Do on our home page, then Standards Development under Regulations and Guidance.

5 NRC STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 The Public and the Media

The NRC recognizes the public's interest in the safe regulation of nuclear activities and provides opportunities for citizens to participate in meetings and regulatory proceedings, ask questions about nuclear regulation, and make their opinions known. The media is kept informed of major NRC actions primarily through news releases. Fact sheets and brochures are also good sources of information for both the public and the media. For types of information not specifically described in this "Citizen's Guide," members of the public and the media may write, call, or e-mail the Office of Public Affairs[5] (OPA).

5.2 The Congress

The NRC keeps Congress fully and currently informed of its activities. Members of the Commission and NRC senior staff regularly provide information to Congress and reply to inquiries from various committees of the House and Senate and to Members of Congress who are interested in aspects of NRC's responsibilities. NRC's Office of Congressional Affairs[6] is the focal point for NRC communications with Congress. To learn more, select What We Do on our home page, then Congressional Affairs.

5.3 NRC Licensees

The NRC strives to conduct an efficient and effective regulatory program and has established strategic and performance goals for doing so in regulating the current licensees. To learn more, select Nuclear Reactors, Nuclear Materials, or Radioactive Waste on our home page.

5.4 Other Federal Agencies and Departments

The NRC produces reports jointly with other agencies and departments, participates in task forces and interagency committees to share information about specific regulatory issues of mutual importance, and has memoranda of understanding with various other Federal agencies. Other cooperative interagency activities are also carried out with other regulatory bodies such as the Environmental Protection

Agency or the Department of Transportation. For example, the staff and the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards reviewed the nuclear propulsion system for the Virginia class submarine for DOE under a reimbursable agreement, and the NRC is assisting DOE in the review of transportation container designs for the return of spent nuclear fuel from foreign research reactors.

5.5 Federal, State, Tribal, and Local Organizations

While NRC's contacts with States are far-reaching and involve activities of many of the agency's offices, as well as the Commission itself, NRC's program of cooperation with Federal, State, and local governments, interstate organizations, and Indian Tribes is administered primarily through the Office of State and Tribal Programs (STP).[7] This office strives to maintain effective relations and communications with these organizations and to promote greater awareness and mutual understanding of the policies, activities, and concerns of all organizations involved as they relate to radiological safety at NRC-licensed facilities and at facilities licensed through Agreement States.

A total of 32 States have formal agreements with the NRC by which those States have assumed regulatory responsibility over certain nuclear material. The NRC reviews Agreement State radiation control programs periodically to ensure adequate protection of the public health and safety and to ensure that their programs are compatible with NRC's program.

The NRC provides technical assistance primarily to Agreement States and sponsors conferences and special workshops on specific areas when needed. NRC also disseminates nuclear safety information of interest to organizations, including the Agreement States; the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Inc; the Organization of Agreement States; the National Governors' Association; the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners; and the National Congress of American Indians.

NRC communicates with affected State, local, and Tribal governments in order to provide timely and complete information on the proposed Yucca Mountain radioactive waste repository (see also Section 3.3). To learn more about STP programs, select What We Do on our home page, then State and Tribal Programs.

5.6 Industry and Its Workers

To further the protection of the public health and safety in regulating the use of nuclear materials, the NRC exchanges technical information and operational data, often taken from databases, with various industry groups and standards organizations. These exchanges include participating in standards committees or sharing other publicly available documents with such organizations as the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, the American Concrete Institute, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the American Board of Health Physicists (see also Section 4.3).

5.7 International Community

The NRC works with international organizations such as the International Nuclear Regulators Association, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Nuclear Energy Agency, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to help improve nuclear safety worldwide. The NRC provides for bilateral information exchange and cooperation on nuclear safety through letters of agreement with its counterpart foreign national regulatory authorities, ensuring prompt notification of safety problems that warrant action or investigation. Additionally, over 60 joint international safety research agreements with other countries enable sharing technical information, funding, technical support, and the results of joint research projects and programs. To improve nuclear safety regulation of Soviet-designed reactors, the NRC assists the foreign licensees through workshops, peer review of regulatory documents, working group meetings, and technical information and specialist exchanges.

The NRC also issues import and export licenses for nuclear facilities, major components, material, and related commodities as well as assisting in the development of legal instruments to address vital issues in the nuclear safety field. See also Section 3.8, "International Activities and Non-Proliferation," in this guide or to learn more, select What We Do, on our home page, then International Programs.

6 AGENCY INFORMATION

On the basis of Congressional authorization of its mission through statutes and the issuance of its basic operating regulations, NRC issues licenses authorizing individuals or companies to conduct certain activities involving nuclear materials. NRC oversees licensees to ensure that they comply with Commission requirements and safety standards, develops guidance to assist them with compliance, and authorizes certain actions. In addition, the NRC publishes other information and documents to support its regulatory mission, inform the public of its activities, and assist licensees in complying with its regulations. NRC has, for example—

- regulatory guides;
- generic communications;
- publications in the NUREG series;
- news releases, speeches, and fact sheets;
- information about obtaining contracts; and
- information about obtaining forms.

Much of this information and more is available on NRC's Web site at http://www.nrc.gov. All recent publicly available official agency records are available in the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (known as ADAMS). Contact NRC's Public Document Room (PDR)[8] for help in finding NRC information from either of these sources.

6.1 Regulatory Guides

These guides provide advice for preparing a license application. They describe acceptable methods of implementing NRC regulations, techniques used by the NRC staff in evaluating specific problems or postulated accidents, and data needed by the staff in its review of applications for permits and licenses. An NRC licensee may commit to following a regulatory guide when it receives or modifies its license. The guides are issued in 10 divisions:

1. Power Reactors
2. Research and Test Reactors
3. Fuels and Materials Facilities
4. Environmental and Siting
5. Materials and Plant Protection
6. Products
7. Transportation

8. Occupational Health
9. Antitrust and Financial Review
10. General

The guides are issued at two stages—as drafts for public comments and then as active (final) guides. Comments are solicited on draft guides for a minimum of two months following their issuance. Comments received on a current draft regulatory guide and information on the resolution of those comments may be viewed electronically and copied for a fee at the NRC's PDR. These documents are also available in ADAMS. For assistance using ADAMS, contact the PDR. To access draft guides and comment on these guides, select Public Involvement on our home page, then Documents for Comment.

A single copy of each guide, whether draft or active, is sent to each affected NRC licensee. Requests for single copies of a draft or a final guide (which may be reproduced) or for placement on an automatic distribution list for single copies of future draft guides in specific divisions may be made in writing to the NRC.[9] For a list of all regulatory guides, select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, Collections of Documents by Type, then Regulatory Guides.

6.2 Generic Communications

The NRC issues generic communications, which include bulletins, generic letters, information notices, and regulatory issue summaries, to inform licensees about specific problems, developments, or other matters of interest.

The NRC distributes these generic communications to appropriate groups of licensees and interested groups or organizations. To learn more, select What We Do on the home page, then Generic Communications under Regulations and Guidance. To purchase a subscription for Generic Communications, contact the U.S. Government Printing Office (see Endnote 1 in Section 9) or to copy them for a fee, contact the PDR.

6.3 NUREG–Series Publications

The NRC publishes in its NUREG series scientific, technical, and administrative information dealing with licensing and regulation of civilian nuclear facilities and materials. These publications present information supporting regulatory decisions, guidance for meeting NRC regulations, results of task force investigations of specific topics

or incidents, results of research programs, resolution of generic safety issues, analyses of certain regulatory programs, proceedings of conferences and workshops, and general information about NRC of interest to the public. The publications contain no legally binding requirements and contain only unclassified information.

To see an index for those publications available on our Web site, select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, Collections of Documents by Type, then NUREG–Series Publications. NUREG–series publications issued since November 1, 2000, are available in ADAMS (see Section 7, Information Systems). All NUREG–series publications are available for viewing either electronically or on microfiche in the PDR. The PDR's document reproduction contractor will reproduce these publications for a fee. You may also purchase publications from the GPO or the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) (see Endnote 1). NRC provides the public a free paper copy of any draft publication issued for comment (see Endnote 9).

6.3.1 Licensing and Other Safety Reviews

Some publications are related to NRC's licensing and safe operation oversight reviews and include Safety Evaluation Reports, Environmental Impact Statements, Safety Analysis Reports, and Standard Review Plans. Parties to a review proceeding receive a free copy of any related publication. Publications in this category related to proceedings that began before 1975 will not have a NUREG–series designator, but are referenced by docket numbers assigned to the case involved in a proceeding. Contact the PDR (see Endnote 8) for help finding them.

Standard Review Plans. To ensure consistency of its reviews and to ensure technical adequacy of the licensee's submittal, the NRC staff follows a plan for review of various licensee submittals. Each plan addresses—

- responsibilities of NRC staff reviewers,
- matters that are reviewed,
- the Commission's regulations and acceptance criteria necessary for the review,
- how the review is accomplished,
- the conclusions that are appropriate, and
- the implementation requirements.

A sampling of these plans published for a variety of NRC regulatory areas follows.

Reactors:

- Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Reactors (NUREG-0800)*
- Standard Review Plan for Evaluating Nuclear Power License Termination Plans (NUREG–1700)*

Materials:

- Standard Review Plan for Transportation Packages for Radioactive Material (NUREG–1609)*
- Standard Review Plan for the Review of a Reclamation Plan for Mill Tailings Sites Under Title II of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act (NUREG–1620)*

Decommissioning:

- NMSS Decommissioning Standard Review Plan (NUREG–1727)
- NMSS Handbook for Decommissioning Fuel Cycle and Materials Licensees (NUREG/BR–0243) is similar to a standard review plan.

Waste:

- Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility (NUREG-1200)
- Environmental Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility (NUREG-1300)
- Standard Review Plan for Spent Fuel Dry Storage Facilities (NUREG-1567)*

6.3.2 Operational Information

Operational information includes information about agency regulatory plans and programs, some of it mandated by the Government

*Available at http://www.nrc.gov in the Electronic Reading Room.

Performance and Results Act and other recent acts, including the following publications:

- Strategic Plan (NUREG-1614)*
- Accountability and Performance Report (NUREG-1542)*
- NRC Information Digest (NUREG-1350)*
- Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences (NUREG-0090)*
- Reactor Oversight Process (NUREG-1649)*

The following publications describe NRC programs:

- The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and How It Works (NUREG/BR-0256)*
- NRC, Regulator of Nuclear Safety (NUREG/BR-0164)*

6.3.3 Regulatory Decisions

- Nuclear Regulatory Commission Issuances (NUREG-0750)*
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Staff Practice and Procedure Digest (NUREG-0386)

The issuances (NUREG-0750) contain adjudications, formal orders, opinions, and other Commission decisions, including those of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Boards, the Administrative Law Judges, the Directors' Decisions (in accordance with 10 CFR 2.206), and the Decisions on Petitions for Rulemaking. Semiannual compilations of the monthly editions are published along with quarterly indices for them. NRC's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) publishes a digest (NUREG-0386) of these decisions as a research tool for citizens and lawyers who participate in NRC proceedings.

6.3.4 Public Participation

Some publications may aid in understanding the opportunities for participation.

- A Guide to Open Meetings (NUREG/BR-0128)
- Public Petition Process (NUREG/BR-0200)

*Available at http://www.nrc.gov in the Electronic Reading Room.

6.4 News Releases, Speeches, and Fact Sheets

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) (see Endnote 5) routinely provides news releases and speeches to the media and to others who request them and posts them daily on our home page. Select More News and Information for an index to news releases, speeches, fact sheets on various topics, and more, or contact OPA to obtain fact sheets.

Members of the news media may request that OPA place them on a daily facsimile or e-mail list for all NRC news releases and speeches. Any member of the public may request placement on the mailing list to receive free weekly compilations.

6.5 Contracts

NRC publicizes and posts proposed business opportunities valued at greater than $25,000 on the FedBizOpps Web site at http://www.fbo.gov . Once at this site, select Vendors located at the lower center of the screen. Search for NRC business opportunities either in the agency acronym menu or in the alphabetized list. Once you find NRC, select Posted Dates. Once you have selected a procurement of interest, select Synopsis, then Register To Receive Notification, and follow the guidelines to receive further notice about that particular NRC procurement.

The FedBizOpps system also includes an e-mail notification service. This service allows vendors to fill out a subscription form in order to receive e-mail notification when notices are posted to FedBizOpps that fit a particular agency/office/location, procurement classification code, set-aside type, or place-of-performance zip code. At the FedBizOpps Web site, select Vendors Notification Service located under "Related Links". Select a notification option and follow the instructions on the screen that follow.

NRC utilizes PRO-NET as the primary database to identify small and disadvantaged businesses to fulfill our requirements.

NRC also posts to its Web site notices of proposed contract actions with estimated values between $10,000 and $25,000. Contact the Division of Contracts and Property Management staff for more information.[10] Also published to the Web site is the NRC's supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the NRC Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR Chapter 20).

Procurement Opportunities for Small Business. The NRC is committed to ensuring that small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses are given equal opportunity to compete for and win their fair share of NRC contracts. NRC sets annual goals for awarding contracts to small, small disadvantaged, 8(a), women-owned, HUBZone, and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights is the NRC's advocate for all categories of small businesses. To learn more, select Contracting with NRC on our home page, then Opportunities for Small Businesses.

6.6 Forms

To obtain public-use NRC forms related to NRC regulatory requirements, select Electronic Reading Room, Collections of Documents by Type, then Forms. They are also available free upon request by calling, writing, or sending an e-mail message to the Forms Manager in the Graphics Section.[11] Requesters must identify the specific form by number. Allow 2 weeks for delivery.

7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

7.1 Agencywide Documents Access and Management System

The Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) is an information system that provides access to all documents made public by the NRC since November 1, 1999. Several hundred new documents are added daily. ADAMS permits full text searching and the ability to view document images, download files, and print locally. Documents can be searched and retrieved using the Citrix-based client access or the Web-based access. To learn more, select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, then ADAMS Documents.

The ADAMS Public Legacy Library, previously the Bibliographic Retrieval System, contains citations to documents created before November 1999. These documents are available on microfiche or hardcopy and can be copied for a fee by sending a request to the Public Document Room (see Endnote 8). The Public Legacy Library can be accessed through the Citrix-based ADAMS search by selecting Electronic Reading Room, ADAMS, then Citrix-Based Access.

7.2 World Wide Web Site

The NRC Home Page at our Web site http://www.nrc.gov is a gateway to agency information. The site provides coverage of NRC's regulatory programs for commercial power reactors, nuclear materials, and radioactive waste, as well as information about the agency's organization, budget, mission, strategic plan, and public participation in its regulatory activities. For government-wide information, access the www.firstgov.gov site.

7.3 The NRC Government Information Locator Service

NRC participates in the Federal Government Information Locator Service (GILS). The Federal GILS identifies and describes information resources throughout the Federal government. It also describes how the public can obtain the information. The NRC's GILS provides the public ways to locate—

- information products (e.g., books, maps, and publications in any medium)

- automated information systems (e.g., document and data retrieval systems, and
- information locators (e.g., indices, directories, and documents).

Select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, Collections of Documents by Type, then Government Information Locator Service.

8 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

8.1 Within the NRC

8.1.1 The Public Document Room

The Public Document Room (PDR) (see Endnote 8) serves as a bridge between the agency and the public, providing onsite and remote access to a comprehensive collection of publicly available NRC documents in paper, microfiche, or electronic format. Reflecting the Commission's openness policy, the NRC staff has released over two million documents to the PDR since the agency's founding in 1975. This comprehensive collection includes regulatory guides, Freedom of Information Act responses, NUREG-series publications, Commission (SECY) papers, inspection reports, Weekly Information Reports, transcripts of Commission meetings, existing and proposed regulations and amendments, material from NRC's licensing and enforcement proceedings, petitions for rulemaking or for enforcement action, news releases, and correspondence on technical, legal, policy, and some administrative matters. Some documents from the regulatory activities of NRC's forerunner agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, are also available upon request from the PDR.

The PDR has a staff of reference librarians to assist the public with their information needs. The staff provides reference services, including assistance searching the ADAMS Publicly Available Record System (PARS) Library, NRC's Web site, and the Public Legacy Library (PLL), previously the Bibliographic Retrieval System (BRS). Use of the PDR reference services is without charge. However, the user is responsible for fees for documents that are reproduced by the copy service. The PDR staff does not maintain collections of such formally published materials as books, monographs, serials, periodicals, industry codes or standards, or general indexes that are usually available in a traditional library.

8.1.2 The Office of Public Affairs

The Office of Public Affairs (see Endnote 5) conducts its activities at its Headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, and at four locations throughout the country—King of Prussia, Pennsylvania; Atlanta, Georgia; Lisle, Illinois; and Arlington, Texas. The office provides information on NRC activities to the media and the public. The chief means for doing this are through issuance of news releases,

speeches, brochures, fact sheets, and videos; maintaining a current Web page; answering questions by telephone and in person at meetings; and responding to correspondence—both written and electronic.

8.1.3 Commission Meetings, Documents, and Programs

8.1.3.1 Meetings

In accordance with the Government in the Sunshine Act, the public is welcome to observe all Commission meetings, unless a meeting is closed because it involves one or more of the "exempted" subjects described in NRC Regulations (10 CFR Part 9). "Exempted" subjects usually involve classified information, investigations, enforcement actions, internal rules and practices, or personnel matters. Advance notices of Commission meetings are published in the *Federal Register*, sent by e-mail to a regular list of recipients, and listed at our Web site (select Public Involvement, then Public Meeting Schedule). Contact the Office of the Secretary[12] of the Commission to obtain meeting schedules or to be added to the list of recipients who regularly receive advance notice of these meetings.

Transcripts from open Commission meetings are available to the public. Other papers relating to a public meeting, along with illustrative slides, are available to members of the public who attend a meeting. Copies of these papers are placed in ADAMS and posted to our Web site (select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, Collections of Documents by Type, then Commission Documents). Live Webcasts are available for most meetings. At NRC's Home page, if a meeting is scheduled, you will be able to select Live Commission Meeting Webcast.

8.1.3.2 Decision-Making Documents

The Commission's general policy is to release to the public written issue papers submitted by the NRC staff after the Commission has acted on the paper. Policy, rulemaking, and adjudicatory matters, as well as general information, are provided to the Commission for consideration. Such documents are referred to as "SECY Papers." Commission decisions on a SECY Paper are recorded in a "Staff Requirements Memorandum" (SRM). The SRM includes a concise statement of any additional requirements or tasks the staff is to perform. Along with the SRM, the Commission also issues a Commission Voting Record (CVR). This CVR contains clear indication of the individual votes of the Commissioners; a copy of each Commissioner's vote sheet; a comment resolution section indicating the extent to which differing views, if any, were expressed in the individual vote sheets;

and how they were accommodated, resolved, and reflected in the final decision. After the Commission's decision, all SECY Papers and other associated documents are released to the public unless they contain specific, limited types of information (adjudicatory, enforcement, or investigatory, lawyer-client or legal work, classified, security-sensitive, or proprietary, and personal privacy) that the Commission has specifically agreed should be withheld. To access publicly released SECY Papers, SRMs, and CVRs at our Web site, select Electronic Reading Room, Collections of Documents by Type, then Commission Documents. You may also view them in ADAMS or order copies for a fee from the PDR.

Commission Action Memoranda (COMs), another decision-making tool used by the Commission and the staff, are (1) written memoranda between Commissioners on issues before the agency or on matters a Commissioner wants to bring to the attention of his or her fellow Commissioners or (2) memoranda from the NRC staff seeking guidance from the Commission. After voting is completed on a COM, an SRM is written to record the decision. Publicly released COMs, the pertinent SRMs, and copies of individual Commissioner comments, and Commissioner correspondence are available on our Web site, in ADAMS, and in the PDR.

8.1.3.3 Commission's History Program

Through the Commission History Program, the origins and evolution of NRC regulatory policies are documented. They are discussed in three volumes of nuclear regulatory history:

1. *Controlling the Atom: The Beginnings of Nuclear Regulation 1946-1962* (1984) (NUREG-1610).

2. *Containing the Atom: Nuclear Regulation in a Changing Environment, 1963-1971* (1992).

3. *Permissible Dose: A History of Radiation Protection in the Twentieth Century* (2000).

Controlling the Atom has been reprinted by the NRC and is available as NUREG-1610. *Containing the Atom* and *Permissible Dose* are available from the University of California Press. In addition, the NRC has published a 70-page booklet, "A Short History of Nuclear Regulation, 1946-1999" (NUREG/BR-0175, Rev. 1), which summarizes major issues in the NRC's history. The short history is available at our Web site. Select Who We Are on our home page, then History.

8.1.4 Hearing Records (Dockets) for Regulatory Proceedings

The Commission's Rules of Practice (10 CFR Part 2) provide procedures, called "discovery," that permit parties to a formal NRC proceeding under 10 CFR Part 2, Subpart G, to request documents or obtain answers to questions that are relevant to the issues in a proceeding. Select What We Do on our home page, then Adjudication for an overview of the NRC hearing process. The docket files containing presiding officer, party, or citizen submissions for all 10 CFR Part 2 licensing and enforcement proceedings as well as for rulemaking proceedings (including the determinations on petitions for rulemaking) are available to the public in NRC's Public Document Room or through ADAMS where they can be viewed by searching on the docket number or proceeding number for a particular proceeding. Using the ADAMS search menu, enter the proceeding number in the case or reference field to search. In addition, NRC has established a unique process, known as the Licensing Support Network (LSN)[13], that provides public access to "discovery" information produced by the parties and potential parties to the planned high-level waste repository licensing proceeding. Select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, then HLW Licensing Support Network site to access the LSN.

8.1.5 Public Meeting Notices

Public Meeting Notices. Meeting announcements are provided to the public as soon as the NRC staff is certain that a meeting will be held and has arranged for a firm date, time, and facility. Select Public Involvement on our home page, then Public Meeting Schedule, or, if you do not have Internet access, contact the NRC Public Document Room staff for information about meetings.

8.1.6 Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Requests

Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Requests. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act (PA) program office is responsible for administering policies, programs, and procedures to ensure NRC compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a. NRC regulations governing administration of the FOIA and Privacy Act programs are contained in 10 CFR Part 9. Select Electronic Reading Room on our home page, then FOIA and Privacy Act Requests for more information. You may submit a Freedom of Information Act or Privacy Act request in writing, or electronically via a form at our Web site, to the NRC FOIA/PA Officer.[14]

As previously described, a great deal of NRC information is already publicly available at the PDR and in ADAMS. A number of libraries around the country have agreed to maintain a set of microfiche containing most of the publicly available documents issued between 1987 and 1999. Contact the PDR for more information.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The FOIA *requires* that the NRC allow the public access to the information unless it is exempted under the FOIA from disclosure (e.g., classified national security, business proprietary, personal privacy, investigative information). Submit these requests to the FOIA/PA Officer (see Endnote 14). Your letter must specifically state that you are submitting an FOIA request and must adequately describe the specific records or type of records you seek to enable NRC staff to conduct a search for the requested records with a reasonable amount of effort. Disclosure will be made by providing a copy of the documents requested or by making copies of the documents requested available for viewing in ADAMS. If a person is seeking records that pertain to another person, that information is usually not disclosed unless the requester obtains the other person's written consent and submits it along with the request.

Privacy Act (PA). Under the PA, a person may seek access to records that are retrieved by that person's name or other personal identifier, such as a social security number or an employee identification number. Such records will be made available unless they fall within the exemptions of the PA or the FOIA.

The request should adequately describe the types of records that NRC should search (e.g., investigative, personnel, security clearance). A person making a request under the PA must establish his or her identity by a signature, address, date of birth, employee identification number, and one other item of identification such as a photocopy of a driver's license or other document.

A requester may be required to pay fees for searching, reviewing, and copying records, but will be notified beforehand if fees will exceed $25.

8.1.7 The Technical Library

The Technical Library (see Endnote 4) houses scientific and technical books, journals, reports, standards, codes, microforms, CD-ROMs, and electronic databases necessary to support most regional and headquarters' staff needs. Further, the Library staff provides information and document retrieval to NRC staff as well as access to information resources outside of the NRC through use of the interlibrary

loan network. Although the primary function of service is to the NRC staff, limited resources are available to similarly serve the general public. The Technical Library is open to the public for reference use by appointment.

8.2 Outside the NRC

8.2.1 Radiation Safety Information Computational Center

The Radiation Safety Information Computational Center[15] (RSICC) was established in 1962 at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. The RSICC is a specialized information analysis center authorized to collect, analyze, maintain, and distribute computer software and data sets in the areas of radiation transport and safety. This center serves as a repository for computer software sponsored by the NRC.

8.2.2 U.S. Government Printing Office

You may order NRC publications directly from the Government Printing Office (GPO) (see Endnote 1). Your order can be charged to VISA, Mastercard, or Superintendent of Document Accounts. GPO also offers convenience deposit accounts. Upon receipt of an initial deposit ($50 minimum), GPO will assign you a unique account number. You can charge future purchases against the deposit account to the extent of sufficient funds in the account. For detailed information and forms, contact GPO.

The Federal Depository Library Program[16] (FDLP), a GPO program, was established by Congress to ensure that the American public has access to its Government's information. This program involves the acquisition, format conversion, and distribution of depository materials and the coordination of Federal depository libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. The mission of the FDLP is to disseminate information products from all three branches of the Government to more than 1,300 libraries nationwide. Libraries that have been designated as Federal depositories maintain these information products as part of their existing collections and are responsible for assuring that the public has free access to the material provided by the FDLP. Some of these libraries have older NRC records.

8.2.3 National Technical Information Service

The National Technical Information Services (NTIS) (see Endnote 1) is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Administration. Among other services, it maintains a permanent repository of

unclassified scientific, technical, engineering, and business information, which it collects and disseminates worldwide. You may purchase most NRC publications and regulatory guides from NTIS.

8.2.4 Energy Science and Technology Software Center

The Energy Science and Technology Service Center[17] (ESTSC) offers a variety of software that operates on personal computers, mainframes, or supercomputers. Many packages are designed to function in several computing environments, computers, and operating systems. Software is available on diskettes or magnetic tape along with supporting documentation. The center serves as a repository for computer software sponsored by the DOE. The collection also contains selected software from the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The prices for software vary according to customer category, the computer platform on which the software will be used, and the level of review received. Specific information on software in the collection and payment options can be obtained by contacting the ESTSC.

8.2.5 Office of Scientific and Technical Information

The Office of Scientific and Technical Information[18] (OSTI), within the Office of Advanced Scientific Computing Research (OASCR), in the DOE's Office of Science is responsible for leading the Department's Technical Information Management Program. They also provide direction and coordination for the dissemination of scientific and technical information (OSTI) resulting from DOE research and development and environmental programs. To effectively disseminate OSTI information, OSTI has produced Energy Files. This Virtual Library Collection of Energy Science and Technology provides a vast array of information and resources pertaining to energy science and technology: The DOE Information Bridge, which allows access to full-text OSTI reports; PubSCIENCE—which provides access to scientific journal literature; and the PrePRINT Network, OSTI's newest product—which provides a searchable gateway to preprint servers.

9 ENDNOTES: SOURCES OF NRC INFORMATION

An endnote number found throughout this guide, identifies the sources of the information it follows (e.g., NUREG-0980 is available from the sources listed in Endnote 1).

See also our Web site at http://www.nrc.gov.

1. Unless otherwise specified, obtain NUREG-0980 or other NUREG-series publications listed in this guide in one of the following ways:
   - Access most NUREG-series publications issued after October 1999 in full text at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html.
   - Order photocopies of these publications for a fee from the NRC Public Document Room (see Endnote 8).
   - Contact the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) by telephone at 202-512-1800 or WWW address: http://www.access.gpo.gov/#info.
   - Contact the National Technical Information Service (NTSI) by telephone at 703-487-4650, facsimile at 702-321-8547, or WWW address: http://www.ntis.gov/help/ordermethods.asp?loc=7-4-0#phone.
2. The *Federal Register* is available in the NRC Library and many public libraries. You may view the table of contents for the day's issue of the *Federal Register* at Internet Web site address http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html.
3. Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch; Telephone: 301-415-7163, or toll-free at 800-368-5609.
4. Office of the Chief Information Officer, NRC Technical Library, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; Telephone: 301-415-5610; e-mail address: library@nrc.gov.
5. Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; e-mail address: OPA@nrc.gov; Telephone: 1-800-368-5642, or locally, call 301-415-8200.
6. Office of Congressional Affairs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; Telephone: 301-415-1776.

7. Office of State and Tribal Programs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; e-mail address: kjk@nrc.gov; Telephone: 301-415-3340.

8. NRC Public Document Room
   - Located at 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, across from the White Flint Metrorail Station.
   - Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, Federal work days from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Eastern time.
   - Telephone: 1-800-397-4209, or locally, 301-415-4737, or TDD number, 1-800-635-4512.
   - Facsimile: 301-415-3548.
   - E-mail address: pdr@nrc.gov.

9. Office of the Chief Information Officer, Reproduction and Distribution Services Branch, Mail Stop O-P137; U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001 or e-mail address: DISTRIBUTION@nrc.gov.

10. Office of Administration, Division of Contracts, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; Telephone: 301-415-6598 or e-mail address: mer@nrc.gov.

11. Office of the Chief Information Officer, NRC Forms Manager, Graphics Section, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; Telephone: 301-415-5877; e-mail address: FORMS@nrc.gov. Requesters must identify the specific form by number. Allow two weeks for delivery.

12. Office of the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; Telephone: Recorded message at 301-415-2092. For more information about these meetings, call 301-415-1661.

13. Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel, Licensing Support Network Administrator, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop T3-F23, Washington, DC 20555-0001; e-mail address: LSNWebmaster@nrc.gov ; Telephone: 301-415-7550; WWW address: http://lsnnet.gov/.

14. Office of the Chief Information Officer, FOIA/PA Officer, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; e-mail address: FOIA@nrc.gov; Telephone: 301-415-7169 between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m, Federal work days. Facsimile: 301-415-5130.

15. Radiation Safety Information Computational Center, P.O. Box 2008, Oak Ridge National Library, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6362; Telephone: 865-574-6176; WWW address: http://www-rsicc.ornl.gov/rsicc.html

16. Federal Depository Library Program's, one of the Government Printing Office's programs (see Endnote 1), WWW address: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/locators/findlibs/index.html

17. Energy Science and Technology Software Center, Director's Office, P.O. Box 1020, Oak Ridge TN, 37831-1020; Telephone: 865-576-2606; WWW address: http://apollo.osti.gov/html/osti/estsc/estsc.html

18. Office of Scientific and Technical Information, Department of Energy, P.O. Box 62, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6362; Telephone 865-576-8401; WWW address: http://www.OSTI.GOV/aboutosti.html

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