



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

No. 05-041

March 3, 2005

NRC PROPOSES REVISED STANDARDS FOR POST-FIRE ACTIONS BY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT OPERATORS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing revised requirements nuclear power plant operators must meet in order for their fire protection plans to include manual actions for safely shutting down the plant after a fire.

The requirements are outlined in a proposed rule that would apply to plants that began operation prior to Jan. 1, 1979. These plants have the option to adopt the NRC's approved alternate methods for using manual actions to safely shut down the reactor after a fire. Compensatory manual actions by plant personnel had been previously implemented. The proposed rule is intended to provide consistent standards by which the NRC can ensure manual actions are adequate.

The proposed rule would amend the NRC's regulations to formally describe where and how manual actions would be acceptable. The manual action would have to provide protection comparable to either a fire barrier capable of withstanding a fire for an hour, or to 20 feet of space with no intervening flammable material. The requirements also require fire detectors and fire suppression equipment in the fire area. Under the rule change, plant operators will have to provide thorough evaluations of how their proposed manual actions provide acceptable protection.

For more information on the proposed rule, contact NRC staff members David Diec (telephone 301-415-2834, e-mail dtd@nrc.gov) or Alexander Klein (telephone 301-415-3477, e-mail arkl@nrc.gov).

Comments on the changes will be accepted for 75 days following publication of the proposed rule in the *Federal Register*, expected shortly. Comments may be mailed to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. They may be e-mailed to: SECY@nrc.gov, via the NRC's rulemaking Web site at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov>, or through the Federal Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Comments may also be faxed to the Secretary at 301-415-1101, or hand-delivered to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on federal workdays.

###