



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC AMENDING RULES ON HOW LICENSEES, APPLICANTS AND MEMBERS OF PUBLIC MAY SUBMIT DOCUMENTS ELECTRONICALLY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is revising its rules on when and how licensees, applicants, vendors and members of the public may submit documents electronically to the agency. The NRC is modifying numerous provisions in its regulations to make clear it will accept electronic communications, if they comply with agency guidance.

The revised procedures provide for voluntary electronic submissions to the agency through such means as CD-ROM, e-mail, and the agency's Electronic Information Exchange (EIE). The EIE enables the submission of documents electronically in a secure Web-based environment. However, the NRC also will continue to accept paper documents. The NRC will conduct a public meeting to discuss its proposal and guidance document on October 3 in the NRC Auditorium at Two White Flint North, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., from 8:30 a.m. until 12 noon.

The NRC is seeking public comment on both the revised rule and the accompanying guidance document, which explains how to submit documents to the agency electronically and identifies those methods which may not be used. When the revised rule becomes effective, the new guidance document will supersede the agency's earlier guidance on electronic submissions, which included a Regulatory Issues Summary that informed licensees regulated under Part 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations that they may use the Electronic Information Exchange to submit electronically signed documents. The revised rule also will supersede the August 10 letter of last year issued to certain fuel cycle facilities providing them the option of electronic submissions.

The revised rule and guidance do not address the submission of documents in hearings under NRC regulations in Part 2 and other parts that govern hearings. However, the NRC is currently conducting a pilot program for electronic filings in one adjudicatory proceeding. At the conclusion of the program, the agency will seek public comment on a separate rule and guidance governing procedures for electronic filings in adjudicatory proceedings. Until then, adjudicatory documents submitted to the Atomic Safety and Licensing Boards will continue to be filed in paper, unless electronic filing is authorized on a case-by-case basis.

The rule will become effective 90 days after publication in the *Federal Register*, expected shortly, unless significant adverse comments on the rule are received within 45 days after publication in

the Register. The NRC is publishing a direct final rule because it views this as a non-controversial action and anticipates few, if any, significant adverse comments on the rule itself. The guidance document the NRC is issuing as an appendix to the Federal Register Notice will be available on the agency's web site, at <http://www.nrc.gov/site-help/eie.html> , by calling 301-415-6030, or via e-mail to EIE@nrc.gov .

Written comments may be mailed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Deliver comments to: 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays.

Comments may also be submitted via the NRC's interactive rulemaking Web site at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov> . For information about the interactive rulemaking site, contact Carol Gallagher at 301-415-5905, or CAG@nrc.gov .

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