

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, DC 20555  
Phone 301-415-8200 Fax 301-415-2234  
Internet:opa@nrc.gov

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NRC APPROVES SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR SHIPPING  
SPENT FUEL FROM LIMERICK REACTOR TO CALIFORNIA FACILITY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved security arrangements for trucking a bundle of irradiated nuclear fuel from a power plant near Philadelphia to a facility near Pleasanton, California.

The purpose of the shipment from PECO Energy Company's Limerick, Pennsylvania, nuclear power plant to General Electric Company's Vallecitos Nuclear Center in California is to test the feasibility of burning fuel in commercial reactors for a longer period than is the current practice.

The ten 12-foot long fuel rods will be contained in a 23-ton NRC-certified steel shipping cask hauled by tractor-trailer. As is required for spent fuel shipments by road or rail, elaborate security arrangements will be followed, including armed escorts, special communications, frequent contact with a dedicated communications center, and close coordination with state and local law enforcement agencies along the entire route. Special procedures are provided for in case of emergencies, such as an accident or hijacking attempt. In the latter case, the truck could be instantly immobilized so that it could not be moved.

There have been more than 1,000 separate shipments of commercial spent fuel in the United States over the last 20 years. Although there have been a small number of traffic accidents, in no case has any radioactive material been released to the environment.

NRC regulations prohibit details of scheduling to be disclosed until ten days after the shipment has been completed.

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