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NRC CHANGES REGULATIONS ON SAFETY DEFECTS REPORTING

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulations governing the reporting of safety defects found during the design, construction and operation of nuclear facilities.

Under various portions of the Commission's regulations, operators of nuclear power plants and non-power reactors, holders of construction permits and non-licensees supplying basic components for NRC-licensed facilities or activities all are required to report safety defects to the NRC staff.

The amendments to these regulations will, among other things:

- Eliminate instances, which have occurred in the past, of more than one organization evaluating and reporting a safety defect as the result of trying to satisfy different parts of the NRC's regulations.

- Establish uniform time limits for initial reports of safety defects (within two days of the determination that a safety defect exists) and followup reports (within 30 days of the determination).

- Establish a five-day limit for vendors to transfer information to end users when it is not possible to determine if a safety defect exists.

- Establish a uniform definition of defects to be reported.

- Establish a requirement to assure the uniformity of all safety defect reports.

- Clarify the term "basic component".

- Specify time limits for retention of specific records.

- Provide that, in cases where an evaluation of a potential safety defect cannot be made within 60 days, an interim report be submitted within 60 days of discovery of the potential safety defect.

The amendments to Parts 21 and 50 of the Commission's regulations will become effective on October 29, 1991.

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