

No. 92-65  
Tel. 301/504-2240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(Wednesday, April 29, 1992)

NRC PROPOSES TO AMEND REGULATIONS DEALING  
WITH EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to amend its regulations to require specific licensing of exports and imports of radioactive wastes. Currently, exports and imports of radioactive wastes can take place under general licenses which do not require case-by-case licensing actions by the NRC staff

The Commission's proposed action results from concerns, raised in an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published in the Federal Register in February 1990, that international transfers of radioactive wastes, particularly low-level radioactive wastes, should be subject to more control.

As proposed the revisions would:

- Require that an application for a NRC license to export or import radioactive wastes contain information on the volume of the wastes, the waste classification, its chemical and physical characteristics and whether a disposal site operator had agreed to accept the waste.
- Provide for a notice of receipt of each application in the Federal Register; soliciting the views of the Executive Department through the Department of State on each export application; and consultations, if appropriate, with other Federal agencies, interested States and low-level waste compacts on import applications.
- Establish criteria for reviewing each application: would a proposed export or import minimize public health, safety and environmental impacts in the United States and the global commons? would a proposed export be acceptable to the responsible regulatory authority of the receiving country? would a proposed export be inimical to the common defense and security interests of the United States?

- Require the staff, following its review, to recommend to the Commission approval or denial of the license; make clear that the NRC license would only authorize the waste material to enter or exit the jurisdiction of the United States but not authorize the possession of the material or guarantee access to a disposal site in this or another country; and commit the NRC to consult with interested States and low-level waste compacts prior to issuing an import license which generally would not be issued unless it were clear that the waste would be accepted by a disposal site and its host State and compact.

Written comments on the proposed amendments to Parts 110 of the Commission's regulations should be received by July 13, 1992. They should be addressed to the Secretary of the Commission, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch.

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