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NRC PROPOSES RULE CHANGE TO EXERCISE
BETTER CONTROL OVER RADIOACTIVE GAUGES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to amend its regulations governing the safe use of radioactive materials in certain measuring, gauging and controlling devices.

The proposed rule would provide for additional regulatory control over gauges with accessible air gaps and radiation levels that exceed specified values. This action is intended to make it increasingly difficult for personnel to obtain access to the devices' radiation beam which should reduce the frequency and likelihood of unnecessary radiation exposures to personnel.

These devices, which were the subject of a recent NRC study, have been distributed under a general license where a case-by-case evaluation of the adequacy of the training, experience and radiation safety program of the user by the NRC or one of the 28 States which have assumed, by agreement part of the NRC's regulatory authority was unnecessary. As proposed, unless the accessible air gap can be eliminated by physical modification, users of the gauges would be required to obtain a specific license requiring the development of training and access control programs.

Written comments on the proposed amendments to Parts 31 and 32 of the Commission's regulations should be received by March 29, 1993. 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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