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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION TO HOLD WORKSHOP
NOVEMBER 19 ON CLEANUP OF CONTAMINATED SITES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a workshop on November 19 in Rockville, MD, to discuss cleanup of radioactively contaminated sites. Interested persons are invited to attend.

NRC Chairman Ivan Selin will give the keynote address at 8:45 a.m., following opening remarks by NRC staff members at 8:30 a.m. The workshop, which will be held at the Potomac Inn, 3 Research Court, Rockville, will continue until about 5:30 p.m.

In 1990, the NRC developed a Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) to identify and resolve issues associated with the timely cleanup of radioactively contaminated nuclear materials sites. The NRC staff determined that over 40 of these sites deserved special attention to ensure that they were decontaminated and decommissioned in a timely and effective manner. These sites, called the "SDMP sites," have buildings, former waste disposal areas, large piles of tailings from mineral processing, groundwater and soil contaminated with low levels of uranium, thorium or other radioactive materials.

The sites present varying degrees of radiological hazard and cleanup complexity and cost. In some cases, cleanup and decommissioning activities have begun or are nearing completion. At others, cleanup and decommissioning have not yet been planned or initiated.

On April 16, 1992, the NRC issued an action plan to ensure the timely cleanup of the SDMP sites (none of which are nuclear power plants). Since the issuance of the Action Plan, some licensees have proposed ideas for achieving more timely and effective cleanup of contaminated sites. One idea involves creating a mechanism by which licensees and other interested parties can share lessons learned in characterizing and remediating contaminated sites. NRC is holding this workshop in response to this proposal and in recognition that there are common cleanup issues that exist at a number of SDMP sites.

Presentations during the workshop will be limited to invited speakers, whose topics will include cleanup criteria, verification surveys, finality, process for reviewing and approving decommissioning actions, and coordination with federal, state and local agencies.

All attendees are encouraged to participate in question-and-answer sessions after each series of presentations.

Persons who would like to include specific topics in the workshop or who have questions regarding the agenda should contact Harvey Spiro, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, telephone: 301/504-2559.

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