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NRC EXTENDS DATE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH REVISED
RADIATION PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is extending from January 1, 1993, to January 1, 1994, the date by which licensees must comply with revised radiation protection requirements.

The new requirements, which are contained primarily in Part 20 of the Commission's regulations, were approved by the Commission on December 13, 1990, published in the Federal Register on May 21, 1991, and became effective on June 20, 1991. Compliance with the revised requirements was optional beginning on the June 20 effective date and will now be mandatory on January 1, 1994.

The revisions will provide a substantial increase in the overall protection of public health and safety. However, in approving the proposed extension of time for compliance, the Commission noted that current practices, such as conducting operations to keep radiation exposures as low as is reasonably achievable, generally have kept radiation exposures well below the limits in the current regulations.

Delaying the required implementation date until 1994 will give licensees additional time to examine and implement the regulatory guidance that has been developed to support the rule. It will also establish a concurrent implementation date for NRC and Agreement State licensees. ("Agreement States" are the 29 states that regulate certain radioactive material users under agreement with the NRC. NRC had previously asked the Agreement States to proceed as quickly as possible to conform to the revised requirements, and to require their licensees to comply by January 1, 1994.)

A proposed rule on this subject was published in the Federal Register for public comment on May 19, 1992. No substantive changes have been made as a result of the comments received.

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