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NRC ISSUES FIRST IMPORT LICENSE UNDER NEW REGULATIONS TO SIEMENS
POWER COMPANY

The NRC has issued the first import license under new regulations which require specific authorization for export or import of nuclear materials to be used for waste treatment, storage, or disposal.

The license authorizes Siemens Power Corporation to import 1200 kilograms (more than 2600 pounds) of combustible fuel fabrication waste material from Germany over a 10-year period. The waste, in the form of low enriched uranium oxide powder, will be incinerated at Siemens' facility in Richland, Washington. The resulting ash residue will be sold to COGEMA, Inc. in France for uranium recovery, then recycled for fuel fabrication.

NRC regulations under which Siemens received this import license were adopted last year. Before then, any entity authorized to possess nuclear material in the United States had general NRC authority to export and import radioactive waste, along with other radioactive material.

The new regulations are consistent with the International Atomic Energy Agency's International Code of Practice on Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste.

A Federal Register notice on the license application was published on May 5 and no comments were received. NRC has also consulted with the State of Washington, which has no objection to the license being granted.

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