

No. 94-14
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Wednesday, January 26, 1994)

NRC STAFF ISSUES SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT
ON PROPOSED CLAIBORNE ENRICHMENT CENTER IN LOUISIANA

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards has issued a safety evaluation report on the proposed construction and operation of the Claiborne Enrichment Center to be located near Homer, Louisiana.

Louisiana Energy Services has applied for a license to build and operate the facility to enrich natural uranium to a maximum of 5 percent Uranium-235 by the gas centrifuge process. The enriched uranium will be used to produce fuel for commercial nuclear power plants in the United States. Facility construction is expected to last from 2-1/2 to 5 years, operation 30 years and decommissioning 7 years.

The site, about 5 miles northeast of Homer and 50 miles east-northeast of Shreveport, consists of 442 acres of land, of which about 70 acres will be developed for plant facilities.

In the safety evaluation report, the NRC staff documents the results of its review of the potential adverse impacts of operation of the facility on worker and public health and safety under both normal and accident conditions. The review also considered the management organization, administrative programs and financial qualifications provided by the applicant to ensure safe design and operation of the facility. The staff concluded that the applicant's descriptions, specifications and analyses provide an adequate basis for safety review and evaluation of facility operations and that construction and operation of the facility would not pose an undue risk to public health and safety.

The staff's report will form part of the record for a public hearing to be conducted by an NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board. Participants in the hearing will include Citizens Against Nuclear Trash (a group that has been admitted as an intervenor in the hearing), Louisiana Energy Services and the NRC staff. The portion of the hearing directed to technical issues is currently estimated to begin on June 10, 1994, and the portion on environmental issues on December 27, 1994.

Copies of the "Safety Evaluation Report for the Claiborne Enrichment Center, Homer, Louisiana (NUREG-1491)," are available for public inspection and copying at the NRC's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC, and at the Local Public Document Room at the Claiborne Parish Library, 901 Edgewood Drive, Homer, Louisiana. In addition, a free single copy of the document may be obtained by written request to the Director, Division of Information Support Services, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.