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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NRC PROPOSES TO REDUCE SCOPE OF WORK STATES
CONDUCT IN OFFSITE MONITORING OF LICENSED FACILITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is requesting public comments on its plan to reduce the amount of offsite monitoring around selected nuclear facilities that 27 States are paid to conduct under contract with the NRC. The majority of the facilities are nuclear power plants.

Plans to eliminate a portion of the environmental monitoring work, which will cost about \$1 million this year, would not hamper the NRC's ability to monitor and regulate the safety of the plants. Licensees will continue with their own required monitoring programs.

The NRC will evaluate the public comments and make a decision this year on its plan to reduce the amount of monitoring work done by the States in 1996.

The 27 States have been provided funding under cooperative agreements, since the mid-1970s, to collect and analyze samples taken periodically from the air, water, soil and food products (milk and food crops) around the selected licensed facilities.

Results of the sample analyses are compared by the States with similar analyses made by the respective nuclear facility. This information is then sent to the NRC where it is used as a supplemental tool in cross-checking the performance of environmental monitoring programs conducted by the nuclear facility.

Licensees are under strict NRC requirements to monitor and control radioactive materials released to the air, water and ground around their facilities. The NRC inspects and reviews licensee conformance with the requirements on a regular basis.

The contracts with States to perform parallel environmental monitoring of licensed facilities were intended as seed money to get the States started in their own radiological programs, but not to fully fund them.

Under the new proposal, the NRC will no longer contract with the States to sample and analyze the air, water and ground for radiation levels. However, the States will continue to participate in a NRC program that uses a network of small devices called thermoluminescent dosimeters (TLDs). The devices provide continuous measurement of radiation levels in the air in areas around selected nuclear facilities.

State personnel place about 40-50 TLDs on poles in specific places around a nuclear facility. They replace and collect the exposed TLDs quarterly and ship them in shielded containers to the NRC's Region 1 Office in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, for analysis and comparison with licensee data.

The program will cost the NRC \$195,000 this year.

Comments on the NRC proposal are due by May 26, and should be sent to the Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555.

A table reflecting the States involved in the environmental monitoring and TLD programs is attached.

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Attachment:
As stated

1995 STATE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

<u>STATE</u>	<u>TLD</u>	<u>ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING</u>
Alabama	Yes	Yes
Arizona	Yes	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	Yes
California	Yes	Yes
Colorado	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	Yes	Yes
Delaware	Yes	No
Florida	Yes*	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes
Illinois	Yes	No
Iowa	Yes	Yes
Kansas	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	Yes	Yes
Maine	Yes	Yes
Maryland	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	Yes
Michigan	Yes	No
Minnesota	Yes	No
Mississippi	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Yes	No
Nebraska	Yes	Yes
New Hampshire	Yes	No
New Jersey	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	Yes
Ohio	Yes	Yes
Oregon	No**	Yes
Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	Yes	Yes
Texas	Yes	Yes
Vermont	Yes	No
Virginia	Yes	Yes
Washington	Yes	Yes
Wisconsin	Yes	Yes

*University of Florida collects TLDs for the NRC.

**Washington State collects the TLDs for Oregon.