

No. 95-53
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Friday, April 28, 1995)

NRC TO AMEND REGULATION GOVERNING LICENSING
OF INDEPENDENT SPENT FUEL STORAGE INSTALLATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulation governing the site-specific licensing of an independent spent fuel storage installation to eliminate a requirement that the Commission itself authorize the issuance of such licenses.

To date, six separate site-specific licenses have been issued authorizing the use of independent spent fuel storage installations, otherwise known as dry cask storage, all specifically authorized by the Commission. They are for the Surry nuclear power plant in Virginia, the H.B. Robinson nuclear power plant in South Carolina, the Oconee nuclear power plant in South Carolina, the Ft. St. Vrain nuclear power plant in Colorado (now being decommissioned), the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant in Maryland and the Prairie Island nuclear power plant in Minnesota.

The amendment will keep intact the requirement that the NRC staff conduct a detailed review of any site-specific application to store fuel in an independent spent fuel storage installation and prepare a Safety Evaluation Report and Environmental Assessment detailing the results of the review.

In addition, the present requirement that the public be given notice of the receipt of such an application and offered an opportunity for a public hearing is being retained. In the event a public hearing were held, a license could not be issued until the proceeding was complete and an Initial Decision was issued by the presiding Atomic Safety and Licensing Board. In addition, hearing participants would retain the right to request Commission review of the Board's decision, including the opportunity to request that the effectiveness of the Board's decision be stayed and that the Commission undertake review before the license becomes effective.

Absent such a stay request, the Board's decision would be immediately effective and the staff could issue the license within 10 days and without being required to obtain additional express Commission authorization.

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The amendments are being adopted following receipt and consideration of written public comments on the proposed rule that was published in June 1993.

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