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NRC WITHDRAWS PROPOSED CHANGES TO REGULATIONS
FOR ON-SITE STORAGE OF LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is withdrawing a proposed regulation on low-level radioactive waste that was aimed at discouraging licensees from storing the waste rather than sending it to a permanent disposal facility. The Commission continues to favor disposal of low-level waste over long-term storage, and the withdrawal of the proposed rule in no way alters that position.

However, after considering comments received on the proposed rule, which was published in the Federal Register for public comment on February 2, 1993, the Commission does not believe that there is sufficient connection between the requirements in the rule and the objectives of reducing on-site storage of low-level waste and encouraging the development of new low-level waste disposal capacity.

The proposed rule would not have permitted licensees to store low-level radioactive waste on-site after January 1, 1996 (other than reasonable short-term storage for radioactive decay or for collection or consolidation for shipment off-site to a disposal facility), unless the licensee could document that it had exhausted other reasonable waste management options. The proposal would have required that the licensee attempt to contract, either directly or through the State in which the licensee's facility is located, for the disposal of the waste. Licensees would have been required to retain all relevant documentation, on actions taken under the rule, for at least three years and to make the documentation available for NRC inspection.

Existing NRC regulations will continue to be used for on-site storage of low-level radioactive waste. These rules permit on-site storage, if all relevant licensing and regulatory requirements are met.

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