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NRC REVISES REGULATIONS FOR URANIUM ENRICHMENT FACILITIES
OPERATED BY USEC OR ITS SUCCESSOR

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is revising its regulations for uranium enrichment facilities operated by the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) to be consistent with provisions of the USEC Privatization Act.

The principal effect of the act, which was signed into law on April 26, is to require the government-owned USEC to sell its assets to a private company.

The act also changes the way uranium enrichment facilities operated by USEC or its successor are to be certified or licensed by the NRC. NRC has therefore changed its regulations to:

(1) Incorporate authority granted by the legislation to impose civil penalties on USEC or its successor if NRC requirements are violated.

(2) Specify that the Commission will not issue a certificate or license to a foreign-owned or dominated corporation, and will not issue a certificate or a license if it would be inimical to the common defense and security of the United States or the maintenance of a reliable and economical domestic source of enrichment services.

(3) Revise the frequency with which the operator of the existing gaseous diffusion plants must apply to NRC for a certificate of compliance with NRC regulations. Currently the operator must apply for recertification annually. The revisions state that the operator must apply for a new certificate of compliance before April 15 of the year specified by NRC, but at least every five years.

(4) Establish the licensing process for atomic vapor laser isotope separation enrichment facilities as a single-step process.

The revised regulations will be effective on April 14 (60 days after publication of a Federal Register notice on February 12), unless significant adverse comments are received by March

14.

The NRC is also amending its policy statement related to enforcement actions to reflect the new authority to issue civil penalties for the gaseous diffusion plants. The maximum for the most severe violations of NRC requirements will be \$110,000 for each violation, each day.

Interested persons may submit written comments to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 02555-0001, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch. Comments may also be submitted electronically, as described in the Federal Register notice.

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