

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, DC 20555
Phone 301-415-8200 Fax 301-415-2234
Internet: opa@nrc.gov

No. 97-086

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Friday, May 23, 1997)

NRC AMENDS REGULATIONS
GOVERNING SAFETY OF INDUSTRIAL RADIOGRAPHY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulations governing industrial radiography to enhance safety of radiographers and the public and to provide licensees with a better understanding of what is expected in radiography operations.

Radiography is a process that uses radioactive materials to make X-ray-like pictures of the inside of large objects, such as metal castings or welded pipelines, to see if they contain flaws. A person who conducts radiography operations is known as a "radiographer."

The NRC has approximately 170 radiography licensees, and the 30 Agreement States (which are states that have assumed, by agreement, part of the NRC's regulatory authority) have about 330 additional licensees.

The revised regulations require radiographers to be certified by an independent certifying organization or an Agreement State, in addition to meeting the existing training and qualification requirements.

The amendments also:

- Require two qualified persons--a radiographer and a trained assistant--to be present any time radiography occurs at a temporary jobsite.
- Require licensees to have a Radiation Safety Officer, with responsibility for ensuring compliance with radiation protection rules. The amended regulations set out qualifications, duties and training for this position.
- Require additional training for radiographer's assistants.

A proposed rule on this subject was published in the Federal Register for public comment on February 28, 1994. Changes to the rule were made as a result of comments received, which are discussed in a Federal Register that will be published soon.

#