

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. 99-08

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Wednesday, January 13, 1999)

NRC PROPOSES TO AMEND REGULATIONS TO ADD
HI-STAR FUEL STORAGE CASK DESIGN TO APPROVED LIST

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to amend its regulations to add an additional fuel storage cask design to those that utilities can use—under a general license and without site-specific approval—to store spent fuel at their nuclear power plants.

The new design is the Holtec International Hi-Star 100 cask system (Hi-Star), manufactured by Holtec International Inc. of Marlton, NJ. It can contain up to 24 pressurized water reactor fuel assemblies or 68 boiling water reactor fuel assemblies.

Under the terms of an NRC general license, any nuclear power reactor licensee can use a pre-approved cask if the company notifies the NRC in advance, meets the conditions of the cask's NRC certificate of compliance and complies with NRC's regulations, including a requirement to ensure that the reactor site characteristics and potential site-boundary radiation doses are within the scope of the cask's safety analysis report and the reactor license.

Seven cask designs have previously been approved for use under a general license. The Hi-Star certificate would contain conditions for use that are similar to those for other NRC-approved casks. However, the certificate for each cask design may differ in some specifics, such as operating procedures, training exercises and spent fuel specifications.

The NRC staff has issued a preliminary safety evaluation report which finds that, if the conditions specified in the certificate of compliance are met, adequate protection of public health and safety will be maintained. The staff's draft environmental assessment determined that use of the Hi-Star cask design on reactor sites would have no significant incremental impacts on the environment.

The certificate would expire in 20 years unless it is renewed.

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the proposed amendments to the regulations by March 29. The comments should be addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Comments may also be submitted via the NRC's interactive rulemaking web site at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov>.

###