

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. 99-46

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Tuesday, March 9, 1999)

NRC CONSIDERING REQUEST BY OHIO
TO BE AN 'AGREEMENT STATE'

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering a request that Ohio assume part of NRC's regulatory authority over certain nuclear materials. If the request is accepted, Ohio will become the 31st state to sign such an agreement with NRC.

Under the agreement, NRC would transfer to Ohio the responsibility for licensing, rulemaking, inspection and enforcement concerning the use of (1) radioactive materials produced as byproducts during operation of certain nuclear reactors; (2) uranium and thorium source materials; and (3) small quantities of fissionable materials.

The agreement also would allow the state to regulate the land disposal of radioactive waste and to conduct safety evaluations of sealed radioactive sources and devices for medical and industrial use.

By law, NRC retains jurisdiction over regulation of nuclear reactors and other major nuclear facilities. It also continues to regulate Federal agencies which use certain nuclear materials and companies which distribute such materials (as in smoke detectors) to members of the public.

If the agreement is approved, about 550 NRC licenses, most of them for medical and industrial uses, would be transferred to Ohio's jurisdiction.

Before entering into the agreement, NRC must determine that the State's radiation control program is adequate to protect public health and safety, and is compatible with the agency's own program for regulating the radioactive materials covered in the agreement.

The proposed agreement, along with an assessment of the Ohio proposed regulatory program, will be published for public comment shortly in the Federal Register and will be published once each week for the three weeks afterwards. Comments should be sent to David L. Meyer, Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Division of Freedom of Information and Publications Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

###