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NRC STAFF MODIFIES RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS LICENSES
OF APPLIED HEALTH PHYSICS, INC., OF BETHEL PARK, PA

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued an order modifying its licenses to use radioactive materials held by Applied Health Physics, Inc., of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania. The order, which contains commitments made by Applied Health Physics, is effective immediately.

Applied Health Physics holds two NRC licenses. One, issued in 1975, authorizes the receipt, possession, and storage of pre-packaged wastes. Another license, issued in 1963, authorizes the company to perform leak test services, analysis of samples, calibrations of instruments, and fixed gauge services. Overall, the licensee provides services to customers in a variety of areas such as radioactive waste brokerage, surveys, leak tests and analysis, calibration of instrumentation, sample analysis, training and consultation.

The order suspends Applied Health Physics' authorization to receive pre-packaged radioactive waste at its Bethel Park facility, and requires that the company dispose of radioactive waste in accordance with disposal schedules provided to the NRC. The order further requires that the company establish an escrow account by April 29 to provide financial assurance for the handling and disposal of radioactive waste, and give NRC details about the escrow agent and the fund's operations.

The NRC order was issued following several events. On March 9, 1995, the licensee voluntarily filed for bankruptcy protection in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. The following month, NRC identified seven violations during a routine safety inspection of company operations. One of these violations involved holding radioactive waste for more than 180 days, contrary to a license requirement. On May 26, 1995, Applied Health Physics took possession of two drums of radioactive waste, one of which contained unsealed americium-241, which the company is not authorized to handle.

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Because of concern about the company's financial status and the potential for abandonment of radioactive waste material at Bethel Park, NRC issued a confirmatory action letter to the company last November 8, specifying steps the company agreed to take to cease acquiring additional radioactive waste from customers, provide an up-to-date inventory of all radioactive material in its possession, a schedule of shipments of waste planned for the balance of the year and a copy of its plans over the next six months regarding its bankruptcy proceedings. The NRC order supersedes the terms and conditions of that letter.

The licensee, or any other person adversely affected by the order, has 20 days to request a hearing.
