



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. 00-094

June 7, 2000

NRC CONSIDERING REQUEST BY OKLAHOMA TO BE AN "AGREEMENT STATE"

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering a request by the state of Oklahoma to assume regulatory authority over certain nuclear materials. If the request is accepted, Oklahoma will become the 32nd state to sign such an agreement with NRC.

Under the agreement, NRC will transfer to Oklahoma the responsibility for licensing, rulemaking, inspection and enforcement concerning (1) materials made radioactive in nuclear research reactors; (2) uranium and thorium source materials used as shielding in certain medical and industrial instruments; and (3) special nuclear material in quantities not sufficient to support a nuclear reaction.

The agreement would also allow the state to regulate the land disposal of radioactive waste.

If the agreement is approved, approximately 220 current NRC licenses, most of them for medical and industrial uses, would be transferred to Oklahoma's jurisdiction. The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality will administer the regulatory program.

The NRC will retain jurisdiction over 14 nuclear materials licenses and over regulation of nuclear reactors and other major nuclear facilities in Oklahoma. It will also continue to regulate Federal agencies that use certain nuclear materials in the state.

The NRC has preliminarily determined 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.

It should be noted that NRC staff and representatives of Oklahoma have worked closely to identify efficiencies in the Agreement review process to meet the Governor's request for an effective date of September 30. The NRC expects to meet that deadline which is two months ahead of schedule, and apply the same expedited review process for future state agreement requests. An announcement of the proposed agreement, along with a summary of the NRC staff draft assessment of the proposed Oklahoma Program, will be published for public comment once a week for four consecutive weeks in the Federal Register.

Other states that have previously signed such agreements with NRC, are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Maine, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Three other states are in various stages of entering into agreements with the NRC. They are Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

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