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Date: 8/14/01 5:11PM
Subject: Comments on Draft NUREG 1520

To: US Nuclear Regulatory Commission; ATTN: Yawar Faraz, Mel Leach, Bob Pierson
MO, KY, OH, TN, SC, NC, VA (states which also have fuel cycle facilities)

From: John Erickson, Director, Division of Radiation Protection
Terry Frazee, Supervisor, Radioactive Materials Section
Debra McBaugh, Supervisor, Environmental Radiation Section
Susan May, Supervisor, Nuclear Safety Section

Subject: COMMENTS ON DRAFT NUREG 1520 from Washington State

Since Washington State has a fuel fabrication facility, the Department of Health reviewed Chapters 8, 9, and 10 of Draft NUREG 1520 - Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Fuel Cycle Facility. These are the chapters that most impact the state and local communities surrounding a fuel cycle facility. Within these chapters there were four areas that should be addressed. We will outline them briefly below. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us at the email addresses below.

Chapter 8 - Emergency Management

Emergency classifications for fuel cycle facilities and nuclear power plants are not the same. Fuel cycle facilities are not required to have emergency plans unless they have the potential to exceed 1 rem exposure to the general public offsite and even then their highest emergency classification level is Site Area Emergency. A nuclear power plant, on the other hand, is required to declare a General Emergency if the accident exceeds EPA Protective Action Guides (1 rem) and must also plan for offsite dose in the 100 mrem to 1 rem range. This is inconsistent and confusing. We are concerned that with the less conservative approach taken for fuel cycle facilities state and county agencies may not respond in a manner adequate to protect the public. NRC should assure consistency in its emergency response requirements.

Chapter 9 - Environmental Protection

States require licensees with potential for environmental impact to provide an annual environmental surveillance report to the state. Since states will inherit fuel cycle facility sites after decommissioning, states must receive and review copies of annual environmental surveillance reports. NRC should require fuel cycle facilities to submit annual environmental reports to the state radiation control program.

While this chapter clearly describes how to do an environmental report, it does not adequately cover environmental protection measures. The section listing the regulatory guidance for environmental protection (9.4.2) does not include any guidance for defining an environmental monitoring program such as is used for nuclear power plants or by states for their licensees. NRC should provide specific guidance in these areas. Suggestions for inclusion are listed below:

Regulatory Guide 4.1 Programs for Monitoring Radioactivity in the Environs of Nuclear Power Plants Assessment Branch Technical Position Rev. 1 - An Acceptable Radiological Environmental Monitoring Program

Criteria for an Adequate Radiation Control Program, Environmental Radiation Surveillance -
Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors

Chapter 10 - Decommissioning

Because states will ultimately inherit responsibility for these sites,
states must be involved throughout the decommissioning process and receive
copies of the final decommissioning report. NRC should ensure this happens.

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"The Department of Health works to protect and improve the health of people
in Washington State."

This message from Terry C. Frazee
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