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To: "secy@nrc.gov" <secy@nrc.gov>
Date: Thu, Jun 12, 2003 10:59 PM
Subject: Stop Radioactive Poisoning of Recycling! - 68 FR 40: 9595-9602

June 12, 2003

Secretary, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff
Washington, DC 20555

Dear ,

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission should abandon its efforts to deregulate radioactive wastes. All atomic waste and materials potentially contaminated with radioactivity from nuclear industry processes should be isolated from the environment and the public.

It is unfair to shift the burden of measuring and isolating radioactive materials from the nuclear power industry, which profits from generating atomic waste, to clean recycling industries that do not generate such long-lasting and deadly poisons. Likewise they should not be dumped in landfills where they can leak into ground and drinking water and contaminate soil, air, flora and fauna for generations to come. Permitting radioactively contaminated materials into everyday commerce increases health risks to workers, the public and the environment and puts recycling industries / manufacturers / retailers and solid waste facilities at financial and legal risk.

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission should refocus its resources to maintain control and isolation of nuclear materials rather than "justifying" deliberate loss of control.

Neither "release" nor "dispose at Environmental Protection Agency waste sites" options are acceptable. Radioactive materials should remain in specifically licensed radioactive facilities under regulatory control with the goal of isolation from the public and environment.

"Conditional use" or "restricted release" of radioactive materials for industrial uses instead of personal use will still result in radiation exposure to workers and members of the public and should be prevented. There are no mechanisms in place to track the end uses of recycled materials to guarantee they do not get into personal use items, even if they are originally released with the intent of limited use.

We oppose the exemption of radioactive and potentially radioactive materials from regulatory control and call on the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission to enforce a prohibition on release and recycling of such materials. Keep nuclear waste out of recycling supplies and out of landfills.

Sincerely,

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