



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON DECOMMISSIONING PLAN FOR UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN RESEARCH REACTOR

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on the University of Michigan's plan for decommissioning its research reactor in Ann Arbor.

The NRC is reviewing the plan, which was submitted June 23, to determine whether it meets NRC regulations and to ensure the proposed actions will not pose a threat to the health and safety of the public or to the common defense and security.

The Ford Nuclear Reactor at the university's North Campus is one of the nation's oldest research reactors, having gone critical in 1957 and operated successfully until it was shut down permanently July 3, 2003, and its fuel subsequently returned to the Department of Energy. It is a two-megawatt, open-pool reactor that used fuel composed of aluminum and enriched uranium-235. The reactor generated no electricity, but was used by students and faculty from the university and other institutions for research and experiments. It was also used for irradiation, radiography and production of isotopes for medical uses.

The decommissioning plan describes the process and methods to be used to decontaminate or remove radioactive materials, equipment, components and other media associated with the reactor in a safe, orderly manner while preventing radiation exposures. Successful decommissioning could result in termination of the reactor's license and NRC's release of the site for unrestricted use.

The plan is available through the NRC's ADAMS document management system, at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>, using Accession Number ML041810603 in the search window. For help in using ADAMS, call the NRC Public Document Room at (800) 397-4209, or (301) 415-4737.

A notice on the decommissioning plan was published today (Sept. 8) in the *Federal Register*. Comments on the decommissioning plan should be submitted no later than Sept. 30 to Patrick M. Madden, chief of the Research and Test Reactors Section, Mail Stop O12-G13, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555.

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