



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SETS SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW OF USEC APPLICATION; OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST PARTICIPATION IN HEARING

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has established a 30-month schedule for reviewing an application from USEC Inc., to build a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant in Piketon, Ohio, to be known as the American Centrifuge Plant. The agency will hold a hearing on the application as part of its review and invites those who may be affected by the proceeding to seek permission to participate in the hearing.

The facility would be housed in buildings and areas leased from the Department of Energy (DOE) where DOE operated similar gas centrifuge machines in the 1980s. USEC's gas centrifuge technology is based on DOE's gas centrifuge technology, which USEC obtained by signing an agreement with DOE in June 2002.

The NRC has determined that the application, which was submitted on Aug. 23, contains sufficient information for the agency to begin its detailed review and has formally "docketed" the application. A copy will be available on the NRC's Agencywide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS) using accession number ML042800551 through <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>. A copy will also be available at the NRC's Public Document Room at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md.

The NRC staff will conduct a comprehensive review of the USEC application and prepare a safety evaluation report and environmental impact statement before the hearing is completed. The applicant and the NRC staff will be parties to the hearing.

Any other person whose interest may be affected and who wishes to participate as a party in the hearing proceeding must file a petition to intervene within 60 days of publication of the Commission's notice and order in the *Federal Register*, expected shortly. The petition must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff, with copies by fax or e-mail and to the NRC staff and applicant attorney at the addresses listed in the *Federal Register* notice. The petition must include the particular interest of the petitioner in the proceeding and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding; a specification of the contentions, or specific issues, that the petitioner seeks to have litigated in the hearing; and other information as set out in detail in the *Federal Register* notice.

Construction and operation of the American Centrifuge Plant, if authorized, will be preceded by a test and demonstration facility to be known as a "Lead Cascade." NRC issued a license for the Lead Cascade in February, and construction of the cascade is underway in one of the buildings to be used for the full-scale plant.

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