November 2, 2004

ALL AGREEMENT STATES, MINNESOTA, PENNSYLVANIA

PROPOSED GENERIC COMMUNICATION: ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A SAFETY CONSCIOUS WORK ENVIRONMENT (STP-04-079)

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing to issue a regulatory issue summary (RIS) to provide the guidance for licensees on establishing and maintaining a Safety Conscious Work Environment (SCWE): that is, an environment in which employees are encouraged to raise safety concerns both to their own management and to the NRC without fear of retaliation. The purpose of the guidance is to provide information on practices which have been effective at some larger licensees to maintain or improve the work environment and ensure its employees feel free to raise safety concerns. Consistent with the NRC's 1996 Policy Statement "Freedom of Employees in the Nuclear Industry to raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation," the guidance document applies to all employers, including licensees and their contractors subject to NRC authority and their employees. However, not all the practices outlined in the guidance document will be practical or effective for all licensees. The guidance, in the form of a RIS, is being provided for comment. It is available on the NRC's Web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/allegations/scwe-guide.html.

A *Federal Register* (FR) notice providing the RIS for comment was published on October 14, 2004 (69 FR 61049) and is available at: http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/allegations/frn10142004.pdf. Please note that NRC staff requested in the FR notice that any comments provided relate to the content of the document.

We are providing this document to the Agreement States for your information. If you choose, you may provide comments* on this document by November 15, 2004; we will also consider comments received shortly after this date. You may e-mail comments to nrcrep@nrc.gov. Fax comments to: Chief, Rules and Directive Branch, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission at (301) 415–5144.

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*This information request has been approved by OMB 3150-0029, expiration 06/30/07. The estimated burden per response to comply with this voluntary collection is approximately 6 hours. Forward any comments regarding the burden estimate to the Information and Records Branch (T-6F33), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and to the Paperwork Reduction Project (3150-0029), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. If a document does not display a currently valid OMB control number, the NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information.

STP-04-079

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*See previous concurrences

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