



NRC NEWS

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED IRRADIATOR IN HAWAII

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a draft environmental assessment for a proposed irradiator facility to be operated by Pa'ina Hawaii LLC adjacent to the Honolulu International Airport. The draft assessment concludes that there would be no significant environmental impact from the proposed facility.

Pa'ina submitted the application for the irradiator license in June 2005. The irradiator would be used primarily to kill pests on fresh fruit and vegetables bound for the mainland United States from the Hawaiian Islands and produce imported to Hawaii, as well as irradiate cosmetics and pharmaceutical products. It would also be used for research and development projects and to irradiate a range of other items as approved by the NRC on a case-by-case basis.

The NRC staff's environmental assessment considered potential impacts to the health of the public and workers at the facility, transportation of the radioactive material, socioeconomics, ecology, water quality, and the effects of aviation accidents and natural phenomena.

Considering the location of personnel and operational practices of the irradiator, it is unlikely during normal operations that any employee could receive more than the NRC's annual occupational dose limit of 5,000 millirem. The expected dose rates outside the building are expected to be indistinguishable from naturally occurring background radiation. Therefore, it is unlikely that a member of the public could receive more than the annual public dose limit of 100 millirem.

The staff's finding of no significant impact means that a formal Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted for this license application review.

The draft environmental assessment is available on the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/materials.html> by selecting "Pa'ina Irradiator" in the Quick Links box.

Public comments will be accepted through Feb. 8. Written comments should be submitted to the Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Mail Stop T6-D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C., 20555-0001. Comments will also be accepted by e-mail at NRCREP@nrc.gov or by facsimile to (301) 415-5397, Attention: Matthew Blevins.

The NRC staff will conduct a public meeting Feb. 1 in Honolulu to discuss the draft environmental assessment and accept written and oral public comments. More information on that meeting is included in a *Federal Register* notice, published Dec. 28.

More information on irradiators is available at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/commercial-irradiators.html> .

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