



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC REVIEWING DECOMMISSIONING PLAN FOR NEW HAVEN, CONN., SITE; HEARING OPPORTUNITY TO BE OFFERED

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considering approval of a decommissioning plan for a former nuclear materials facility in New Haven, Conn. As part of that review process, an opportunity to request a hearing on the plan will be offered.

United Nuclear Corp. (UNC) – Naval Products previously held an NRC license for its facilities in New Haven and Montville, Conn. UNC closed the New Haven facility in 1974, transferring the radioactive materials from that site to the Montville location. From 1973 through 1976, the New Haven site was decontaminated and decommissioned, with final radiological surveys finished in 1976.

UNC's license was amended in April 1976 to remove the New Haven facility. That action cleared the way for the site to be released for "unrestricted" use consistent with existing regulations and guidance at the time. After the Montville facility was decontaminated and decommissioned, the UNC license was terminated on June 8, 1994.

In the early 1990s, the NRC initiated a program to ensure that past licenses had been terminated in accordance with the agency's current release criteria for unrestricted use. (Current criteria require that members of the public should not be exposed to more than 25 millirems of radiation annually from a site released for unrestricted use. For comparison purposes, the average American is exposed to about 360 millirems of radiation each year from natural and manmade sources.) The NRC contracted with Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) to conduct that review. During the course of that evaluation, ORNL determined that UNC did not have sufficient documentation to verify the New Haven facility had been properly decontaminated prior to its release for unrestricted use. Subsequently, the NRC and Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education performed radiological surveys of the site in 1996 and found soil contaminated with uranium in excess of allowable levels. The residual radioactivity does not pose a threat to the health and safety of members of the public.

UNC carried out additional studies of the site, performed further remediation work and then submitted a decommissioning plan to the NRC on June 7, 2005. A Final Status Survey Plan, which details the UNC testing to be performed to demonstrate that any radioactive material left on-site meets acceptable limits, was provided to the NRC in October 2006.

Prior to approving the decommissioning plan, the NRC staff must complete a review of the proposal, including an environmental assessment. The review also entails the opportunity for any person whose interest may be affected by the action to request a hearing. Such a request must include specific contentions. A notice of opportunity to request a hearing will be published soon in the *Federal Register*. The deadline for requesting a hearing is 60 days after publication of the notice.

A request for a hearing and a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff. Requests may also be submitted by fax to (301) 415-1101 or e-mail to HEARINGDOCKET@nrc.gov. A copy should also be submitted to the NRC Office of General Counsel, by fax to (301) 415-3725 or e-mail to OGCMailCenter@nrc.gov.

More information about the UNC decommissioning plan is available via the NRC's electronic document system known as ADAMS (Agencywide Document Access and Management System) at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html. The ADAMS Accession Numbers for documents related to this matter are: ML051780083, ML051780088, ML051780091 and ML062910318. Help in accessing documents through the Reading Room is available by contacting the NRC's Public Document Room at 800-397-4209 or by e-mail at pdr@nrc.gov.

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