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Emergency Preparedness Rulemaking In Final Stages

It is a very busy time for the Emergency Preparedness staff here at the NRC. We are in the final stages of the rulemaking for emergency preparedness (EP) and are getting ready to publish the rule.

The EP final rule package was approved by the NRC's Executive Director for Operations and submitted to the Commission in April for consideration. The Commission then met with EP staff and public stakeholders in May to respond to questions on the rule contents. If you would like to view more detailed information on this meeting including the tran-

script and archived webcast, please visit <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/commission/tr/2011/>.

Following careful consideration, the Commission voted at the end of August to approve the EP final rule.

The EP rule and supporting guidance documents are currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB is the President's oversight organization to evaluate the efficiency of agency programs, policies and procedures. Once OMB concludes their review, the rule will be published in the Fed-

eral Register and become effective after 30 days of publication.

In developing and finalizing the rule, NRC EP staff, working closely with staff from FEMA, gathered public comments through seventeen public meetings and through a lengthy public comment period.

During the winter of 2011-2012, NRC and FEMA will hold public forums in each of the NRC regions to present the final rule and guidance documents and to answer questions about implementation. Details of these forums will be announced in the coming weeks.

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Impact of Natural Disasters on Emergency Preparedness

Recently, the eastern United States felt the effects of Hurricane Irene. These events highlighted the close cooperation between the NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in determining the impact on emergency preparedness (EP) capabilities. Natural disasters, such as a hurricane, tornado, or earthquake may significantly damage major roads, communications, buildings, and other offsite infrastructure near a nuclear power plant may degrade the capabilities of offsite response organizations in the 10-mile plume exposure planning

zone. Per the formal Memorandum of understanding between NRC and FEMA contained in Appendix A to Title 44, Part 353 to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), FEMA is responsible for evaluating the adequacy of State and local plans and preparedness.

If a disaster damages the area around a licensed operating nuclear power plant to the extent that FEMA seriously questions the continued adequacy of offsite EP, FEMA may initiate what is

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Management Changes Announced in Division of Preparedness and Response

The Division of Preparedness and Response welcomes new Director, Robert J. Lewis. Mr. Lewis joins NSIR from the Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, where he has served as the Acting Deputy Office Director. Mr. Lewis joined the NRC in 1992 and recently served as the Director for the Division of Materials Safety and State Agreements.

Mr. Lewis succeeds Brian J. McDermott. Mr. McDermott has been appointed Director, Division of Materials Safety and State Agreements, FSME. Both will assume their new positions beginning October 9, 2011.



Robert Lewis



Brian McDermott

Annual EP Counterpart Meeting Held at Church Street Facility

Emergency Preparedness staff from Headquarters recently hosted the Annual NRC EP Face-to-Face Counterpart meeting with the Regional EP inspectors and Branch Chiefs at the agency's Church Street facility. Topics discussed were inspection activities, updates on EP program activities, and training on the soon to be published EP rule. The staff also attended a public meeting to discuss on-shift personnel assigned emergency plan implementation functions. In addition to the annual counterpart meeting, the staff hold regularly scheduled conference calls to discuss EP issues.



Impact of Natural Disasters on Emergency Preparedness

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referred to as a Disaster Initiated Review (DIR). The decision to initiate a formal DIR is made by FEMA after discussions with affected State and local government authorities and the NRC. The groups promptly assess damage to offsite infrastructure and EP capabilities, and the ability for timely restoration or implementation of compensatory measures. A DIR is performed to reaffirm EP capabilities of affected offsite jurisdic-

tions, and is not intended to be a comprehensive review of offsite plans and preparedness. The NRC will consider information provided by FEMA and pertinent findings from the DIR in making decisions regarding the restart or continued operation of an affected operating nuclear power reactor.

The impact of Hurricane Irene provided an opportunity for FEMA and the NRC to test and evaluate this process. Because of the lessons that were learned from this event,

NRC will be working in close cooperation with FEMA to further enhance respective protocols and procedures for EP reviews related to natural disasters. As with any natural disaster, immediate response to protect public health and safety is the responsibility of State and local responders. The NRC appreciates the efforts and dedication of these professionals and volunteers, who are committed to safeguarding their communities.

Upcoming Events of Interest to the EP Community

**National Emergency Management Association
Emergency Management Policy & Leadership Forum**

October 3-7, 2011
Austin, TX

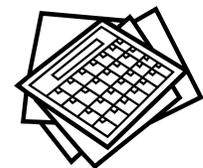
<http://www.nemaweb.org/>

**International Association of Emergency Managers
Annual Conference & EMEX 2011**

Come find our booth and say hi!

November 11-18, 2011
Las Vegas, NV

<http://www.iaem.com/events/annual/intro.htm>



Do you have an upcoming event to highlight?

For consideration, send the details to:

emergencypreparedness.resource@nrc.gov