



NRC NEWS

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NRC AMENDS REGULATIONS ON SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its security regulations to expand upon and make generally applicable measures the agency imposed for risk-significant radioactive materials after Sept. 11, 2001.

In a [final rule](#) published in the *Federal Register* March 19, the NRC adds a new Part 37 to its regulations in Title 10 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR), and makes conforming changes to other parts of NRC regulations regarding radioactive materials.

The new regulation, which takes effect 60 days after publication, establishes security requirements for the most risk-significant radioactive materials (those in [Category 1](#) and [Category 2](#) of the International Atomic Energy Agency's rankings of radiation sources), as well as for shipments of small amounts of irradiated reactor fuel.

The NRC and state regulators ensure the security of more than 75,000 radioactive sources used in medical, commercial and research activities. Because of the wide variety of sources, security programs are tailored to the specific needs of each licensee. But all security programs must include background checks, personnel access controls, security barriers, detecting unauthorized access and an armed law enforcement response. The NRC and state regulators conduct periodic inspections to ensure licensees are meeting the NRC's security requirements.

The NRC and its partners in 37 [Agreement States](#) took steps to strengthen the security of risk-significant radioactive materials immediately after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Since that time, the agency has issued various orders imposing increased controls, implemented requirements for fingerprinting and criminal background checks for people with access to certain radioactive materials, and established the National Source Tracking System. The NRC cooperates with the departments of Homeland Security and Energy as well as other federal, state and local agencies on security matters, and chairs the inter-agency Radiation Source Protection and Security Task Force.

The new Part 37 and changes to other parts of 10 CFR contained in the final rule incorporate NRC's lessons learned in implementing the post-Sept. 11 security measures, as well as stakeholder input on the proposed rule. Making these requirements in NRC's regulations generally applicable enhances consistency of implementation as well as transparency and predictability of NRC's oversight of radioactive material security.

The NRC published a proposed rule for public comment on June 15, 2010, and received 110 comment letters from licensees, state agencies, industry organizations, individuals and a federal agency. The comments are addressed in the *Federal Register* notice accompanying the final rule. NRC's Commissioners approved publication of the final rule in March 2012.

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