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NRC Extends Public Comment Period for Proposed Rule and Environmental Study on Extended Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is extending by three weeks, until December 20, the deadline for public comments on a proposed rule and supporting environmental study on the effects of extended storage of spent nuclear fuel beyond the licensed operating life of commercial reactors.

The NRC has also rescheduled the five public meetings on extended storage that were postponed due to the government shutdown and will hold an additional teleconference to receive public input on Dec. 9. The rescheduled meetings will be held Nov. 12 in Oak Brook, Ill.; Nov. 18 in Carlsbad, Calif.; Nov. 20 in San Luis Obispo, Calif.; Dec. 2 in Perrysburg, Ohio; and Dec. 4 in Minnetonka, Minn. Additional details about the meetings, including information on how to register, can be found on the NRC [website](#). NRC staff will also host a public status update teleconference on Oct. 30. Details are on the [website](#).

The proposed rule was published in the *Federal Register* September 13 for public comment through Nov. 27. Known as “waste confidence,” the proposed rule would replace a similar provision in NRC’s environmental regulations that was vacated last year by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The rule does not authorize extended storage of spent fuel at reactor sites – a separate license is required for that. Rather, waste confidence is a generic finding of the environmental impacts of storing spent fuel for extended periods beyond the licensed operating life of reactors. The draft Waste Confidence Generic Environmental Impact Statement forms the regulatory basis for the proposed rule. The draft statement is available on the NRC’s [waste confidence webpage](#).

Public comments may be submitted several ways: Online through the federal government’s rulemaking website, www.regulations.gov using Docket ID NRC-2012-0246; by e-mail to Rulemaking.Comments@nrc.gov; by fax to 301-415-1101; by mail to Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff; or by hand delivery to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on federal workdays.

Comments may also be provided orally or in writing at the public meetings, part of the agency’s extensive public outreach effort on the waste confidence project. All comments will be considered no matter how they are submitted.