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NRC Proposes to Amend Licensing, Inspection, and Annual Fees Regulations

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission seeks public comments on proposed changes to its regulations for the licensing, inspection, and annual fees it charges applicants and licensees for fiscal year (FY) 2015. The proposed fee rule, published today in the *Federal Register*, includes fees required by law to recover approximately 90 percent of the agency's budget authority.

In order to ensure timely publication of this rulemaking, this proposed fee rule is based on the NRC's FY 2015 President's budget and adjustments were not made to reflect NRC's FY 2015 appropriations. However, because the enacted budget represents a \$44.2 million reduction from the President's budget, the NRC will reduce the hourly rate and some fees in the final rule. All figures in the final rule will be updated based on the NRC's appropriation (an estimate has been included in the proposed rule).

For the FY 2015 proposed fee rule, the NRC's estimated required fee recovery amount is approximately \$935.3 million, with an estimate of \$895.5 million for the final FY 2015 rule. Approximately 36 percent of the fees would recover the cost of specific services to identifiable applicants and licensees under 10 CFR Part 170. The remaining 64 percent would be billed as annual fees under 10 CFR Part 171. By law, the NRC is required to collect all fees by Sept. 30, 2015.

The proposed rule includes several changes affecting licensees and applicants. First, the NRC would slightly lower the current hourly rate from \$279 to \$277 for FY 2015 (with an estimated \$268 hourly rate in the final rule). Second, the NRC would revise the flat rate license application fees in 10 CFR 170.21 and 170.31 to reflect the new hourly rate. Compared with the FY 2014 annual fees, the FY 2015 fees in the proposed rule would increase for operating reactors, fuel facilities, spent fuel storage and reactor decommissioning, research and test reactors, some materials users, DOE transportation activities, and most uranium recovery licensees. However, the NRC estimates the FY 2015 fees for operating reactors would decrease in the final rule.

Comments on the proposed rule are due by April 22 and may be submitted through the federal rulemaking website at www.regulations.gov, using Docket ID NRC-2014-0200, or by e-mail to Rulemaking.Comments@nrc.gov. They may also be mailed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.