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NRC Seeks Public Comment on Draft Regulatory Basis for Greater-Than-Class C Waste Disposal

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a draft regulatory basis for potential new regulations governing the near-surface disposal of certain low-level radioactive waste.

The NRC classifies low-level radioactive waste based on its potential hazards and has specified disposal and waste requirements for three classes of waste with progressively higher concentrations of radioactive material. Class A is the least hazardous and Class C the most hazardous. However, a fourth type of low-level radioactive waste, called “greater-than-Class-C,” contains radionuclides exceeding the concentration limits for Class C. GTCC waste is typically activated metals from power reactors, sealed sources, and waste material from medical isotopes, but it may also contain special nuclear material such as enriched uranium or plutonium.

Currently, there are no facilities licensed to dispose of GTCC waste, so it is being stored at nuclear power plants or at interim storage sites. The draft regulatory basis evaluates whether certain GTCC waste could be safely disposed in a near-surface disposal facility. It also evaluates whether regulatory changes would need to be considered to permit such action, and whether the NRC or certain states should regulate such disposal.

The draft regulatory basis is being made publicly available through the NRC’s ADAMS online database under accession number [ML19059A403](#). A notice will be published shortly in the *Federal Register*, which will initiate a 60-day public comment period. Comments may be submitted via the federal government’s rulemaking website, www.regulations.gov, using Docket ID NRC-2017-0081.

The NRC will hold a public meeting Aug. 27 in Austin, Texas, to present the draft regulatory basis and receive public comments. Details on that meeting will be published at a later date.